

The Fable of the Bees

or

Private vices, public benefits

Bernard Mandeville

1732

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[Brackets] enclose editorial explanations. Small ·dots· enclose material that has been added, but can be read as though it were part of the original text. Occasional •bullets, and also indenting of passages that are not quotations, are meant as aids to grasping the structure of a sentence or a thought. Every four-point ellipsis Indicates the omission of a brief passage that seems to present more difficulty than it is worth. Longer omissions are reported between brackets in normal-sized type. —The work consists mainly in

- a set of 20 ‘Remarks’ on bits of a 9-page poem; preceded by
- the poem itself, presented with letters of the form of **[A]** against the bits to which Remarks are addressed;
- a longish Essay on charity and charity schools, and another on the origin of society (the black-type subheadings in these are not in the original); and
- materials attacking the first edition of this work, followed by Mandeville’s defence.

In some Remarks and in the Essay, each CROSS-HEADING in small capitals marks the start of a new topic, but no indication is given of where the topic ends.

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Glossary

connive: Used here in its proper sense: if you ‘connive at’ my doing x, you pretend not to know that I am doing it, although really you ought to stop me. From a Latin verb meaning ‘wink’.

content: In Remark V and the related part of the Poem, this noun means ‘contentment’.

cross: a small coin; ‘without a cross’ means ‘without money’.

curious: Mandeville’s uses of this seem to involve one or more of three of the OED’s senses for it: ‘exquisite, excellent, fine’, ‘interesting, noteworthy’, ‘deserving or arousing curiosity; strange, queer’.

dipped: mortgaged

emulation: competitive copying

encomium: high praise

enthusiasm: This is sometimes replaced by ‘fanaticism’. Where it is allowed to stand, it still stands for something hotter than mere ‘enthusiasm’ is taken to be today.

felicity: happiness

industry: industriousness, willingness to work hard

Leviathan: As used on page 118 this has both its role as the name of a mythical sea-monster and its meaning (derived from Hobbes’s classic work) as ‘commonwealth’.

limner: painter; especially portrait-painter

mischief: harm

mortify: humiliate; similarly ‘mortification’

operose: labour-intensive

polite: polished, civilised

politician: Mandeville often uses this word to mean something like ‘person who makes it his business to modify and manipulate our behaviour’.

presentment: An action whereby a local Grand Jury ‘presents’ to the relevant judges its considered opinion that a certain person ought to be charged with a crime.

prodigal: excessively free-spending. The idea that a prodigal is someone who leaves home and then returns comes from misunderstanding the biblical title ‘the parable of the prodigal son’.

rapine: plunder; seizing property by force

sumptuary laws: Laws enforcing frugal and simple modes of living.

temporal: Temporal happiness is happiness in this life; in contrast with eternal happiness in the after-life.

vicious: morally bad; not as intense or focussed as the word is today; Similarly ‘vice’.

voluptuous: Given to sexual pleasure

vulgar: ‘the vulgar’ are people who not much educated and not much given to thinking.

Preface

Laws and government are to the political bodies of civil societies what the vital spirits and life itself are to the natural bodies of living creatures; and just as those who study the anatomy of dead carcasses can see that

the chief organs and most precise springs more immediately required to keep our machine going are not •hard bones, strong muscles and nerves, or the smooth white skin that so beautifully covers them, but •small trifling films and little pipes that are overlooked or seen as negligible by untutored eyes,

so also those who examine the nature of man, setting aside art and education, can see that

what makes him a sociable animal consists not in •his desire for company, good-nature, pity, affability, and other graces of a fair outside, but •his vilest and most hateful qualities.

It is these that are the most necessary accomplishments to fit him for the largest and (according to the world) the happiest and most flourishing societies.

The following fable, in which what I have just said is set forth at large, was printed eight years ago in a sixpenny pamphlet called *The Grumbling Hive; or Knaves turned Honest*; and being soon after pirated, it was sold in the streets in a halfpenny sheet. I have encountered several people who, wilfully or ignorantly mistaking the design, regard it as a satire on virtue and morality, written for the encouragement of vice. This made me decide that whenever this little poem was reprinted, I would find some way to inform the reader of the real intent it was written with.

I do not want the reader to expect any poetry in these few loose lines. I dignify them with the label 'poem' only because

they are rhymed, and I am really puzzled about what to call them; for

- they are neither heroic nor pastoral, satire, burlesque nor heroicomic;
- they are not *probable* enough to be a tale; and
- the whole thing is rather too long for a fable.

All I can say of them is that they are a story told in doggerel, which—without the least design of being witty—I have tried to write in as easy and familiar a manner as I was able. You may call the 'poem' anything you like.

Someone said of Montaigne that he was pretty well versed in the defects of mankind, but unacquainted with the excellencies of human nature. If no-one says anything worse than that about me, I shall think myself well treated.

Whatever country in the universe is to be understood by the beehive represented here, it must be a large, rich and warlike nation that is happily governed by a limited monarchy; that is made clear by what the poem says about its laws and constitution, and about the glory, wealth, power and industry [see Glossary] of its inhabitants. So the poem's satire on the various professions and callings, and on almost every degree and station of people, was not made to injure and point to particular persons, but only to show the vileness of the ingredients that compose the wholesome mixture of a well-ordered society; in order to extol the wonderful power of political wisdom that enables such a beautiful machine to be raised from the most contemptible branches. For the main design of the fable (as it is briefly explained in the moral [page 12] is **(i)** to show the impossibility of enjoying all the most elegant comforts of life that an industrious, wealthy and powerful nation can provide while also being blessed with all the virtue and innocence that can be wished for in a golden age; and on that basis **(ii)** to expose the unreasonableness and folly of those who, wanting to be a

flourishing people and wonderfully greedy for all the benefits they can receive as such, are always exclaiming against the vices [see Glossary] and inconveniences that have—from the beginning of the world to this present day—been inseparable from all kingdoms and states that ever were famed for strength, riches, and politeness [see Glossary] at the same time.

To do this, I first slightly touch on some of the faults and corruptions the various professions and callings are generally accused of. Then I show that those very vices of every individual person were made, by skilful management, to be conducive to the grandeur and worldly happiness of the whole. Lastly, by setting forth what must be the consequence of general honesty and virtue, and of national temperance, innocence and content, I demonstrate that if mankind could be cured of the failings they are naturally guilty of, they would cease to be capable of being raised into such vast, potent and polite societies as they have been under the various great commonwealths and monarchies that have flourished since the creation. If you ask me why I have done all this—*Cui bono?* [Latin meaning ‘For whose benefit?’]—and what good these notions will produce, I answer ‘None at all, except the reader’s entertainment’. But if I was asked what naturally ought to be expected from them, I would answer that •those who continually find fault with others would, by reading them, be taught to look at home, examine their own consciences, and be ashamed of always railing at what they are more or less guilty of themselves; and that •those who are so fond of the ease and comforts and benefits that are the consequence of a great and flourishing nation would learn to submit more patiently to the inconveniences that no government on earth can remedy, when they see the impossibility of enjoying any great share of the former without partaking likewise of the latter.

This ought naturally to be expected from the publishing of these notions, if people could be made better by anything that might be said to them; but mankind has for so many ages remained the same despite the many instructive and elaborate writings by which their amendment has been attempted, that I am not so vain as to hope for better success from so inconsiderable a trifle ·as the present work·. Having admitted the small advantage this little whim is likely to produce, I think I am obliged to show that it cannot be prejudicial to any; for anything that is published, if it does no good, ought at least to do no harm. For this purpose I have made some explanatory notes—Remarks—to which the reader will be referred in the passages of the poem that seem most liable to objections.

Censorious people who never saw *The Grumbling Hive* will tell me that whatever I may say about the fable, it doesn’t take up a tenth part of the book and was only contrived to introduce the Remarks; that instead of clearing up the doubtful or obscure passages ·in the poem· I have only pitched on topics that I wanted to expatiate upon; and that far from striving to extenuate the errors committed before, I have made bad worse, and shown myself a more barefaced champion for vice in the rambling Remarks than I had done in the fable itself.

I shall spend no time in answering these accusations; where men are prejudiced, the best defences are lost; and I know that those who think it criminal to suppose vice is *ever* a necessity will never be reconciled to any part of the work; but if the work is thoroughly examined, all the offence it can give must result from inferences wrongly drawn from it, which I want nobody to make. When I assert that vices are inseparable from great and potent societies, and that their wealth and grandeur could not possibly subsist without vices, I do not say that the particular members of

those societies who are guilty of any vices should not be continually reprov'd, or not be punished for them when they grow into crimes.

Of people in London who are at any time forced to go on foot, there are few who would not wish its streets to be much cleaner than they generally are, when they are thinking only about their own clothes and private convenience; but when they come to consider that what offends them results from the wealth and busyness of that mighty city, if they have any concern for its welfare they will seldom wish to see its streets less dirty. For if we bear in mind

- the materials of all sorts that must supply the countless trades and handicrafts that are always going forward,
- the vast quantity of victuals, drink and fuel that are daily consumed in the city,
- the waste and superfluities that must be produced from them,
- the multitudes of horses and other animals that are always daubing the streets,
- the carts, coaches and heavier vehicles that are perpetually wearing and breaking their pavement, and above all
- the countless swarms of people that are continually harassing and trampling through every part of them,

we shall find that every moment must produce new filth; and considering how far the great streets are from the river, it is impossible—no matter what cost and care are devoted to removing the nastiness almost as fast as it is made—that London should be more clean before it is less flourishing. In the light of all this, might not a good citizen say that dirty streets are a necessary evil inseparable from the felicity [see Glossary] of London, without hindering the cleaning of shoes or sweeping of streets, and consequently without any prejudice to those who do those jobs.

But if I were asked what place I thought most pleasant to walk in, *of course* I would esteem a fragrant garden or a shady grove in the country before the stinking streets of London. In the same manner, if laying aside all worldly greatness and vainglory I were asked where I thought it most probable that men might enjoy true happiness, I would opt for •a small peaceable society in which men, neither envied nor esteemed by neighbours, were contented to live on the natural product of the spot they inhabit, rather than •a vast multitude abounding in wealth and power, always conquering others by their arms abroad and debauching themselves by foreign luxury at home.

Since the second edition of this book a violent outcry has been made against it, fulfilling the expectation I always had of the justice, wisdom, charity and fairness of those whose good-will I despaired of. It has been presented [see Glossary] by the Grand Jury, and condemned by thousands who never saw a word of it. It has been preached against before my Lord Mayor, and an utter refutation of it is daily expected from a reverend divine who has threatened to answer me 'in two months time' for more than five months in a row. In my *Vindication* ·starting on page 124· you will see •what I have to say for myself, •the Grand Jury's presentment, and •a letter to the right honourable Lord C. The author of that letter shows a fine talent for invective, and great sagacity in discovering atheism where others can find none. He is zealous against wicked books, points at the *Fable of the Bees*, and is very angry with its author.

The letter is long, but the parts of it concerning me are so interwoven with the rest that I was obliged to trouble you with the whole thing, hoping that—prolix as it is—its extravagance will be entertaining to those who have read the treatise it condemns with so much horror. [The present version will cure the prolixity somewhat.]

The Poem

The Grumbling Hive or **Knaves turned Honest**

A spacious hive well stocked with bees,
that lived in luxury and ease;
and yet as famed for laws and arms
as yielding large and early swarms;
was counted the great nursery
of sciences and industry.

No bees had better government,
more fickleness, or less content:
they were not slaves to tyranny,
nor ruled by wild democracy;
but kings, that could not wrong, because
their power was circumscribed by laws.

These insects lived like men, and all
our actions they performed in small:
they did whatever's done in town,
and what belongs to sword or gown,
though th' artful works, by nimble slight
of minute limbs, 'scaped human sight;
yet we've no engines, labourers,
ships, castles, arms, artificers,

craft, science, shop, or instrument,
but they had an equivalent:
which, since their language is unknown,
must be called as we do our own.
As grant that among other things
they lacked dice, yet they had kings;
and those had guards; from whence we may
justly conclude they had some play,
unless a regiment be shown
of soldiers that make use of none.

Vast numbers thronged the fruitful hive;
yet those vast numbers made them thrive;
millions endeavouring to supply
each other's lust and vanity;
while other millions were employed,
to see their handiworks destroyed;
they furnished half the universe;
yet had more work than labourers.
Some with vast stocks, and little pains,
jumped into business of great gains;
and some were damned to scythes and spades
and all those hard laborious trades,
where willing wretches daily sweat

and wear out strength and limbs to eat,
while others followed mysteries,
to which few folks bind apprentices; [A]
that want no stock but that of brass,
and may set up without a cross [see Glossary]
as sharpers, parasites, pimps, players,
pick-pockets, coiners, quacks, soothsayers,
and all those that in enmity,
with downright working, cunningly
convert to their own use the labour
of their good-natured heedless neighbour.
These were called 'knaves', but bar the name,
the grave industrious were the same: [B]
all trades and places knew some cheat,
no calling was without deceit.

The lawyers, of whose art the basis
was raising feuds and splitting cases,
opposed all registers, that cheats
might make more work with dipped estates;
as wer't unlawful that one's own
without a law-suit should be known.
They kept off hearings wilfully,
to finger the refreshing fee;
and to defend a wicked cause,
examined and surveyed the laws,

as burglars shops and houses do,
to find out where they'd best break through.

Physicians valued fame and wealth
above the drooping patient's health,
or their own skill. The greatest part
studied, instead of rules of art,
grave pensive looks and dull behaviour
to gain the apothecary's favour;
the praise of midwives, priests, and all
that served at birth or funeral.
To bear with the ever-talking tribe,
and hear my lady's aunt prescribe
with formal smile and kind 'How do ye?'
to fawn on all the family;
and, which of all the greatest curse is,
to endure the impertinence of nurses.

Among the many priests of Jove,
hired to draw blessings from above,
some few were learned and eloquent,
but thousands hot and ignorant:
yet all passed muster that could hide
their sloth, lust, avarice and pride;
for which they were as famed as tailors
for cabbage, or for brandy sailors;
some, meagre-looking, and meanly clad,

would mystically pray for bread,
meaning by that an ample store,
yet literally received no more;
and, while these holy drudges starved,
the lazy ones, for which they served,
indulged their ease, with all the graces
of health and plenty in their faces.

The soldiers, that were forced to fight,
if they survived, got honour by it; [C]
though some, that shunned the bloody fray,
had limbs shot off, that ran away:
some valiant gen'als fought the foe;
others took bribes to let them go:
some ventured always where 'twas warm,
lost now a leg, and then an arm;
till quite disabled, and put by,
they lived on half their salary;
while others never came in play,
and stayed at home for double pay.

Their kings were served, but knavishly,
cheated by their own ministry;
many that for their welfare slaved,
robbing the very crown they saved:
pensions were small, and they lived high,
yet boasted of their honesty.

calling, whene'er they strained their right,
the slippery trick a 'perquisite';
and when folks understood their cant,
they changed that for 'emolument';
unwilling to be short or plain,
in anything concerning gain;
for there was not a bee but would
get more, I won't say, than he should; [D]
but than he dared to let them know,
that paid for it; as your gamesters do,
who, though at fair play, ne'er will own
before the losers what they've won. [E]

But who can all their frauds repeat?
the very stuff, which in the street
they sold for dirt to enrich the ground,
was often by the buyers found
sophisticated with a quarter
of good-for-nothing stones and mortar;
though flail had little cause to mutter,
who sold the other salt for butter.

Justice herself, famed for fair dealing,
by blindness had not lost her feeling;
her left hand, which the scales should hold,
had often dropped them, bribed with gold;
and, though she seemed impartial,
where punishment was corporal,

pretended to a reg'lar course,
 in murder and all crimes of force;
 though some, first pilloried for cheating,
 were hanged in hemp of their own beating;
 yet, it was thought, the sword she bore
 checked but the desp'rate and the poor;
 that, urged by mere necessity,
 were tied up to the wretched tree
 for crimes, which not deserved that fate,
 but to secure the rich and great.

Thus every part was full of vice,
 yet the whole mass a paradise;
 flattered in peace, and feared in wars,
 they were the esteem of foreigners,
 and lavish of their wealth and lives,
 the balance of all other hives.
 such were the blessings of that state;
 their crimes conspired to make them great:
 and virtue, who from politics
 had learned a thousand cunning tricks, [F]
 was by their happy influence
 made friends with vice: and ever since,
 the worst of all the multitude
 did something for the common good. [G]

This was the statescraft, that maintained

the whole of which each part complained:
 this, as in music harmony,
 made jarrings in the main agree;
 parties directly opposite,
 assist each other, as it were for spite; [H]
 and temperance with sobriety,
 serve drunkenness and gluttony.

The root of evil, avarice,
 that damned ill-natured baneful vice, [I]
 was slave to prodigality,
 that noble sin; while luxury [K, L]
 employed a million of the poor,
 and odious pride a million more: [M]
 envy itself, and vanity,
 were ministers of industry; [N]
 their darling folly, fickleness,
 in diet, furniture and dress,
 that strange ridiculous vice, was made
 the very wheel that turned the trade.
 Their laws and clothes were equally
 objects of mutability;
 for what was well done for a time
 in half a year became a crime;
 yet while they altered thus their laws,
 still finding and correcting flaws,

they mended by inconstancy
faults, which no prudence could foresee.

Thus vice nursed ingenuity,
which joined with time and industry,
had carried life's conveniencies,
its real pleasures, comforts, ease, [O]
to such a height, the very poor
lived better than the rich before, [P]
and nothing could be added more.

How vain is mortal happiness!
Had they but known the bounds of bliss;
and that perfection here below
is more than gods can well bestow;
the grumbling brutes had been content
with ministers and government.
But they, at every ill success,
like creatures lost without redress,
cursed politicians, armies, fleets;
while everyone cried 'Damn the cheats!'
and would, though conscious of his own,
in others barbarously bear none.

One that had got a princely store,
by cheating master, king and poor,
dared cry aloud 'The land must sink

for all its fraud!'; and whom d'ye think
the sermonizing rascal chid?
A glover that sold lamb for kid.
The least thing was not done amiss,
or crossed the public business;
but all the rogues cried brazenly,
'Good gods, had we but honesty!'
Mercury smiled at the impudence,
and others called it lack of sense,
always to rail at what they loved:
but Jove with indignation moved,
at last in anger swore he'd rid
the bawling hive of fraud; and did.
The very moment it departs,
and honesty fills all their hearts;
there shows them, like th' instructive tree,
those crimes which they're ashamed to see;
which now in silence they confess,
by blushing at their ugliness:
like children, that would hide their faults,
and by their colour own their thoughts:
imagining, when they're looked upon,
that others see what they have done.

But oh ye gods! what consternation,
how vast and sudden was the alteration!

in half an hour, the nation round,
meat fell a penny in the pound.
The mask hypocrisy's flung down,
from the great statesman to the clown:
and some in borrowed looks well known,
appeared like strangers in their own.
the bar was silent from that day;
for now the willing debtors pay,
even what's by creditors forgot;
who quitted them that had it not.
Those that were in the wrong stood mute,
and dropped the patched vexatious suit:
on which since nothing less can thrive,
than lawyers in an honest hive,
all, except those that got enough,
with inkhorns by their sides trooped off.

Justice hanged some, set others free;
and after jail delivery,
her presence being no more required,
with all her train and pomp retired.
First marched some smiths with locks and grates,
fetters, and doors with iron plates:
next goalers, turnkeys and assistants:
before the goddess, at some distance,

her chief and faithful minister,
Squire Catch, the law's great finisher,
bore not the imaginary sword,
but his own tools, an ax and cord:
then on a cloud the hoodwinked fair,
Justice her self was pushed by air:
about her chariot, and behind,
were serjeants, bums¹ of every kind,
tipstuffs, and all those officers,
that squeeze a living out of tears.

Though physic lived while folks were ill,
none would prescribe but bees of skill,
which through the hive dispersed so wide,
that none of them had need to ride;
waved vain disputes, and strove to free
the patients of their misery;
left drugs in cheating countries grown,
and used the product of their own;
knowing the gods sent no disease
to nations without remedies.

Their clergy roused from laziness,
laid not their charge on journey-bees;
but served themselves, exempt from vice,

¹ A kind of bailiff.

the gods with prayer and sacrifice;
 all those that were unfit, or knew
 their service might be spared, withdrew:
 nor was there business for so many,
 (if the honest stand in need of any,)
 few only with the high-priest stayed,
 to whom the rest obedience paid:
 himself employed in holy cares,
 resigned to others state-affairs.
 He chased no starveling from his door,
 nor pinched the wages of the poor;
 but at his house the hungry's fed,
 the hireling finds unmeasured bread,
 the needy traveller board and bed.

Among the king's great ministers,
 and all the inferior officers
 the change was great; for frugally
 they now lived on their salary: [9]
 that a poor bee should ten times come
 to ask his due, a trifling sum,
 and by some well-hired clerk be made
 to give a crown, or ne'er be paid,
 would now be called a downright cheat,
 though formerly a perquisite.
 All places managed first by three,

who watched each other's knavery,
 and often for a fellow-feeling,
 promoted one another's stealing,
 are happily supplied by one,
 by which some thousands more are gone.
 No honour now could be content,
 to live and owe for what was spent; [R]
 liveries in brokers' shops are hung,
 they part with coaches for a song;
 sell stately horses by whole sets;
 and country-houses, to pay debts.

Vain cost is shunned as much as fraud;
 they have no forces kept abroad;
 laugh at the esteem of foreigners,
 and empty glory got by wars;
 they fight but for their country's sake,
 when right or liberty's at stake.

Now mind the glorious hive, and see
 how honesty and trade agree.
 the show is gone, it thins apace;
 and looks with quite another face.
 for 'twas not only that they went,
 by whom vast sums were yearly spent;
 but multitudes that lived on them,
 were daily forced to do the same.

in vain to other trades they'd fly;
all were o'er-stocked accordingly.

The price of land and houses falls;
miraculous palaces, whose walls,
like those of Thebes, were raised by play,
are to be let; while the once gay,
well-seated household gods would be
more pleased to expire in flames, than see
the mean inscription on the door
smile at the lofty ones they bore.
The building trade is quite destroyed,
artificers are not employed;
no limner for his art is famed,
stone-cutters, carvers are not named. [S]

Those that remained, grown temperate, strive
not how to spend, but how to live,
and, when they paid their tavern score,
resolved to enter it no more:
no vintner's jilt in all the hive
could now wear cloth of gold, and thrive;
nor Torcol such vast sums advance,
for Burgundy and Ortelans;
the courtier's gone, that with his miss
sipped at his house on christmas peas;
spending as much in two hours stay,

as keeps a troop of horse a day.

The haughty Chloe, to live great,
had made her husband rob the state: [T]
but now she sells her furniture,
which the Indies had been ransacked for;
contracts the expensive bill of fare,
and wears her strong suit a whole year:
the slight and fickle age is past;
and clothes, as well as fashions, last.
Weavers, that joined rich silk with plate,
and all the trades subordinate,
are gone. Still peace and plenty reign,
and everything is cheap, though plain:
kind nature, free from gard'ners force,
allows all fruits in her own course;
but rarities cannot be had,
where pains to get them are not paid.

As pride and luxury decrease,
so by degrees they leave the seas.
Not merchants now, but companies
remove whole manufactories.
All arts and crafts neglected lie;
content, the bane of industry, [V]
makes them admire their homely store,
and neither seek nor covet more.

So few in the vast hive remain,
 the hundredth part they can't maintain
 against the insults of numerous foes;
 whom yet they valiantly oppose:
 till some well-fenced retreat is found,
 and here they die or stand their ground.
 No hireling in their army's known;
 but bravely fighting for their own,
 their courage and integrity

Then leave complaints: fools only strive
 to make a great an honest hive [X]
 to enjoy the world's conveniencies, [Y]
 be famed in war, yet live in ease,
 without great vices, is a vain
 Utopia seated in the brain.
 Fraud, luxury and pride must live,
 while we the benefits receive:
 hunger's a dreadful plague, no doubt,
 yet who digests or thrives without?
 Do we not owe the growth of wine
 To the dry shabby crooked vine?
 Which, while its shoots neglected stood,
 choked other plants, and ran to wood;

at last were crowned with victory.

They triumphed not without their cost,
 for many thousand bees were lost.
 Hardened with toils and exercise,
 they counted ease itself a vice;
 which so improved their temperance;
 that, to avoid extravagance,
 they flew into a hollow tree,
 blest with content and honesty.

* * * * *

The Moral

but blest us with its noble fruit,
 as soon as it was tied and cut:

So vice is beneficial found,
 when it's by justice lopped and bound;
 nay, where the people would be great,
 as necessary to the state,
 as hunger is to make them eat.
 Bare virtue can't make nations live
 in splendour; they, that would revive
 a golden age, must be as free,
 for acorns, as for honesty.

Introduction

One of the greatest reasons why so few people understand themselves is that most writers are always teaching men what they should be, and hardly ever bother to tell them what they really are. For my part, without any compliment to you or me, I believe that man is—besides skin, flesh, bones, etc. that are obvious to the eye—a compound of various passions that govern him by turns, whether he will or no, the turns being decided by which passions are provoked and come uppermost at a give time. Though we all claim to be ashamed of these qualities, they are the great support of a

flourishing society, this being the subject of the foregoing poem. But because some passages in it seem paradoxical, I have in the Preface promised some explanatory remarks on it; and to make them more useful I have thought fit to offer a preliminary article, in which I enquire into how a man with only these qualities might be taught by his own imperfections to distinguish virtue from vice. I ask you here to take notice, once for all, that when I speak of 'men' I mean neither Jews nor Christians, but mere *man*, in the state of nature and ignorance of the true deity.

An enquiry into the origin of moral virtue

All untaught animals are solicitous only of pleasing themselves, and naturally follow the bent of their own inclinations without considering the good or harm this will do to others. This is why in the wild state of nature the creatures that are fittest to live peaceably together in great numbers are the ones that reveal the least understanding and have the fewest appetites to gratify; so that no species of animals is (without the curb of government) less capable of agreeing long together in multitudes than that of *man*. He is an extraordinarily selfish, headstrong, *cunning* animal; so, however he may be subdued by superior strength, it is impossible by force alone to make him tractable and receive the improvements he is capable of.

So the chief endeavour of lawgivers and other wise men who have laboured for the establishment of society has been to make their people believe that for each person it was more beneficial to conquer his appetites than to indulge them, and much better to mind the public than to mind what seemed to be his private interest. This has always been a very difficult task, and no wit or eloquence has been left untried to succeed in it; and the moralists and philosophers of all ages employed their utmost skill to prove the truth of this useful assertion. But whether mankind would ever have believed it or not, it is not likely that anybody could have persuaded them to disapprove of their natural inclinations, or prefer the good of others to their own, unless he had also showed them some equivalent that they could enjoy as a reward for the violence they must commit upon themselves by self-denial. Those who have undertaken to civilise mankind knew this; but being unable to give enough *real* rewards to satisfy everyone for every individual action, they were forced to invent an

imaginary one that would be found acceptable as a general all-purpose equivalent for the trouble of self-denial, without costing them or anyone else anything.

They thoroughly examined all our strengths and weaknesses, saw that none were •so savage as not to be charmed with praise or •so despicable as patiently to bear contempt, and rightly concluded that *flattery* must be the most powerful argument to use on human creatures. Using this bewitching engine, they extolled the excellence of our nature above other animals, gave unbounded praise to the wonders of our sagacity and vastness of our understanding, and to the rationality of our souls by the help of which we were able to perform the most noble achievements. Having thus insinuated themselves into the hearts of men, they began to instruct them in the notions of honour and shame; representing the one as the worst of all evils, and the other as the highest good mortals could aspire to. Then they laid before men that it was unworthy of the dignity of such sublime creatures to •care about gratifying appetites that they had in common with brutes while •neglecting the higher qualities that made them pre-eminent over all visible beings. They admitted that those impulses of nature were very pressing; that it was troublesome to resist them and very difficult to subdue them entirely. But they used this to show on the one hand how glorious the conquest of them was, and on the other how scandalous it was not to attempt it.

Moreover, to introduce emulation [see Glossary] among men, they divided the species into two classes. (i) One consisted of abject, low-minded people who were always hunting after immediate enjoyment and were wholly incapable of self-denial. They had no concern with the good

of others, had no higher aim than their private advantage, were enslaved by voluptuousness [see Glossary] and yielded without resistance to every gross desire, making no use of their rational faculties except to heighten their sensual pleasure. These vile groveling wretches, they said, differed from brutes only in their outward shape. **(ii)** The other class was made up of lofty high-spirited creatures who, free from sordid selfishness, regarded the improvements of the mind as their fairest possessions. They despised whatever they had in common with irrational creatures, opposed by the help of reason their most violent inclinations, and made continual war with themselves to promote the peace of others, aiming to promote the public welfare by the conquest of their own passion. They were the true representatives of their sublime species, exceeding class **(i)** in worth by more degrees than **(i)** was superior to the beasts of the field.

The finest and most beautiful and valuable animals of their kind generally have the greatest share of pride (if the kind is capable of pride at all). So it is with man. Pride is so inseparable from his very essence (however cunningly some may learn to hide or disguise it) that without it the compound he is made of would lack one of its chief ingredients; so it is only to be expected that lessons and remonstrances skilfully adapted to the good opinion man has of himself will when scattered among a multitude not only •get the assent of most of them as a matter of theory but also •induce many of them—especially the fiercest, most resolute, and best—to endure a thousand inconveniences and undergo a thousand hardships in order to have the pleasure of counting themselves as members of class **(ii)** and thereby claiming for themselves all the excellences they have heard of it.

All this would lead us to expect two things. **First**, the heroes who took such extraordinary pains to master some of their natural appetites and put the good of others ahead

of any visible interest of their own would stick to the fine notions they had received concerning the dignity of rational creatures; and—with the authority of the government always on their side—would vigorously assert the superiority of those of class **(ii)** over the rest of their kind. **Second**, those who had not enough pride or resolution to support them in mortifying [see Glossary] what was dearest to them, and who thus followed the sensual dictates of nature, would yet be ashamed to confess themselves to be despicable wretches—generally reckoned to be so little removed from brutes—belonging to the inferior class **(i)**. This would lead them to hide their imperfections as well as they could, and in self-defence they would join in the general praise of self-denial and public-spiritedness; for it is highly probable that •some of them, convinced by the real proofs of fortitude and self-conquest they had seen, would admire in others what they found lacking in themselves; that •others would be afraid of the resolution and prowess of those of class **(ii)**; and that •all of them would be kept in awe by the power of their rulers. So it is reasonable to think that none of them (whatever they thought in themselves) would dare to openly contradict something that everybody else thought it was criminal to call into question.

This was (or at least might have been) the way savage man was tamed; from which it is evident that the first rudiments of morality—unlimbered by skilful politicians [see Glossary] to make men useful to each other as well as tractable—were designed so that ambitious people might govern and reap more benefit from vast numbers of them with greater ease and security. Once this foundation of politics had been laid, man could not have remained uncivilised for long. Even those who only wanted to gratify their appetites, being continually at odds with others of the same sort, could not help seeing that whenever they checked their inclinations (or

merely followed them more cautiously) they often escaped many of the calamities that generally came with the too eager pursuit of pleasure.

For one thing, actions that were done for the good of the whole society brought benefits to them as well as to others, so they were bound to look with favour on those of class **(ii)** who performed them. Also, the more intent they were in seeking their own advantage without regard to others, the more they were hourly convinced that those who stood most in their way were those who were most like themselves.

So it was in the interests of the very worst of them, more than of anyone else, to preach up public-spiritedness, so that they could reap the fruits of the labour and self-denial of others while indulging their own appetites with less disturbance. Consequently, they agreed with the rest to call

- ‘vice’ everything a man does to gratify any of his appetites without regard to the public, if that action shows the faintest prospect of being injurious to any member of the society or of making the man himself less serviceable to others; and to call
- ‘virtue’ every performance by which a man, contrary to the impulse of nature, tries to benefit others or to conquer his own passions out of a rational wish to be good.

It will be objected that no society was ever civilised in any way before the majority had agreed on some worship of an over-ruling power, and thus that the notions of good and evil, and the distinction between virtue and vice, were not the contrivance of politicians but the pure effect of religion. Well, the idolatrous superstitions of all other nations, and their pitiful notions of the supreme being, were incapable of arousing man to virtue and were good for nothing but to awe and trick a rough and unthinking multitude. It is evident from history that •in all considerable societies—however

stupid or ridiculous their accepted notions of the deities they worshipped—*human* nature has always exerted itself in all its branches, and that •every earthly wisdom and moral virtue is something men have excelled in at one time or another in all monarchies and commonwealths that have been at all remarkable for riches and power.

[After a brief paragraph on the Egyptians’ eminence in the arts and sciences and stupidity in religion, he looks further north.] No states or kingdoms have yielded more or greater patterns in all sorts of moral virtues than the Greek and Roman empires, especially the latter; and yet how loose, absurd and ridiculous were their views on sacred matters? Their religion, far from teaching men the conquest of their passions and the way to virtue, seemed rather to be designed to justify their appetites and encourage their vices [see Glossary]. To learn what made them excel in fortitude, courage and magnanimity, we should look at

- the pomp of their triumphs,
- the magnificence of their monuments and arches,
- their trophies, statues, and inscriptions,
- the variety of their military crowns,
- their honours decreed to the dead,
- public encomiums [see Glossary] on the living, and other imaginary rewards they bestowed on men of merit;

and we shall find that what carried so many of them to the utmost pitch of self-denial was their politic use of the most effective means that human pride could be flattered with.

Clearly, then, what started man on checking his appetites and subduing his dearest inclinations was not any heathen religion or other idolatrous superstition, but skilful management by wary politicians. The more closely we search into human nature, the more we shall be convinced that the moral virtues are the political offspring that flattery begot upon pride.

No man, however able and intellectually sharp, is wholly proof against the witchcraft of flattery if artfully performed and suited to his abilities. Children and fools will swallow personal praise; but abler people must be managed with greater care, and the more general the flattery is, the less it is suspected by those it is levelled at. What you say in commendation of a whole town is received with pleasure by all the inhabitants: commend letters in general and every man of learning will be flattered. You may safely praise a man's trade or profession, or the country he was born in, because this lets him screen the joy he feels on his own account under the esteem he pretends to have for others.

When the incomparable Sir Richard Steele, in the usual elegance of his easy style, praises his sublime species and elaborately sets forth the excellence of human nature, one must be charmed with his happy turns of thought and the politeness [see Glossary] of his expressions. But though I have often been moved by the force of his eloquence, I could never avoid being prompted by his artful encomiums to think about the tricks used by women aiming to teach children to be mannerly. When an awkward girl, before she can either speak or go, begins after many entreaties to make the first crude attempts to curtsy, the nurse falls into an ecstasy of praise:

'There's a delicate curtsy! O fine miss! There's a pretty lady! Mama! Miss can make a better curtsy than her sister Molly!'

This is echoed by the maids, while Mama almost hugs the child to pieces; only miss Molly, who being four years older knows how to make a very handsome curtsy, wonders at the perverseness of their judgment; till it is whispered in her ear that it is only to please the baby, and that she is a woman. She is proud of being let into the secret, and rejoices at the superiority of her understanding. . . . Anyone above the

capacity of an infant would regard these extravagant praises as abominable lies, yet experience teaches us that young misses will be brought to make pretty curtsies, and act like women much sooner (and with less trouble) by the help of such gross encomiums than they would without them. It is the same with boys, whom they'll work to persuade that all fine gentlemen do as they are told, and that none but beggar boys are rude or dirty their clothes. [He goes into details.]

The meanest wretch puts an incalculable value on himself, and the highest wish of the ambitious man is to have all the world share his opinion of himself; so that the most insatiable thirst after fame that any hero was ever inspired with was never more than an ungovernable greed to attract the esteem and admiration of others in future ages as well as his own. The great reward for which the most exalted minds have with so much alacrity sacrificed their quiet, health, sensual pleasures and every inch of themselves has never been anything but *the breath of man*, the airy coin of *praise*. Who can forbear laughing. . . .when he compares •the fine things great men have said about that Macedonian madman Alexander with •the goal he proposed to himself for his vast exploits, as can be proved from his own mouth, when the great trouble he took to cross the river Hydaspes forced him to cry out, 'Oh you Athenians! Could you believe what dangers I expose myself to, so as to be praised by you!' So the reward of glory—putting it at its highest, the most that can be said of it—is a superlative felicity [see Glossary] that a man who is conscious of having performed a noble action enjoys in self-love, while he is thinking of the applause he expects from others.

But you may say:

'Besides the noisy toils of war and public bustle of the ambitious, some noble and generous actions are performed in silence. Virtue is its own reward; so

those who are really good have a satisfaction in their awareness of being so, which is all the reward they expect from the most worthy performances. Among the heathens there have been men who, when they did good to others, were so far from coveting thanks and applause that they took great care to be forever concealed from those on whom they bestowed their benefits. So pride has no part in spurring man on to the highest pitch of self-denial.

In answer to this I say that we cannot judge a man's performance unless we are thoroughly acquainted with the principle and motive from which he acts. Although pity is the most gentle and the least mischievous of all our passions, it is as much a frailty of our nature as anger, pride or fear. The weakest minds generally have the greatest share of it, which is why the most compassionate people are women and children. Admittedly, of all our weaknesses pity is the most amiable and has the greatest resemblance to virtue; indeed, without a considerable mixture of it the society could hardly survive; but it can produce evil as well as good, because it is a natural impulse that consults neither the public interest nor our own reason. It has helped to destroy the honour of virgins, and corrupted the integrity of judges; and whoever is driven by it, whatever good he may bring to the society, has nothing to boast of except that he has indulged a passion that *happened* to be beneficial to the public. There is no merit in saving an innocent baby from dropping into the fire:

the action is neither good nor bad, and whatever benefit the infant receives, we only obliged ourselves; for if we had seen it fall and not tried to save it, that would have caused a pain that self-preservation compelled us to prevent. . . .

But men who, without being led by any weakness of their own, can part from what *they* value and perform in silence a worthy action, moved only by their love for goodness; these men, I confess, have more refined notions of virtue than those I have been speaking of. Yet even in these (and the world has never swarmed with them) we may discover considerable symptoms of pride. The humblest man alive must confess that the reward of a virtuous action, namely the satisfaction that it brings, consists in a certain pleasure he gets for himself by contemplating his own worth; and this pleasure together with the cause of it are signs of pride, as certainly as pallor and trembling in face of danger are signs of fear.

If the too-scrupulous reader should at first view condemn these views about the origin of moral virtue, perhaps thinking them offensive to Christianity, I hope he'll forbear his censures when he considers that nothing can make the unsearchable depth of the divine wisdom more conspicuous than the fact that man, whom providence had designed for society, should not only be led by his own frailties and imperfections onto the road to •temporal [see Glossary] happiness, but likewise receive from a seeming necessity of natural causes a little of the knowledge he was later to be made perfect in by the true religion, to his •eternal welfare.

Remarks A through L

Remark A

'while others followed mysteries, to which few folks bind apprentices'

In educating youth for earning a living when they reach maturity, most people look out for some respectable employment, of which there are whole bodies or companies in every large human society. In this way all arts and sciences, as well as trades and handicrafts, are perpetuated in the commonwealth as long as they are found useful, with the young folk who are daily brought into them continually making up for the loss of the old ones who die. But some of these employments are vastly more creditable than others because of how much they vary in the cost of entering into them; so all prudent parents in the choice of them chiefly consult their own abilities and the circumstances they are in. . . .

There are plenty of well brought-up men who have very small incomes but are forced by their reputable callings to make a greater figure than ordinary people with twice their income. If they have children, it often happens that as their poverty makes them incapable of bringing them into creditable occupations, so also their pride makes them unwilling to put them into any of the mean laborious trades; and then—hoping for an alteration in their fortune—they keep putting off the disposing of them, until they come to be of age and are at last brought up to nothing. I shall not determine whether this neglect is more barbarous to the children or prejudicial to the society. At Athens all children were forced to assist their parents if they came to be in need; but Solon made a law that no son should be obliged to relieve his father who had not bred him up to any calling.

Some parents put their sons into good trades that are very suitable to their abilities, but happen to die or fail in business before their children have finished their apprenticeships and been made fit for the business they are to follow; many young men are handsomely provided for and set up for themselves, but are reduced to poverty and cannot maintain themselves by the business they were brought up to; this happens to some for lack of industry [see Glossary] or of sufficient knowledge in their callings, to others from indulging their pleasures, and to a few by misfortunes. Such neglects, mismanagements and misfortunes must happen often in populous places, so many people must be daily flung into the wide world unprovided for, however rich and potent a commonwealth may be and whatever care a government may take to stop this from happening. How are these people to be disposed of? I know that the sea will take off some and so will armies, which the world is seldom without. Those who are honest drudges and not averse to work will become journeymen to the trades they belong to or enter into some other service; such of them as studied and were sent to the university may become schoolmasters, tutors, and a few of them will get into some office or other; but what is to become of the lazy ones who care for no manner of working, and the footloose ones who hate to be confined to anything?

[With a crescendo of mockery, he speaks of these people as becoming actors, cooks, pimps, card-sharpers, pick-pockets, forgers, until:] Others again, who have noticed the credulity of simple women and other foolish people, if they have impudence and a little cunning, either set up as doctors or pretend to tell fortunes. Everyone turning the vices and frailties of others to his own advantage, tries to

pick up a living the easiest and shortest way his talent and abilities will let him.

These are certainly the bane of civil society. But only fools storm at the laxity of the laws that allow them to live, while wise men content themselves with taking care not to be circumvented by them, without quarrelling at what no human prudence can prevent.

Remark B

these were called 'knaves', but bar the name, the grave industrious were the same

This is admittedly a poor compliment to all the trading part of the people. But if the word 'knave' is understood as applying to everyone who is not sincerely honest and does to others what he would dislike having done to himself, I am sure I shall make good the charge. Setting aside the countless tricks by which buyers and sellers outwit one another, that are practised among the fairest of dealers, show me the tradesman who has always revealed the defects of his goods to those who were bidding for them, indeed, who has not sometimes industriously concealed them.

[He describes two traders haggling over the price at which one was to buy sugar from the other, each having information that the other lacked. Trickery all the way, with this summing up:] This is called 'fair dealing'; but neither would have wanted to be treated as he treated the other.

Remark C

the soldiers that were forced to fight, if they survived, got honour by it

So unaccountable is men's desire to be thought well of that though they are dragged into the war against their will (sometimes as criminal punishments), and are compelled

to fight with threats and often blows, they want to be praised for conduct that they would have avoided if it had been in their power to do so; whereas if man's reason was of equal weight with his pride, he could never be pleased with praises that he is conscious of not deserving.

By 'honour', in its proper and genuine signification, we mean nothing but the good opinion of others, which is counted more or less substantial depending on how much noise or bustle is made in displaying it; and when we say the sovereign is the fountain of honour, it means that he has the power to stamp on anyone he pleases a mark that will be as good currency as his coin, and will procure for the owner the good opinion of everybody, whether he deserves it or not. The stamping may be done by titles or ceremonies or both.

The reverse of honour is dishonour, or ignominy, which consists in the bad opinion and contempt of others; and as honour is counted a reward for good actions, so dishonour is taken to be a punishment for bad ones; and how much a person is degraded by his dishonour depends on how publicly or how heinously the contempt of others is shown. This ignominy is likewise called 'shame', from the effect it produces; for though the good and evil of honour and dishonour are imaginary, shame is real.

·THE NATURE OF SHAME·

It is a passion that has its own symptoms, overrules our reason, and requires as much labour and self-denial to be subdued as any of the other passions; and since many of the most important actions of life are regulated according to the influence this passion has on us, a thorough understanding of it must help to illustrate the world's notions of honour and ignominy. I shall therefore describe it in full.

I think shame may be defined as **a sorrowful reflection on our own unworthiness, coming from a realisation that others**

deservedly despise us or would do so if they knew all. The only objections of weight that can be raised against this definition are **(a)** that innocent virgins are often ashamed and blush when they are guilty of no crime and can give no reason for this frailty; and **(b)** that men are often ashamed for others for (or with whom) they have neither friendship nor affinity. To answer **(a)**, I would have it first considered that the modesty of women is a result of custom and education, by which all unfashionable denudations and filthy expressions are made frightful and abominable to them; and that nevertheless the most virtuous young woman alive will often unwillingly have thoughts and confused ideas of things arise in her imagination that she would not reveal to some people for a thousand worlds. When obscene words are spoken in the presence of an inexperienced virgin, she is afraid that someone will think she understands what they mean, and consequently understands this and that and several things that she wishes to be thought ignorant of. Reflecting on this, and on thoughts that are forming to her disadvantage, brings on her the passion we call ‘shame’.

That we are often ashamed and blush for others—which was **(b)** the second objection—is merely the fact that sometimes we make the case of others too nearly our own, as when we shriek at seeing others in danger. When we reflect too earnestly on the effect such a blameworthy action would produce in us if it was ours, our spirits and consequently our blood are moved in the way they would be if the action *was* our own, and so the same symptoms appear.

Raw, ignorant, ill-bred people show shame when in the presence of their betters, seemingly without a cause. But this shame always comes from a consciousness of their weakness and inabilities; and the most modest man—however virtuous, knowing, and accomplished he might be—has never been ashamed without some guilt or something he is shy about.

Those whose social awkwardness and lack of education make them unreasonably subject to this passion, overcome by it at every turn, we call ‘bashful’; and those who out of disrespect to others and a false opinion of their own sufficiency have learned not to be affected with it when they should be are called ‘impudent’ or ‘shameless’.

What strange contradictions man is made of! The reverse of **a** shame is **b** pride (see Remark M), yet nobody can be touched with the former who has never felt the latter; for the source of **a** our extraordinary concern with what others think of us is simply **b** the vast esteem we have for ourselves.

[Mandeville now describes some of the physical upshots of bouts of shame or of pride, as evidence that ‘these two passions are realities in our frame and not imaginary qualities’. Then his focus switches.]

It is incredible how necessary an ingredient shame is to make us sociable; it is a frailty in our nature; whenever people have it they submit to it with regret and would prevent it if they could; yet the happiness of human converse depends on it, and no society could be polished if mankind in general were not subject to it. Because the sense of shame is troublesome, one might expect that a man trying to avoid this uneasiness would mainly conquer his shame by time he was an adult; but this would be detrimental to the society, and therefore from his infancy throughout his upbringing we try to *increase* his sense of shame. The only remedy prescribed is a strict observance of certain rules to avoid things that might bring shame on him. But as for ridding or curing him of it—the politician [see Glossary] would rather take away his life!

The rules I speak of consist in a dextrous management of ourselves, a stifling of our appetites, and hiding the real sentiments of our hearts before others. Those who are not instructed in these rules long before they come to years of

maturity, seldom make any progress in them afterwards. To acquire and bring to perfection the accomplishment I hint at, nothing helps more than pride and good sense. Our greed for the esteem of others, and our raptures at the thought of being liked and perhaps admired, are more than adequate for the conquest of the strongest passions, and consequently keep us at a great distance from words or actions that can bring shame on us. The passions we chiefly ought to hide for the happiness and embellishment of our society are **lust**, **pride** and **selfishness**; and accordingly the word ‘modesty’ has three different meanings that vary with the passions modesty conceals. I shall start discussing the first now, and will reach the other two on page 24.

·SEXUAL MODESTY·

The branch of modesty that aims at a general claim to chastity consists in a sincere and painful endeavour to stifle and conceal before others the inclination nature has given us to propagate our species. The lessons of it, like those of grammar, are taught to us long before we have occasion for them or understand their usefulness; so that children are often ashamed, and blush out of modesty, before the relevant impulse of nature makes any impression on them. A modestly educated girl may, before she is two years old, begin to observe how carefully the women around her cover themselves in the presence of men; and because the same caution is inculcated into her by precept and example, by the age of six she’ll probably be ashamed of showing her leg, without knowing any reason why such an act is blameable or what the tendency of it is.

To be modest, we ought in the first place to avoid all *unfashionable* barings of the body. [He goes into some detail—e.g. a country’s rules may allow a woman to display her breasts but not to show her ankles.] In the second

place, our language must be chaste—not only free from obscenities but *remote* from them. Nothing that relates *however distantly* to the multiplication of our species is to be spoken of. Thirdly, all postures and motions that can in any way sully the imagination, i.e. put us in mind of obscenities (as I have called them), are to be avoided with great caution.

Moreover, a young woman who wants to be thought well-bred ought to be guarded in all her behaviour in the presence of men, and never be known to receive favours from them—much less to bestow favours on them—unless she can plead in her defence that the man is very old, a near relative, or of a much higher or much lower rank than she has. A young lady of refined upbringing keeps a strict guard over her looks as well as her actions, and we may read in her eyes an awareness that she has a treasure which is not out of danger of being lost but which she is resolved not to part with on any terms.

This strict reservedness is to be complied with by all young women, especially virgins, if they value the esteem of the polite and knowing world. Men may take greater liberty because in them the *sexual* appetite is more violent and ungovernable. If equal harshness of discipline been imposed on both *sexes*, neither could have made the first advances, and propagation must have stood still among all the fashionable people. This was far from the politician’s aim, so it was advisable to ease and indulge the sex that suffered most by the severity, and make the rules relax their rigour where the passion was the strongest and the burden of strict restraint would have been the most intolerable.

For this reason, the man is allowed openly to profess the veneration and great esteem he has for women, and show more mirth and gaiety in their company than he usually does out of it. He may not only be obliging and serviceable to them on all occasions, but it is reckoned his duty to protect

and defend them. He may praise their good qualities and extol their merit with as many exaggerations as he can think of and are consistent with good sense. He may talk of love, he may sigh and complain of the rigours of the fair ·sex·, and what his tongue must not utter he has the privilege to speak with his eyes, and in *that* language to say what he pleases as long as it is done with decency. [He explains that it is thought ‘unmannerly’ to look long and hard at a woman because this ‘makes her uneasy’ through the fear ‘that she may be seen through’.] This staring impudence flings an inexperienced woman into panic fears; it keeps her on a perpetual rack that commands her to reveal her secret wishes and seems designed to extort from her the grand truth which modesty bids her to deny.

The difference of modesty between men and women is generally ascribed to nature, but in fact it is entirely a result of early instruction:

- Miss is scarcely three years old when she is told every day to hide her leg, and rebuked in good earnest if she shows it; while
- little Master at the same age is told to take up his coats and piss like a man.

Shame and education contain the seeds of all politeness [see Glossary], and he that has neither and offers to speak the truth of his heart is the most contemptible creature on earth even if he committed no other fault. If a man told a woman that he could like nobody so well to propagate his species upon as herself, and that he had a violent desire at that moment to go about it and accordingly offered to lay hold of her for that purpose, the woman would run away, and he would be called a brute and never be admitted into any civil company. Whereas a man with some sense of shame would conquer the strongest passion rather than be so served. But a man need not conquer his passions; he needs only to

conceal them. Virtue tells us to subdue our appetites, but good breeding only requires us to hide them. [He then talks about the process through which a ‘fashionable gentleman’ wins a wife, the absolutely free sexual conduct they indulge in after they are married, and the fact that on the next day neither they nor anyone else even hints at any such thing’s having taken place. He explains:] My point is to demonstrate that by being well bred we suffer no abridgement in our sensual pleasures, but only labour for our mutual happiness and assist each other in the luxurious enjoyment of all worldly comforts. . . . A man who gratifies his appetites in the way the custom of his country allows has no censure to fear. . . . He can safely laugh at the wise men who would reprove him; all the women and more than nine in ten of the men are on his side. . . .

Impudence is a vice, but it does not follow that modesty is a virtue; it is built on shame—a passion in our nature—and may be good or bad according to the actions performed from that motive. Shame may hinder a prostitute from yielding to a man when there are others present, and the same shame may cause a bashful good-natured creature who has been overcome by frailty to do away with her infant. Passions may *happen* to do good, but there can be no merit except in the conquest of them.

If there was virtue in modesty, it would have the same force in the dark as in the light, which it goes not. Men of pleasure know this very well. They never trouble their heads about a woman’s virtue, as long as they can conquer her modesty; so seducers don’t make their attacks at noon, but cut their trenches at night.

·INFANTICIDE CAUSED BY MODESTY·

People of substance can sin without being exposed for their stolen pleasure; but servants and the poorer sort of women

seldom have any chance of concealing a big belly or at least the consequences of it. An unfortunate girl of good parentage may be left destitute, and know no way of earning a living except by becoming a nurse or chambermaid; she may be diligent, faithful and obliging, have abundance of modesty, and may even be religious; she may resist temptations and preserve her chastity for years together, yet at last comes to an unhappy moment when she gives up her honour to a powerful deceiver who then neglects her. If she has a child, her sorrows are unspeakable and she can't be reconciled with the wretchedness of her condition; the fear of shame attacks her so vigorously that every thought distracts her. All the family she lives in have a great opinion of her virtue, and her last mistress took her for a saint. How will her enemies—who envied her character—rejoice! How will her relations detest her! The more modest she is now, and the more violently the dread of coming to shame hurries her away, the more wicked and cruel will be her resolutions against herself or against what she bears.

It is commonly thought that anyone who can destroy her child, her own flesh and blood, must have a vast stock of barbarity and be a savage monster unlike other women; but this is the thought of someone who does not understand the force of passions. If the woman who murders her bastard in the most execrable manner is married afterwards, she may take care of, cherish and feel all the tenderness for her infant [infants?] that the fondest mother can be capable of.

All mothers naturally love their children; but because this is a passion and therefore centres in self-love, it can be subdued by any passion catering more strongly to that same self-love, which if nothing had intervened would have bid her fondle her offspring. Common whores, whom all the world knows to be whores, hardly ever destroy their children; even those who assist in robberies and murders are seldom

guilty of this crime. It is not because they are less cruel or more virtuous, but because they have lost their modesty to a greater degree, and the fear of shame makes hardly any impression on them.

Our love for what never was within reach of our senses is poor and inconsiderable, and therefore women have no natural love for the child they are bearing. Their affection begins after the birth; what they feel before is the result of reason, education, and thoughts of duty. [The real affection, he goes on to say, expresses itself in ferocious efforts to protect the child,] prompted by a natural inclination, with no consideration of the injury or benefit the society receives from it. Even the offspring is irreparably ruined by the excessive fondness of parents; for two or three years infants may be the better for this indulgent care of mothers, but later on if it is not moderated it may totally spoil them, and has brought many to the gallows.

·MODESTY AS 'GOOD BREEDING'·

If you think I have spent too long on the branch of modesty by the help of which we try to appear chaste [the account began on page 22], I shall make amends by how briefly I shall treat of the remaining part, by which we would make others believe that we have more esteem for them than for ourselves, and that our own interests don't concern us in the slightest. This laudable quality is commonly known as 'manners' and 'good breeding', and consists in a fashionable habit—acquired by precept and example—of **flattering the pride and selfishness of others while skillfully concealing our own**. This applies only to **a** our dealings with our equals and superiors, and only **b** while we are in peace and amity with them; for our affability must never interfere **b** with the rules of honour or with **a** the homage that is due to us from servants and others who depend on us.

With this caution, I believe that the definition squares with everything that can be alleged as showing either good breeding or bad manners. . . . A man who asks for considerable favours from someone who is a stranger to him is called 'impudent', because he openly shows his own selfishness without having any regard to the other person's. For the same reason a man ought to speak of his wife and children and everything dear to him as sparingly as possible, and hardly ever of himself. A well-bred man may be greedy for praise and the esteem of others, but to be praised to his face offends his modesty. Here is why. All human creatures in their unpolished state get extraordinary pleasure from hearing themselves praised; we are all conscious of this, and therefore when we see a man openly feast on this delight in which we have no share, it arouses our selfishness and immediately we begin to envy and hate him. So the well-bred man conceals his joy and utterly denies that he feels any, avoiding the envy and hatred that otherwise he would have justly to fear. When from our childhood we see how those who calmly hear their own praises are ridiculed, we may try so strenuously to avoid that pleasure that in the course of time we become uneasy at the ·mere· *approach* of it; but this is not following nature but warping it by education and custom; for if mankind in general took no delight in being praised, there could be no modesty in refusing to hear it.

[He writes at some length about how 'the man of manners' will pick the worst thing from the dish, leaving he rest to others, implying that he regards them as superior to himself. He says that 'it is *custom* that makes this modish deceit familiar to us, without our being shocked at the absurdity of it', elaborates on the absurdity, and then:] Yet it is certain that this behaviour makes us more tolerable to one another than we could be otherwise.

It is very advantageous to our knowledge of ourselves to

distinguish accurately between •good qualities and •virtues. The bond of society demands from everyone a certain regard for others, including the highest in the presence of the lowest, even in an empire. But when we are by ourselves, out of sight and sound of any company, the words 'modesty' and 'impudence' lose their meaning. A person who is alone may be wicked but he cannot be immodest, and a thought cannot be impudent if it is not communicated to anyone else. A man of exalted pride may hide it so well that nobody can discover that he has any, and yet get more satisfaction from that passion than someone else who indulges himself in declaring it before all the world. Good manners have nothing to do with virtue or religion; instead of extinguishing the passions, they inflame them. The man of sense and education never exults more in his pride than when he hides it with the greatest dexterity; and in feasting on the applause that he is sure all good judges will pay to his behaviour, he enjoys a pleasure unknown to the short-sighted, surly alderman who shows his haughtiness glaringly in his face, doffs his hat to nobody, and hardly deigns to speak to an inferior.

A man can carefully avoid everything that the world thinks to be the result of pride, without mortifying himself or making the least conquest of his passion. He may be only sacrificing •the insipid outward part of his pride, which only silly ignorant people take delight in, to •that inner part that men of the highest spirit and most exalted genius feed on with so much ecstasy—in silence.

Remark D

'there was not a bee but would get more, I won't say, than he should; but than' etc.

Our vast esteem for ourselves and the small value we have for others make us unfair judges in our own cases. Few men

can be persuaded that those they sell to are paying too much, however great their profits are, while they'll grudge almost any profit, however trivial, to those they buy from. Since the smallness of the seller's advantage is the greatest incentive to the buyer, tradesmen are generally forced to tell lies in their own defence, and invent a thousand improbable stories, rather than reveal what they really get by their commodities.

Some old hands who claim to have more honesty than their neighbours—but probably only have more pride—are accustomed to saying little to their customers and refusing to sell at a lower price than what they ask at first. But these are commonly cunning foxes who know that those who have money often get more by being surly than others get by being obliging. The vulgar [see Glossary] think they can find more *sincerity* in the sour looks of a grave old fellow than in the submissive air and inviting obligingness of a young beginner. But this is a great mistake; and if they are mercers, drapers or others that have many sorts of the same commodity, you may soon be satisfied; look at their goods and you'll find each of them—the old and the young—has his private mark, which is a certain sign that both are equally careful in concealing the cost to them of what they sell.

Remark E

'as your gamesters do, who, though at fair play, ne'er will own before the losers what they've won'

This being a well known general practice, there must be something in the human make-up that causes it. But looking for it will seem very trivial to many, so I desire the reader to skip this Remark unless he is in perfect good humour and has nothing at all to do.

That gamesters generally try to conceal their gains before the losers seems to me to come from a mixture of gratitude,

pity, and self-preservation. [Mandeville traces these out in rather wearying detail, helping his prediction that the enquiry 'will seem very trivial'. His account may not fit gaming where special motivations are at work, he says, but he claims that it covers 'ordinary play for money in which men try to get and risk losing what they value', and adds a methodological comment that is more interesting than the rest of this Remark.] Even here I know it will be objected by many that though they have been guilty of concealing their gains they never observed 'in themselves' the passions that I allege as the causes of that frailty. That is not surprising, because few men take the time, and even fewer know how, to examine themselves as they should do. It is with the passions in men as it is with colours in cloth: it is easy to know a red, a green, a blue, a yellow, a black etc. in as many different places; but only an artist can unravel all the various colours and their proportions that make up the compound of a well-mixed cloth. Similarly, the passions can be discovered by everybody while they are distinct and a single one takes over the whole man; but it is very difficult to trace every motive of actions that result from a mixture of passions.

Remark F

'and virtue, who from politics had learned a thousand cunning tricks, was, by their happy influence, made friends with vice'

Virtue can be said to make friends with vice when industrious good people—ones who maintain their families and bring up their children handsomely, pay taxes, and are in various ways useful members of the society—make their living by something that chiefly depends on or is very much influenced by the vices of others, without themselves being involved in them in any way except through trade, as a druggist may be in poisoning or a sword-maker in bloodshed.

Thus the merchant who sends corn or cloth into foreign parts to purchase wines and brandies

- encourages the growth or productivity of his own country,
- is a benefactor to navigation,
- increases the customs, and
- is many ways beneficial to the public;

but it can't be denied but that his greatest dependence is on lavishness and drunkenness. If no-one drank wine who didn't *need* it, and no-one drank more than was good for his health, the multitude of wine-merchants, vintners, coopers etc. who make such a considerable show in this flourishing city of London would be in a miserable condition. The same may be said not only of card- and dice-makers, who are the immediate servants of a legion of vices, but also of mercers, upholsterers, tailors and many others who would be starved in half a year's time if pride and luxury were banished from the nation.

Remark G

'The worst of all the multitude did something for the common good'

This will strike many as a strange paradox; I shall be asked what benefit the public receives from thieves and house-breakers. They are, I agree, very pernicious to human society, and every government should take all imaginable care to destroy them; but if all people were strictly honest and nobody wanted to interfere with pry into anything that was not his own, half the smiths of the nation would be unemployed; and we would not have all the fine workmanship (which now serves for ornament as well as defence) that would not have been thought of except to defend us against the efforts of pilferers and robbers.

If you think this far-fetched, and my assertion still seems a paradox, please look at the *consumption* of things, and you'll find that the laziest and most inactive, the profligate and most mischievous, are all forced to do something for the common good, and while their mouths are not sewed up and they continue to wear and otherwise destroy what the industrious are daily employed in making, fetching and procuring, they are obliged to help maintain the poor and the public charges, though it goes against their grain to do so. The labour of millions would soon be at an end if there were not other millions, as I say in the Fable, 'employed / to see their handiworks destroyed'. But men are not to be judged by the consequences of their actions, but by the facts themselves and the motives they acted from. Suppose that an ill-natured miser, who is extremely wealthy but spends only fifty pounds a year though he has no relation to inherit his wealth, is robbed of a thousand guineas; it is certain that as soon as this money comes to circulate, the nation will be the better for the robbery, and receive the same benefit—and as *real* a benefit—from it as if an archbishop had left a thousand guineas to the public; yet justice and the peace of the society require that those who robbed the miser should be hanged, even if there were half a dozen of them concerned.

Thieves and pick-pockets steal for a livelihood. Either what they can honestly earn is not sufficient to support them, or they have an aversion to steady work—they want to gratify their senses, have victuals, strong drink, lewd women, and to be idle when they please. The victualler who entertains them and takes their money, knowing how they come by it, is nearly as great a villain as his guests. . . . And the wealthy brewer who leaves all the management to his servants knows nothing of the matter, but keeps his coach, treats his friends, and enjoys his pleasure with ease and a good conscience. He gets an estate, builds houses, and brings his children up in

affluence, without ever thinking about the labour wretches perform, the shifts fools make, and the tricks knaves play to get the commodity by the vast sale of which he amasses his great riches.

A highwayman after making a considerable haul gives a poor common harlot whom he fancies ten pounds to new-rig herself from top to toe; is any mercer so conscientious that he will refuse to sell her a thread satin while knowing who she was? She must have shoes, stockings and gloves, and those who sell these must all get something by her; and a hundred different tradesmen dependent on those she spent her money with may touch part of it before a month is over. In the meantime the generous gentleman, his money being nearly all spent, ventured again on the highway; but after committing a robbery near Highgate he was taken with one of his accomplices; at their trial both were condemned, and suffered the law. The money due on their conviction went to three country fellows on whom it was admirably well bestowed. [Details are given of the merits, and the extreme financial difficulties, of the three. Then:] They received more than 80 pounds each, which extricated each of them from the difficulties he laboured under, and made them in their opinion the happiest people in the world.

·THE EVILS OF GIN·

Nothing is more destructive of the health or the vigilance and industry of the poor than *gin*, the infamous liquor whose name—derived from ‘junipera’ in Dutch—has by frequent use and the laconic spirit of the nation shrunk from middling length to a monosyllable. Intoxicating gin, that charms the inactive, the desperate and the crazy of either sex, and makes the starving sot behold his rags and nakedness with dull indolence, or ridicule both in senseless laughter and more insipid jests. It is a fiery lake that sets the brain in flame,

burns up the entrails, and scorches every part within; and at the same time a Lethe of oblivion in which the immersed wretch drowns his most pinching cares and all anxious reflection on brats that cry for food, hard winters, frosts, and a horrid empty home.

In hot and desiccated temperaments it makes men quarrelsome, renders them brutes and savages, sets them fighting for nothing, and has often been the cause of murder. It has broken and destroyed the strongest constitutions, thrown them into wasting diseases, and been the fatal and immediate cause of apoplexies, frenzies and sudden death. These latter troubles do not happen often, and might be overlooked and connived at [see Glossary], but this cannot be said of the many diseases that are daily and hourly produced by gin, such as loss of appetite, fevers, black and yellow jaundice, convulsions, stone and gravel and dropsies.

Among the dotting admirers of this liquid poison, many of the meanest rank, from a sincere affection for the stuff, become dealers in it, and delight in helping others to what they love themselves; . . . but as these starvelings commonly drink more than their gains, selling gin does not mend the wretchedness of condition that they laboured under while they were only buyers. On the outskirts of the town and in all places of the vilest resort, gin is sold in some part of almost every house—often in the cellar, sometimes in the garret. The small-scale traders in this Stygian comfort are supplied by others in somewhat higher station, who keep so-called ‘brandy shops’ and are as little to be envied as the end-of-the-line retailers. Among the middling people I don’t know a more miserable way to earn a living than keeping a brandy shop. For a man to do well at that, he must **(i)** be watchful and suspicious as well as bold and resolute, so as not to be imposed on by cheats and sharpers or out-bullied by the oaths and imprecations of hackney-coachmen and

foot-soldiers; and **(ii)** be handy with gross jokes and loud laughter, have all the winning ways to allure customers and draw out their money, and be well versed in the low jests the mob use to ridicule prudence and frugality. He must be affable and obsequious to the most despicable people; always ready to help a porter down with his load, shake hands with a basket-woman, pull off his hat to an oyster-wench, and be familiar with a beggar; he must be able to endure with patience and good humour the filthy actions and viler language of nasty drabs and the lewdest rakehells, and endure, without a frown or the least aversion, all the stench and squalor, noise and impertinence that the utmost indigence, laziness and drunkenness, can produce in the most shameless and abandoned vulgar.

The vast number of the shops I speak of throughout the city and suburbs are astonishing evidence of the many seducers who in a lawful occupation are accessories to the introduction and increase of all the sloth, sottishness, need and misery that the abuse of strong waters is the immediate cause of. Their activities lift above the middling level perhaps a dozen men who deal in the same commodity by wholesale. As for the retailers: though qualified in the ways I have said they need to be, far more than a dozen of them are bankrupted and ruined because they do not abstain from the Circean cup they hold out to others, and the more fortunate are obliged throughout their whole lifetime to take the uncommon pains, endure the hardships, and swallow all the ungrateful and shocking things I named, for little or nothing beyond a bare sustenance and their daily bread.

·THE GOOD ARISING FROM ALCOHOLIC SPIRITS·

The short-sighted vulgar can seldom see further than one link along the chain of causes; but those who *can* enlarge their view, and are willing to take time to look further along

the chain, may see in a hundred places good spring up and sprout from evil as naturally as chickens do from eggs. The money from the duties on malt is a considerable part of the national revenue; if no spirits were distilled from it, the public treasure would suffer enormously. But if we want to set in a true light the many advantages—the large catalogue of solid blessings—that arise from the evil I have been discussing, we must consider

- the rents received,
- the ground tilled,
- the tools made,
- the animals used, and above all
- the multitude of poor maintained by their labour in husbandry, malting, transport and distillation,

before we can have the malt product called ‘low wine’, which is merely the beginning from which the various spirits are afterwards to be made.

Besides this, a sharp-sighted good-humoured man might pick up plenty of good from the rubbish I have flung away as evil. He would tell me •that whatever sloth and sottishness might be caused by the abuse of malt spirit, the moderate use of it was of inestimable benefit to the poor, who could not afford cordials at higher prices; •that it was a universal comfort in cold and weariness and also in most of the other troubles that afflict the needy, and for the most destitute had often stood in for meat, drink, clothes and lodging; and •that the dull indolence in the most wretched condition caused by those draughts that I complained of was a blessing to thousands, because the happiest are those who feel the least pain. As for diseases, he would say that just as it caused some, so it cured others; that if the excess in those liquors had been sudden death to a few, the habit of drinking them daily prolonged the lives of many. ·He would also say· that the losses we suffered from the insignificant quarrels

alcohol created at home were thoroughly outweighed by the advantage we received from it abroad, by upholding the courage of soldiers and animating the sailors to the combat; and that in the two last wars every considerable victory was obtained with help from alcohol.

To the dismal account I have given of what the retailers are forced to submit to, he would answer that not many people acquired more than middling riches in *any* trade, and that what I had regarded as so offensive and intolerable in that trade was trifling to those who were used to it; that what seemed irksome and calamitous to some was delightful and often ravishing to others, depending on differences in men's circumstances and upbringing. He would remind me that the profit of an employment always makes amends for the toil and labour that belonged to it, and that *dulcis odor lucri e re qualibet* [Juvenal; 'The smell of gain is good, whatever its source'].

If I should ever urge to him that to have a few great and eminent distillers was a poor equivalent for the vile means, the certain want, and lasting misery of so many thousand wretches as were needed to raise them to their level of affluence, he would answer that I could be no judge of this because I don't know what vast benefit they might afterwards bring to the commonwealth. Perhaps, would he say, the man made wealthy in this way will exert himself in the commission of the peace or other station, with vigilance and zeal against the dissolute and disaffected, and be as industrious in spreading loyalty and the reformation of manners throughout every cranny of the wide populous town as he once was in filling it with spirits; until at last he becomes the scourge of whores, vagabonds and beggars, the terror of rioters and discontented rabbles, and a constant plague to Sabbath-breaking butchers. Here my good-humoured antagonist would exult and triumph over me, especially if he could point me to an actual example. 'What an uncommon

blessing this man is to his country! he would cry, 'how shining and illustrious his virtue!'

To justify his exclamation he would demonstrate to me that it was impossible to give a fuller evidence of self-denial in a grateful mind than to see him, at the expense of his quiet and hazard of his life and limbs, always harassing and even persecuting the very class of men to whom he owes his fortune, purely because of his aversion to idleness and his great concern for religion and the public welfare.

Remark H

'parties directly opposite, assist each other, as it were for spite'

Nothing did more to forward the Reformation than the sloth and stupidity of the Roman clergy, yet that same Reformation has roused them from their earlier laziness and ignorance; and the followers of Luther, Calvin and others may be said to have reformed not only those who came to their side but likewise those who remained their greatest opposers. The clergy of England, by being severe on the schismatics and scolding them for their lack of learning, have raised such formidable enemies for themselves as are not easily answered; and the dissenters, by prying into the lives of their powerful antagonists and diligently watching all their actions, make the clergy of the established church more wary of giving offence than they would be if they had no malicious supervisors to fear. It is because there are so many Protestants in France. . . .that it has a less dissolute and more learned clergy than any other Roman Catholic country. The clergy of the Roman church are nowhere more sovereign than in Italy, and therefore nowhere more debauched; nor anywhere more ignorant than they are in Spain, because their doctrine is nowhere less opposed.

Who would imagine that virtuous women might unknowingly be instrumental in promoting the advantage of prostitutes? or (the greater paradox) that incontinence [here = 'sexual promiscuity'] might be made serviceable to the preservation of chastity? Yet nothing is more true. A vicious [see Glossary] young fellow, after an hour or two at church, a ball or any other assembly where there are many handsome women dressed to the best advantage, will have his imagination more fired than if he had been voting at Guildhall or walking in the country among a flock of sheep. The result is that he'll try to satisfy the appetite that is raised in him; and it is very natural to think that when he finds honest women obstinate and uncompliant, he'll hasten to others who are more willing. Who would even have guessed that this is the fault of the virtuous women? They have no thoughts of men in dressing themselves, poor souls, and try only to appear clean and decent.

•THE BENEFITS OF PROSTITUTION•

I am far from encouraging vice, and think it would be a wonderful thing for a state if the sin of uncleanness could be utterly banished from it. But I am afraid this is impossible: the passions of some people are too violent to be curbed by any law or precept, and it is wisdom in all governments to put up with lesser inconveniences to prevent greater. If courtesans and strumpets were to be prosecuted with as much rigour as some silly people want, what locks or bars would be sufficient to preserve the honour of our wives and daughters? . . . Where several thousand sailors arrive at once, as often happens in Amsterdam—men who have seen none but their own sex for many months—how could honest women walk the streets unmolested if there were no harlots to be had at reasonable prices? That is why the wise rulers of that well-ordered city allow there to be houses where women

are hired as publicly as horses at a livery-stable. There is a great deal of prudence and economy to be seen in this toleration, so a short account should be given.

(i) The houses I speak of are allowed only in the most slovenly and unpolished part of the town, where seamen and strangers of no repute chiefly lodge and resort. The street where most of them stand is regarded as scandalous, and its infamy is extended to all the neighbourhood around it. **(ii)** They are only places to meet and bargain in, to make appointments for interviews of greater secrecy, and no sort of lewdness is ever allowed to be transacted in them. Apart from the ill manners and noise of the company that frequent them, you'll meet with no more indecency in those houses, and generally less lasciviousness there, than are to be seen at a playhouse in England. **(iii)** The female traders who come to these evening exchanges are always the scum of the people, and generally such as in the day-time carry fruit and other eatables about in wheelbarrows. The clothes they appear in at night are very different from their ordinary ones; but they are commonly so ridiculously gay that they look more like the Roman dresses of strolling actresses than like gentlewomen's clothes; if you add in the awkwardness, the hard hands and coarse breeding of the damsels who wear them, there is no great reason to fear that many of the better sort of people will be tempted by them.

The music in these temples of Venus is performed by organs, not out of respect to the deity that is worshipped in them but because of •the frugality of the owners, whose business it is to procure as much sound for as little money as they can, and •the policy of the government, who try to discourage the breed of pipers and scrapers. All sea-faring men, especially the Dutch, are like the sea in being much given to loudness and roaring, and the noise of half a dozen of them, when they call themselves 'merry', is sufficient to

drown a dozen flutes or violins; whereas with one pair of organs the owners can make the whole house ring, this being done by one scurvy musician wo cannot cost them much. Despite the good rules and strict discipline that are observed in these markets of love, the police officers are always vexing, fining and (on the least complaint) removing their miserable keepers; a policy that has two great uses. **(i)** It gives a large number of officers, who are indispensably useful to the magistrates on many occasions, a chance •to squeeze a living out of the immoderate gains coming from the worst of employments, and at the same time •punish those necessary profligates, the pimps and madams, whom they abominate but do not wish wholly to destroy. **(ii)** For several reasons it might be dangerous to let the multitude into the secret that those houses and the trade that is pursued in them are connived [see Glossary] at by the authorities; so the magistrates' policing practice keeps them in the good opinion of the weaker sort of people, who imagine that the government is always trying but failing to suppress what it actually tolerates, whereas if they *wanted* to rout them out, their power in the administration of justice is so sovereign and extensive, and they know so well how to use it, that they could send them all packing in a week, indeed in one night.

In Italy the toleration of strumpets is even more barefaced, as is evident from their public brothels. [He gives further details of the openness.] The reason why so many good politicians tolerate lewd houses is not their irreligion but their desire to prevent a worse evil, an impurity of a more execrable kind, and to provide for the safety of women of honour. About 250 years ago, says Monsieur de St. Didier, Venice needed courtesans and had to procure a great number from foreign parts. Doglioni, who wrote the memorable *Affairs of Venice*, highly extols the wisdom of the republic in this point, which secured the chastity of women of honour

daily exposed to public violences, because the churches and consecrated places are not a sufficient asylum for their chastity.

Remark I

'the root of evil, avarice, that damned ill-natured baneful vice, was slave to prodigality'

In attaching so many odious epithets to the word 'avarice', I have been going along with the vogue of mankind, who generally bestow more ill language on this than on any other vice. This is not undeserved, for there is hardly a mischief [see Glossary] to be named that it has not produced at one time or another. But the real reason why everybody exclaims so much against avarice is that almost everybody suffers by it; for the more the money is hoarded up by some people the scarcer it must become among the rest; so when men rail very much at misers there is generally self-interest at bottom.

There is no living without money; so those who are not provided with any, and have nobody to give them any, are obliged to do some service to the society before they can get it. But everyone overrates his labour as he overrates himself, so that most people who need money for immediate consumption imagine that they do more for it than it is worth. Men can't help looking at the necessities of life as their due, whether they work or not, because they find that nature bids them eat whenever they are hungry, without inquiring whether they have victuals or not. For this reason, everybody tries to get what he wants with as much ease as he can; and therefore when men find that it is harder or easier for them to get money depending on the tenacity of those they hope to get it from, they are naturally angry at covetousness in general. . . .

Although avarice is the occasion of so many evils, it is necessary to the society to glean and gather what has been dropped and scattered by the contrary vice. If it were not for avarice, spendthrifts would soon lack materials; and if none acquired and laid up faster than they spent, very few could spend faster than they acquired. That avarice is a slave to prodigality [see Glossary] is evident from how many misers we see toil and labour, pinching and starving themselves to enrich a lavish heir. Though these two vices appear opposite, they often assist each other. Florio is an extravagant young blade, the only son of a very rich father, who wants to live high, keep horses and dogs, and throw his money about as he sees some of his companions do; but the stingy old man will part with no money, and hardly allows him necessities. Florio would have borrowed money on his own credit long ago, but no prudent man would lend him any because all would be lost if he died before his father. At last he meets with the greedy Cornaro, who lends him money at 30%, and now Florio thinks himself happy, and spends a thousand a year. Where would Cornaro ever have got such a prodigious interest if it weren't for such a fool as Florio, who will give such a great price for money to fling it away? And how would Florio get it to spend if he had not encountered such a greedy usurer as Cornaro, whose excessive greed makes him overlook the great risk he runs in venturing such great sums on the life of a wild debauchee?

Avarice is the reverse of profuseness only when it signifies the sordid love of money and narrowness of soul that hinders misers from parting with what they have, and makes them covet it only to hoard up. There is also a sort of avarice that consists in a greedy desire for riches in order to spend them, and this often meets with prodigality in the same persons, as is evident in most courtiers and great officers, both civil and military. . . . Their gallantry is displayed with the greatest

profusion, while the. . .the many frauds and impositions they are guilty of reveal the utmost avarice. This mixture of contrary vices exactly fits the character of Catiline, who was said to be *appetens alieni* and *sui profusus*—greedy after the goods of others and lavish with his own.

Remark K

'that noble sin'

The prodigality [see Glossary] that I call a 'noble sin' is not •the one that has avarice for its companion, and makes men unreasonably profuse in spending some of what they unjustly extort from others, but •the agreeable good-natured vice that makes the chimney smoke and all the tradesmen smile. I mean the *unmixed* prodigality of heedless and pleasure-loving men who have grown up amid wealth, regard the thought of mere *money* as low and abhorrent, and freely spend only what others took pains to scrape together. These men indulge their inclinations at their own expense, have the continual satisfaction of bartering old gold for new pleasures, and from the excessive largeness of a diffusive soul are made guilty of despising too much what most people over-value.

When I treat this vice with as much tenderness and good manners as I do, I have at heart the same thing that made me give so many ill names to the reverse of it, namely the interest of the public; for as the avaricious man does no good to himself and is injurious to everyone else except his heir, so the prodigal man is a blessing to the whole society and injures nobody but himself. It is true that just as most avaricious people are knaves, so all prodigal people are fools; yet they are delicious morsels for the public to feast on. . . . If it were not for prodigality, nothing could reimburse us for the rapine [see Glossary] and extortion of avarice in power. After the death of a covetous statesman who spent his life

fattening himself with the spoils of the nation, and had heaped up an immense treasure by pinching and plundering, every good member of the society should rejoice to behold the uncommon profuseness of his son. This is refunding to the public what was robbed from it. The son's goods should not be seized; that would be barbarous, and it is ignoble to ruin a man faster than he does it himself when he sets about it so earnestly! Does he not feed countless dogs of all sorts and sizes, though he never hunts? keep more horses than any nobleman in the kingdom, though he never rides them? give to an ill-favoured whore—though he never lies with her—as large an allowance as would keep a Duchess? . . . As long as the nation gets its own back again, we ought not to quarrel with *how* the plunder is repaid.

Many moderate men who are enemies to extremes will tell me •that *frugality* might happily fill the place of the two vices I speak of; •that if men did not have so many profuse ways of spending wealth, they would not be tempted to so many evil practices to scrape it together, and consequently •that the same number of men might, by avoiding both extremes, make themselves happier and be less vicious without them than they could be with them. Anyone who argues thus shows himself to be a better man than he is a politician. Frugality is like honesty, a mean starving virtue, that is fit only for small societies of good peaceable men who are contented to be poor as long as they are easy; but in a large stirring nation you may soon have enough of frugality. It is an idle dreaming virtue that employs no hands and is therefore useless in a trading country where vast numbers of people must be set to work somehow. Prodigality has a thousand inventions to keep people from sitting still, ones that frugality would never think of; and as this must consume a prodigious wealth, so avarice can rake it together by countless tricks that frugality would scorn to employ.

Authors are always allowed to liken small things to great ones, especially if they ask permission first. But to liken great things to mean trivial ones is intolerable except in burlesque; otherwise I would use a very low simile to liken the body politic to a bowl of punch. Avarice would be **what sours it** and prodigality **what makes it sweet**. I would call the ignorance, folly and credulity of the floating insipid multitude the **water** in the punch; and the wisdom, honour, fortitude and the rest of the sublime qualities of men—separated by art from the dregs of nature, and exalted and refined by the fire of glory into a spiritual essence—would be an equivalent to **brandy**. If a newcomer to this drink were to taste the different ingredients separately, he would, no doubt, think it impossible they should make any tolerable liquor. The lemons would be too sour, the sugar too luscious, the brandy he'll say is too strong ever to be drunk in any quantity, and the water he'll call a tasteless liquor fit only for cows and horses. Yet experience teaches us that when the ingredients I have named are judiciously mixed, they make an excellent liquor that is liked and admired by men with fine palates.

[He develops this comparison further, bringing avarice and prodigality into it (a bit obscurely), apologising for pursuing this low comparison so far, and concluding:] Avarice and prodigality in the society are like two contrary poisons in physic which can by mutual mischief cancel one another out, and often make a good medicine between them.

Remark L

'while luxury employed a million of the poor, and' etc.

Strictly speaking, anything is a *luxury* if it is not immediately necessary for man's survival as a living creature, and by this standard there are luxuries to be found everywhere in the world; even among the naked savages, who by this time have

improved their former manner of living—in the preparation of their food, the ordering of their huts, or whatever—thus adding something to what once sufficed them. Everybody will say that this definition is too rigorous; I agree; but if we relax its severity by one inch, I am afraid we shan't know where to stop. When people tell us they only want to keep themselves 'sweet' and 'clean', there is no understanding what they would be at. If they used these words in their genuine proper literal sense, they could soon be satisfied without much cost or trouble, as long as they had water; but these two little adjectives are so comprehensive—especially in the dialect of some ladies—that nobody can guess how far they may be stretched. Also, the comforts of life are so various and extensive that nobody can tell what people mean by them unless he knows what sort of life they lead. The words 'decency' and 'convenience' are similarly obscure: I never understand them unless I am acquainted with the quality of the persons who use them. However much people go to church together and are all of one mind, I am apt to believe that when they pray for their 'daily bread' the bishop includes in that petition several things that the sexton does not think of.

Thus, once we depart from calling a 'luxury' everything that is not absolutely necessary to keep a man alive, nothing is a luxury; for if the wants of men are innumerable, then what is needed to meet them has no bounds; what some degree of people would regard as •superfluous to will be thought •requisite to those higher up the scale; and nothing could be too curious [see Glossary] or extravagant for some gracious sovereign to count it as a necessity of life—not meaning everybody's life, but that of his sacred person.

It is generally believed that luxury is as destructive to the wealth of the whole body politic as it is to the wealth of every individual person who is guilty of it, and that national

frugality enriches a country in the same way that more restricted frugality increases the estates of private families. Although I have found men of much better understanding than myself who have this opinion, I cannot help disagreeing with them about it. They argue thus:

Every year we send to Turkey £1,000,000 worth of woollen goods and other things of our own growth, for which we bring back silk, mohair, drugs, etc. to the value of £1,200,000 that are all spent in our own country. By this we get nothing; but if most of us would be content with our own growth, and so consume only half the quantity of those foreign commodities, then people in Turkey who would still want the same quantity of our manufactures would be forced to pay ready money for the rest, and so just by the balance of that trade the nation would get £600,000 per annum.

In examining this argument, let us start by supposing

- that the silk etc. consumed in England is only half of what it is now; and
- that the Turks, though we refuse to buy more than half as much of their commodities as we used to do, either cannot or will not be without the same quantity of our manufactures they had before, and
- that they'll pay the balance in money, giving us as much gold or silver as the value of what they buy from us exceeds the value of what we buy from them.

Though that might happen for one year, it could not possibly last. Buying is bartering, and no nation can buy goods of others if it has no goods of its own to purchase them with. Spain and Portugal, which are annually supplied with new gold and silver from their mines, can go on buying for ready money as long as their yearly increase of gold or silver continues; but for them money is the country's commodity.

·For Turkey the situation is different. . . . If the Turks did not have money fall from the skies, the £600,000 in silk, mohair etc. that are left on their hands in the first year must make ·the market value of· those commodities fall considerably; the Dutch and French will get the benefit of this as much as ourselves; and if we continue to refuse to take their commodities in payment for our manufactures, they can no longer trade with us, but must content themselves with buying what they want from nations that are willing to take what we refuse, even if their goods are much worse than ours. In this way our commerce with Turkey is certain to be lost.

They may say that to prevent the ill consequence I have showed we should take the Turkish merchandise as formerly, and be so frugal as to consume only half of it ourselves, sending the rest abroad to be sold to others. Let us see what this will do, and whether it will enrich the nation by the balance of that trade with £600,000. [He argues in detail that this re-export policy would not work, for various reasons involving costs and risks.]

It is also held against luxury that **(i)** it increases avarice and rapine [see Glossary]; and where they are reigning vices, offices of the greatest trust are bought and sold; the ministers who should serve the public are corrupted, and the countries constantly in danger of being betrayed to the highest bidders; and **(ii)** that it effeminates and enervates the people, so that nations become an easy prey to the first invaders. These are indeed terrible things; but what is charged against luxury here really holds against maladministration, and is the fault of bad politics. [He meets point **(i)** by going into details of how a good, responsible government would handle trade. He will come to **(ii)** soon.]

Trade is the principal thing that makes a nation great, but there are other things to be taken care of besides. The *meum*

and *tuum* [Latin for 'mine and yours'] must be secured, crimes punished, and all other laws concerning the administration of justice wisely designed and strictly enforced. Foreign affairs must also be prudently managed, and the ministry of every nation ought to have good foreign intelligence and be familiar with the public transactions of all the countries that may—through nearness, strength or interest—be hurtful or beneficial to them, to take the necessary measures accordingly. . . . The multitude must be awed, no man's conscience forced, and the clergy allowed no greater share in state affairs than our Saviour has bequeathed them in his testament. These are the arts that lead to worldly greatness. Any sovereign power that makes a good use of them and has a considerable nation to govern—whether it be a monarchy, a commonwealth or a mixture of both—can never fail to make it flourish despite all the other powers on earth, and no luxury or other vice can ever shake their constitution. . . . Of all the famous states and empires the world has had to boast of, none has ever come to ruin whose destruction was not principally owing to the bad politics, neglects or mismanagements of the rulers.

[Now he takes up accusation (ii).] There is no doubt that more health and vigour is to be expected among a people and their offspring from temperance and sobriety than there is from gluttony and drunkenness; but as for luxury's effeminating and enervating a nation, I confess that I don't now have such frightful notions of this as I used to have. When we hear or read of •things that we have never encountered, they commonly bring to our imagination ideas of things we have encountered that we think must be nearest to •them. When I have read of the luxury of Persia, Egypt and other countries where it has been a reigning vice, and that were effeminated and enervated by it, it has sometimes put me in mind of

- the cramming and swilling of ordinary tradesmen at a city feast, and the beastliness that often accompanies their over-gorging themselves,

and at other times it has made me think of

- the distraction of dissolute sailors, as I had seen them in company of half a dozen lewd women roaring along with fiddles before them.

If I were brought into one of the great Persian or Egyptian cities, I would have expected to find one third of the people sick in bed with surfeits; another third laid up with the gout or crippled by a more ignominious illness; and the remainder, who could walk without assistance, going along the streets in petticoats.

For as long as our *reason* is not strong enough to govern our appetites, it is good for us to have *fear* as a guardian; and I believe that my fear focussed on the word 'enervate', and some consequent thoughts about the etymology of it, did me a great deal of good when I was a schoolboy; but now that I have seen something of the world, the consequences of luxury to a nation seem less dreadful to me than they did. As long as men have the same appetites, the same vices will remain. In all large societies, some will love whoring and others drinking. The lustful that can get no handsome clean women will content themselves with dirty drabs; and those who cannot purchase true hermitage or pontack will be glad of more ordinary french claret. Those who can't reach wine take up with worse liquors, and a foot soldier or a beggar may make himself as drunk with stale beer or malt spirits as a lord with burgundy, champaign or tockay. The cheapest and most slovenly way of indulging our passions does as much harm to a man's constitution as the most expensive.

The greatest excesses of luxury are shown in buildings, furniture, equipages and clothes. [He develops this point, saying that intelligent people given to luxury are careful

not to eat or drink too much, and take care of their health. Then:] But let us once suppose that the ease and pleasures of the grandees and rich people of every great nation make them unfit to endure hardships and undergo the toils of war. I'll allow that most of the common council of the city would make very indifferent foot-soldiers; and a cavalry composed of aldermen would be routed by a small artillery of squibs. But the aldermen, the common council, indeed people of any substance have nothing to do with the war except to pay taxes. The hardships and fatigues of war that are personally suffered fall on those who bear the brunt of everything, the lowest poor part of the nation, the working slaving people; for however excessive the plenty and luxury of a nation may be, somebody must do the work, houses and ships must be built, merchandise must be moved, and the ground tilled. This requires a vast multitude of workers, among whom there are always enough loose, idle, extravagant fellows to spare for an army; and those who are robust enough to hedge and ditch, plough and thrash, or else not too enervated to be smiths, carpenters, sawyers, cloth-workers, porters or car-men, will always be strong and hardy enough in a campaign or two to make good soldiers; and in that role, when good orders are kept, they won't often have an amount of plenty and superfluity that will do them any hurt.

So the harm to be feared from luxury among the people of war cannot extend beyond the officers. The greatest of them are either men of high birth and princely upbringing or else extraordinary abilities and no less experience; and a wise government should choose to command its armed forces someone who has

- a consummate knowledge of martial affairs,
- intrepidity to keep him calm in danger, and
- many other qualifications that are bound to come, through time and application, to anyone who has

quick penetration, a distinguished intellect and a world of honour.

Strong sinews and supple joints are trifling advantages that don't count in persons of their reach and grandeur, who can destroy cities before getting out of bed in the morning and ruin whole countries while they are at dinner. As they are usually men of great age, it would be ridiculous to expect a hale constitution and agility of limbs from them; as long as their heads are active and well furnished, it matters little what the rest of their bodies are like. If they cannot bear the fatigue of being on horseback, they can ride in coaches or be carried in litters. Men's conduct and sagacity are never less for their being cripples. [He goes on to say that most men in an army have expenses—going up in step with advances in rank and pay—which leave them unable to afford luxuries that would damage their health.]

Nothing refines mankind more than love and honour. Those two passions are equivalent to many virtues, so the greatest schools of breeding and good manners are courts and armies, the former to accomplish the women, the latter to polish the men. [He writes about how 'the rules of honour' keep military men (officers) decent and self-controlled, and adds that even those of whom this is not true can still acquit themselves well in battle. He appeals to experience:]

Those who have such dismal fears that luxury will enervate and effeminate people should look at our battles in

Flanders and Spain. They would see embroidered beaux with fine laced shirts and powdered wigs stand as much fire, and lead up to the mouth of a cannon with as little concern, as it was possible for the most stinking slovens to have done not wearing wigs but in their own hair that had not been combed in a month; and encounter an abundance of wild rakes who had actually impaired their health with excesses of wine and women yet conducted themselves bravely against their enemies. Robustness is the least thing required in an officer, and if sometimes strength is of use, a firm resolution of mind—inspired by hopes of preferment, competitiveness, and the love of glory—will at a push supply the place of bodily force. . . .

I think I have proved **(a)** that in one sense everything can be called 'luxurious' and in another sense nothing can; **(b)** that with a wise administration all people may swim in as much foreign luxury as their product can purchase, without being impoverished by it; and **(c)** that where military affairs are handled properly and the soldiers well paid and well disciplined, a wealthy nation can live in ease and plenty while still being formidable to their neighbours, matching the character of the bees in the fable, of which I said, that 'flattered in peace, and feared in wars, / they were the esteem of foreigners, / and lavish of their wealth and lives, / the balance of all other hives.'

See what is also said about luxury in Remarks M and Q.

Remarks M through P

Remark M

'and odious pride a million more'

Pride is the natural quality by which every mortal that has *any* understanding over-values himself and imagines better things of himself than any impartial judge who thoroughly knew all his qualities and circumstances could allow him. We have no other quality so beneficial to society as pride—so necessary to make it wealthy and flourishing—yet it is the one that is most generally detested. What is very special about this quality of ours is that those who are the fullest of it are the least willing to connive at [see Glossary] it in others; whereas the heinousness of other vices is extenuated most by those who are guilty of them themselves. The chaste man hates fornication, and drunkenness is most abhorred by the temperate; but none are so much offended by their neighbour's pride as those who are themselves proudest; and the most humble are the most apt to pardon it. I think we can soundly infer from this that its being odious to all the world is a certain sign that all the world is troubled by it. All men of sense are ready to admit this, and nobody denies having pride in general. But if you get down to particulars, you won't find many who will admit that any action of theirs that you can name was a product of pride.

·OBJECTIONS BY 'HAUGHTY MORALISTS'·

There are likewise many who accept that among the sinful nations of today pride and luxury are great promoters of trade, but they refuse to admit that in a more virtuous age—which should be free from pride—trade would in a great measure decay. The Almighty, they say, has endowed us with the dominion over all things that the earth and sea produce

or contain; and man's skill and industry above other animals were given him so that he could make them and everything else within the reach of his senses more serviceable to him. On this consideration they think it impious to imagine that humility, temperance and other virtues should debar people from enjoying those comforts of life that are not denied to the most wicked nations; and from this they infer that without pride or luxury

- the same things might be eaten, worn and consumed,
- the same number of handicrafts and artificers employed, and
- a nation be in every way as flourishing

as where pride and luxury are the most predominant.

As to clothing in particular, they'll tell you •that pride—which clings more tightly to us than our clothes—is only lodged in the heart, and that rags often conceal more pride than the most pompous attire; and •that, just as there have undeniably been virtuous princes who with humble hearts have worn their splendid diadems and swayed their envied sceptres solely for the good of others, so it is very probable that silver and gold brocades and the richest embroideries may be worn without a thought of pride by many whose quality and fortune are suitable to them. May not (they say) a good man of extraordinary revenues make a greater variety of suits than he could possibly wear out, purely so as to set the poor at work, to encourage trade, and to promote the welfare of his country? And considering food and clothing to be necessities—the two chief articles to which all our worldly cares are extended—why may not all mankind set aside a considerable part of their income for the one as well as the other, without the least tincture of pride? Indeed, is not

every member of the society in a way *obliged* to contribute what he can to maintaining that branch of trade on which the whole has so great a dependence? . . .

·ANSWERING THEM·

These are the objections generally made by haughty moralists who cannot bear to hear the dignity of their species arraigned; but if we look closely into them, they can soon be answered. If we had no vices, I cannot see why any man should ever make more suits than he has use for, however much he wanted to promote the good of the nation; for though his only purpose in wearing choice clothes was to set more people to work and thus promote the public welfare, he could consider clothes in exactly the way lovers of their country consider taxes now: they may pay them with alacrity, but nobody gives more than his due; especially where all are justly rated according to their abilities, as they would be in a very virtuous age. Also, in such golden times nobody would dress above his condition, nobody would pinch his family or cheat or over-reach his neighbour to purchase finery, so there would not be half the consumption or a third as many people employed as now there are.

To make this clearer, and demonstrate that for the support of trade nothing can be as effective as pride, I shall examine men's various views about outward apparel, and present what daily experience can teach everybody regarding dress.

Clothes were originally made •to hide our nakedness and •to shelter our bodies against the weather and other outward injuries; and to these our boundless pride has added a third, namely •ornament. . . . It is indeed amazing that so sensible a creature as man, who lays claim to so many fine qualities of his own, should condescend to value himself on what is robbed from such an innocent and defenceless animal as

a sheep, or what he is beholden for to the most insignificant thing on earth, a dying worm; yet he has the folly to laugh at the Hottentots in remote Africa who adorn themselves with the guts of their dead enemies, without considering that they are the signs of their valour and that if their pride is more savage than ours it is certainly less ridiculous, because they wear the spoils of the more noble animal.

But the world has long since decided the matter; handsome apparel is a main point, fine feathers make fine birds, and people in places where they are not known are generally honoured according to their clothes and other accoutrements; from the richness of them we judge of their wealth, and by their ordering of them we guess at their understanding. This encourages everybody who is conscious of his little merit to wear clothes above his rank, if he can, especially in populous cities where obscure men may hourly meet with fifty strangers to one acquaintance, and consequently have the pleasure of being esteemed by a vast majority, not as what they are but what they appear to be. . . .

[Mandeville now devotes a page or more to different manifestations of pride expressed in clothing:

- On 'great holidays', 'women of almost the lowest rank wear good and fashionable clothes'.
- 'The poorest labourer's wife in the parish' half-starves herself and her husband to purchase a 'genteel' second-hand gown and petticoat.

And on it goes:] •The weaver, the shoemaker, the tailor, the barber and every impoverished working fellow uses the first money he can accumulate to dress himself like a tradesman of substance. •The ordinary retailer in the clothing of his wife copies his neighbour, who deals in the same commodity by wholesale. . . . •The druggist, mercer, draper, and other creditable shopkeepers can find no difference between themselves and merchants, and therefore dress and live like

them. •The merchant's lady, who cannot bear the confident bearing and appearance of those mechanics, flies for refuge to the other end of the town and scorns to follow any fashion except what she takes from there. This haughtiness alarms the Court; •the women of quality are frightened to see merchants' wives and daughters dressed like themselves, finding intolerable this impudence of the city; mantua-makers are sent for, and the devising of fashions becomes all their study, so that they may have always new modes ready to take up as soon as those cheeky shopkeepers begin to imitate the existing ones. The same competitiveness is continued up through the various degrees of quality, to an incredible expense, until at last •the prince's great favourites and those of the first rank of all, having nothing else left to outstrip some of their inferiors in respect of clothing, are forced to lay out vast estates in pompous equipages, magnificent furniture, sumptuous gardens and princely palaces.

[Answering the objection that many people wear fine clothes simply because they are used to them, and that pride doesn't come into it, Mandeville says that those people's fine clothes were invented in the first place because of pride. Then he adds a further point.] Not everybody is without pride that appears to be so; the symptoms of that vice are not all easily discovered; they are manifold, and vary according to the age, humour, circumstances, and often constitution, of the people. •The choleric city captain seems impatient to come to action, and expressing his warlike genius by the firmness of his steps, makes his pike tremble at the valour of his arm; his martial finery inspires him with an unusual elevation of mind, by which—trying to forget his shop as well as himself—he looks up at the balconies with the fierceness of a Saracen conqueror. •The phlegmatic alderman, now become venerable both for his age and his authority, contents himself with being thought a

considerable man; and knowing no easier way to express his vanity, looks big in his coach where. . . he receives in sullen state the homage paid to him by the lower sort of people. •The beardless ensign counterfeits a gravity above his years, and with ridiculous assurance strives to imitate the stern countenance of his colonel. •The young woman, with a vast concern not to be overlooked, reveals a violent desire to be observed by continually changing her posture and courting with obliging looks the admiration of her beholders. •The conceited coxcomb displays an air of sufficiency, is wholly taken up with the contemplation of his own perfections, and in public places reveals such a disregard for others that the ignorant must imagine he thinks himself to be alone.

These and their like are all tokens of pride that are obvious to all the world; but man's vanity is not always so soon found out. When we see men who have an air of humanity and seem not to be employed in admiring themselves or entirely unmindful of others, we are apt to pronounce them free of pride, when they may be only fatigued with gratifying their vanity and languid from a satiety of enjoyments. The outward show of peace within and drowsy composure of careless negligence with which a great man is often seen in his plain chariot to loll at ease are not always as free from artifice as they may seem to be. Nothing is more entrancing for the proud than to be thought happy.

The well-bred gentleman places his greatest pride in how skillfully he covers it, and some are so expert in concealing this frailty that when they are the most guilty of it the vulgar think them the most exempt from it. When the dissembling courtier appears in state, he assumes an air of modesty and good humour; and while he is ready to burst with vanity he seems to be wholly ignorant of his greatness, knowing that those lovely qualities must heighten him in the esteem of others. . . .

Remark N**'envy itself, and vanity, were ministers of industry'**

Envy is the baseness in our nature that makes us grieve and pine at what we conceive to be a happiness in others. I don't believe there is a human creature in his senses arrived to maturity that has not at some time been carried away by this passion in good earnest; and yet I never heard anyone dare to admit to being guilty of it except in jest. What makes us so generally ashamed of this vice is the strong habit of hypocrisy, which has helped us—from our cradle—to hide even from ourselves the vast extent of our self-love and all its different branches. . . . Well as we think of ourselves, we often think as ill of our neighbour, with equal injustice; and when we learn that others do or will enjoy something we think they don't deserve, it makes us angry. Secondly, we are constantly employed in wishing well for ourselves, everyone according to his judgment and inclinations, and when we observe others having possession of something that we like and don't have, this brings us sorrow for not having the thing we like. This sorrow is incurable while we continue our esteem for the thing we want; but self-defence makes us try any possible way of removing evil from us; and experience teaches us that nothing in nature more alleviates this sorrow than our anger against those who have what we esteem and want. So we cherish and cultivate this anger so as to save or relieve ourselves, at least in part, from the sorrow.

Envy then is a compound of grief and anger; the degrees of this passion depend chiefly on the nearness or remoteness of the objects as to circumstances. If someone forced to walk on foot envies a great man for keeping a coach and six horses, it will never be with the violence of the envy of a man who also keeps a coach but can only afford four horses.

The symptoms of envy are as various and as hard to describe as those of the plague. Among women the disease is very common, and the signs of it are very conspicuous in their opinions and censures of one another. Beautiful young women will often hate one another mortally at first sight, purely from envy; and you can read this scorn and unreasonable aversion in their faces if they have not learned skills in hiding it.

In the rude and unpolished multitude this passion is very bare-faced; especially when they envy others for the goods of *fortune*. They rail at their betters, rip up their faults, and take trouble to misconstrue their most commendable actions; they murmur at Providence, and loudly complain that the good things of this world are chiefly enjoyed by those who do not deserve them. The grosser sort of them are often affected so violently by envy that if they were not deterred by the fear of the laws they would *beat* those their envy is levelled at, solely because of their envy.

Men of letters suffering from this illness reveal quite different symptoms. When they envy a person for his abilities and erudition, their main concern is to conceal their frailty, which they generally try to do by denying and depreciating the good qualities they envy: they carefully read his works, and are displeased with every fine passage they meet with; they look for nothing but his errors, and wish for no greater feast than a gross mistake; in their censures they are captious as well as severe, make mountains of molehills, and will not pardon the least shadow of a fault but exaggerate the most trifling omission into a capital blunder.

Envy is visible in brute beasts [and he devotes a paragraph to unconvincing examples].

If envy was not rivetted in human nature, it would not be so common in children, and youth would not be so generally spurred on by emulation [see Glossary]. Those who want to

derive everything beneficial to society from a good cause ascribe the effects of *emulation* in schoolboys to a virtue of the mind: it requires labour and pains, so those who act from it are clearly committing a self-denial—so they think. But if we look closely into this we shall find that this sacrifice of ease and pleasure is only made to envy and the love of glory. If there was not something like this passion mixed with that supposed virtue, it would be impossible to create and increase it by the same means that create envy. The boy who receives a reward for the superiority of his performance is conscious of how annoyed he would have been if he had fallen short of it; this thought makes him exert himself not to be outdone by those whom he now regards as his inferiors; and the greater his pride is, the more self-denial he'll practise to maintain his conquest. The other boy, who tried hard but has missed the prize, is sorry, and consequently angry with the one he must see as the cause of his grief; but showing this anger would be of no service to him, so that he must either **a** be contented to be less esteemed than the other boy or **b** renew his efforts and become more proficient; and it is ten to one that the disinterested, good-humoured, and peaceable lad will choose **a** the first, and so become lazy and inactive, while the covetous, peevish, and quarrelsome rascal will **b** take incredible pains and make himself a conqueror in his turn.

Envy is common among painters, and is of great use for their improvement. I don't mean that little daubers envy great masters, but most painters are tainted with this vice against those *immediately* above them. If the pupil of a famous artist is of a bright genius and uncommon application, he at first adores his master; but as his own skill increases he gradually begins to envy what he previously admired. If by exerting himself a painter comes to surpass the man he envied, his sorrow is gone and all his anger

disarmed; and if he hated him before, he is now glad to be friends with him.

Most married women are guilty of this vice, and are always trying to raise the same passion in their spouses; and where they have prevailed, •envy and emulation have kept more men in bounds, and reformed more bad husbands from sloth, drinking and other evil conduct, than •all the sermons preached since the time of the Apostles.

Everybody would like if he could to be happy, enjoy pleasure and avoid pain; so self-love makes us see every creature that seems satisfied as a rival in happiness; and the satisfaction we have in seeing that felicity disturbed, with no advantage to ourselves except the pleasure we have in beholding it, is called loving mischief [see Glossary] for mischief's sake; and the motive of which that frailty is the result is *malice*, another offspring of the same parent; for if there was no envy there could be no malice.

When the passions lie dormant we are not aware of them, and often people think they don't have such a frailty in their nature because at that moment they are not hearing from it.

. . . . At disasters, we either laugh at or pity the sufferers according to our stock of either of malice or compassion. If a man hurts himself so slightly that it does not arouse compassion, we laugh, and here our pity and malice shake us alternately:

'Indeed, sir, I am very sorry for it; I beg your pardon for laughing, I am the silliest creature in the world.'
Then laugh again; and again 'I am indeed very sorry',
and so on.

Some are so malicious they would laugh if a man broke his leg, and others are so compassionate that they can pity a man for a spot in his clothes; but nobody is so savage that *no* compassion can touch him, nor any man so good-natured as *never* to have any malicious pleasure. . . . Men of true good

sense envy less than others because they admire themselves with less hesitation than fools and silly people; for though they do not show this to others, yet the solidity of their thinking gives them an assurance of their real worth, which men of weak understanding can never *feel* though they often counterfeit it.

The ostracism of the Greeks was a sacrifice of valuable men made to epidemic envy, and often applied as an infallible remedy to cure and prevent the mischiefs of popular resentment and rancour. [He develops this through a paragraph, ending with:] Nothing is more tiresome to us than the repetition of praises we have no manner of share in.

The more a passion is a compound of many others, the harder it is to define; and the more tormenting it is to those who labour under it, the greater is the cruelty towards others it can inspire them with. Therefore nothing is more whimsical or mischievous than jealousy, which is made up of love, hope, fear, and a great deal of envy. I have said enough about envy already, and I shall discuss fear in Remark R [see page 61]; so I shall speak here about hope and love, the other two ingredients in this odd mixture that I want to explain and illustrate.

Hoping is wishing with some degree of confidence that the thing wished for will come to pass. The firmness or weakness of our hope depends entirely on the degree of our confidence, and all hope includes doubt; for when our confidence is high enough to exclude all doubts it becomes *certainty*, and we take for granted what we only hoped for before. The phrase ‘certain hope’ cannot be allowed [though it occurs in the Anglican Order for the Burial of the Dead—‘In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life’]; for a man who uses an adjective that destroys the essence of the noun he joins it to can have no meaning at all. . . . Why is it less shocking to some to hear a man speak of ‘certain hope’ than it would be if he

spoke of ‘hot ice’ or ‘liquid oak’? It is not because the first is less nonsensical than either of the other two; but because the word ‘hope’—I mean the essence of it—is not so clearly understood by the generality of the people as the words and essences of ‘ice’ and ‘oak’ are.

Love in the first place signifies affection such as parents and nurses have for children, and as friends have for one another; it consists in a liking and well-wishing to the person who is loved. We give an easy construction to his words and actions, and feel a proneness to excuse and forgive his faults if we see any; in everything we make his interests *our* interests, even to our own disadvantage, and get satisfaction from sympathising with him in his sorrows as well as in his joys. . . .

·LOVE AND LUST·

Secondly, by ‘love’ we understand a strong inclination—distinct in its nature from all other affections of friendship, gratitude and blood-relationship—that persons of different sexes have towards one another. It is in this meaning of the word that *love* is a component in jealousy, and is an effect (as well as the happy disguise) of the passion that prompts us to labour for the preservation of our species. This latter appetite is innate in both men and women who are not defective in their physical constitution, as much as hunger or thirst, though they are seldom affected with it before the years of puberty. If we could undress nature and pry into its deepest recesses, we would discover the seeds of this passion before it expresses itself, as plainly as we see the teeth in an embryo before the gums are formed. There are few healthy people of either sex whom it has made no impression on before twenty; but the peace and happiness of civil society require this to be kept a secret, never talked of in public; so among well-bred people it is counted *criminal*

to mention in company anything in plain words relating to this mystery of succession; which leads to the very name of the appetite that is the most necessary for the continuance of mankind to become odious, and the adjectives commonly joined to 'lust' are 'filthy' and 'abominable'.

In people of strict morals and rigid modesty, this impulse of nature often disturbs the body long before it is known to be what it is, and the most polished and best instructed people are generally the most ignorant about this matter. See the difference between man in **(a)** the wild state of nature and the same creature in **(b)** civil society. In **(a)** men and women, if left rude and untaught in the sciences of modes and manners, would quickly find out the cause of that disturbance and would not be—any more than other animals—at a loss for an immediate remedy. . . . But in **(b)**, where the rules of religion, law and decency are to be obeyed before any dictates of nature, the youth of both sexes are to be armed and fortified against this impulse, and from their infancy deliberately scared off from the most remote approaches of it. The appetite and all its symptoms, though plainly felt and understood, are to be •stifled with care and severity, and in women flatly •disowned and, if there's occasion for this, obstinately •denied. . . . And among people of birth and fortune it is expected that matrimony should never be entered on without a careful attention to family, estate and reputation, with the call of nature being the very last consideration in the making of matches.

Thus, those who would make 'love' and 'lust' synonymous with one another are confounding the effect with the cause of it. But such is the power of upbringing, and the habit of thinking as we are taught to think, that sometimes persons of either sex are actually in love without feeling any carnal desires, and without penetrating into the intentions of nature to identify the goal it proposes, without which they could

never have been affected with that sort of passion. . . . Such platonic lovers, male and female, are commonly pale-faced, weakly people of cold and phlegmatic constitutions; hale and robust people never entertain any love so spiritual as to exclude all thoughts and wishes relating to the body. But even the most seraphic and 'spiritual' lovers could learn what the origin is of their inclination: just let them suppose that someone else has the physical enjoyment of the beloved person, and the tortures they'll suffer from that reflection will soon teach them the nature of their passions. . . .

Those who are skilled in anatomising the invisible part of man will observe that the more sublime and exempt this love is from all thoughts of sensuality, the more spurious it is, and the more it degenerates from its honest original and primitive simplicity. The power and sagacity as well as labour and care of the politician [see Glossary] in civilising the society has been nowhere more conspicuous than in the happy contrivance of playing our passions against one another. By •flattering our pride and increasing our good opinion ourselves on the one hand, and on the other •inspiring us with dread and mortal aversion against shame, the artful moralists have taught us to encounter ourselves cheerfully, and if not *subdue* at least to *conceal* and disguise our favourite passion, lust, to such an extent that we hardly recognise it when we meet with it in our own breasts. . . . Can any man abstain from laughter when he considers that our only reward for so much deceit and insincerity practised on ourselves and others is the empty satisfaction of making our species appear more exalted and remote from that of other animals than it really is and we in our hearts know it to be? . . .

What we call 'love', then, is not a genuine appetite but an adulterated one, or rather a compound, a heap of several contradictory passions blended in one—a product of nature warped by custom and upbringing. So its true origin and first

motive is stifled in well-bred people, and almost concealed from themselves. All this explains why its effects of it are so different, whimsical, surprising and unaccountable, depending as they do on how those affected with it vary in age, strength, resolution, temper, circumstances, and manners.

This passion is what makes jealousy so troublesome. Those who imagine there can be jealousy without love do not understand jealousy. Men who have not the least affection for their wives may be angry with them for their conduct, and suspicious of them, with or without a cause; but in these what affects them is their pride, their concern for their reputation. They feel hatred against them without remorse; they can beat them and go to sleep contentedly; they may watch their wives themselves and have them watched by others, but they are not so inquisitive or industrious in their searches—nor do they feel that anxiety of heart at the fear of a discovery—as when love is mixed with the passions.

What confirms me in this opinion is this: when a man's love for his mistress has gone and he suspects her to be false, he leaves her and forgets about her; whereas it is the greatest difficulty imaginable, even for a man of sense, to part with a mistress as long as he loves her, whatever faults she may be guilty of. [He offers some details.]

Remark O

'real pleasures, comforts, ease'

That the highest good consists in pleasure was the doctrine of Epicurus, whose own life was exemplary for continence, sobriety and other virtues, which led people in later times to quarrel about the meaning of 'pleasure'. Those who argued from Epicurus's own temperance said that the delight he meant was *being virtuous*; so Erasmus tells us in his

Colloquies that there are no greater Epicureans than pious Christians. Others who reflected on the dissolute manners of most of Epicurus's followers maintain that he must have been referring to sensual pleasures and the gratification of our passions. I shall not decide their quarrel; but I hold that whether men are good or bad, what they take delight in is their pleasure. Not looking for etymological help from the learned languages, I think an Englishman can rightly call a 'pleasure' anything that pleases him; and according to this definition we ought not to dispute about men's pleasures any more than about their tastes. . . .

The worldly-minded, voluptuous and ambitious man, despite being void of merit, covets precedence everywhere and wants to be dignified above his betters; he aims at spacious palaces and delicious gardens; his chief delight is in excelling others in stately horses, magnificent coaches, a numerous attendance, and expensive furniture. To gratify his lust he wants genteel, young, beautiful women of different charms and characters to adore his greatness and be really in love with his person; his cellars he wants stored with the flower of every country that produces excellent wines; his table he wants to be served with many courses, each containing a choice variety of dainties not easily purchased, and ample evidence of elaborate and judicious cookery. . . . [This is developed in considerable detail, involving music, well-made 'trifles', good conversational company, servants who know what he wants without being told, and] as chief officers of his hold he wants men of birth, honour and distinction. . . ., for though he loves to be honoured by everybody and receives the respects of the common people with joy, the homage paid to him by persons of quality is ravishing to him in a more transcendent manner.

While thus wallowing in a sea of lust and vanity and wholly employed in provoking and indulging his appetites, he

wants the world to think him altogether free from pride and sensuality and to put a favourable construction on his most glaring vices. Indeed, if his authority can purchase it, he is anxious to be thought wise, brave, generous, good-natured and endowed with all the virtues he thinks worth having. He would have us believe that

- the pomp and luxury he is served with are merely tiresome plagues to him,
- the grandeur he appears in is an unwelcome burden which, to his sorrow, is inseparable from the high sphere he moves in,
- his noble mind—so much exalted above vulgar capacities—aims at higher ends, and cannot take pleasure in such worthless enjoyments;
- the highest of his ambition is to promote the public welfare, and
- his greatest pleasure is to see his country flourish and everybody in it made happy.

These are called *real pleasures* by the vicious [see Glossary] and earthly-minded, and anyone whose skill or luck enables him in this way to enjoy both the world and the world's good opinion is counted extremely happy by all the most fashionable part of the people.

But on the other side, most of the ancient philosophers and grave moralists, especially the Stoics, would not count as a real good anything that was liable to be taken from them by others. They wisely considered the instability of fortune and the favour of princes; the vanity of honour and popular applause; the precariousness of riches and earthly possessions; and therefore placed true happiness in

the calm serenity of a contented mind free from guilt and ambition; a mind which, having subdued every sensual appetite, despises the smiles as well as frowns of fortune, and getting no delight from anything but

contemplation, desires only what everybody is able to give to himself—a mind armed with fortitude and resolution, that has learned to sustain the greatest losses without concern, to endure pain without affliction, and to bear injuries without resentment.

Many have claimed to reach this height of self-denial, and then, if we may believe them, they were raised above common mortals and their strength extended far beyond the pitch of their first nature: they could behold the anger of threatening tyrants and imminent dangers without terror, and stayed calm in the midst of torments. They could meet death itself with intrepidity; and they had no greater reluctance in leaving the world than they had showed fondness when entering it.

Those ancients have always had the greatest sway; yet others—and no fools either—have exploded those precepts as impracticable, called their notions 'romantic', and tried to prove that what these Stoics asserted about themselves exceeded all human force and possibility, and that therefore the virtues they boasted of could only be haughty pretence, full of arrogance and hypocrisy. Despite these censures, however, the serious part of the world—and most of the wise men who have lived between then and now—agree with the Stoics on the most important points: •that there can be no true felicity in what depends on perishable things; •that inner peace is the greatest blessing, and no conquest is like that of our passions; •that knowledge, temperance, fortitude, humility and other embellishments of the mind are the most valuable acquisitions; •that no man can be happy without being good; and •that only the virtuous are capable of enjoying real pleasures.

I expect to be asked why in the Fable [page 8] I have called 'real' pleasures that are directly opposite to the ones that I admit the wise men of all ages have extolled as the most

valuable. I answer that it's because what I call 'pleasures' are not the things that men *say* are best but the ones they seem to be most pleased with. How can I believe that a man's chief delight is in the embellishments of the mind when I see him constantly engaged in pursuing the pleasures that are contrary to them? John cuts just enough pudding to stop you saying he took none; you see that after much chomping and chewing this little bit goes down with him like chopped hay; then he pounces on the beef with a voracious appetite, and crams himself. Is it not provoking to hear John cry every day that pudding is all his delight, and that he doesn't care a farthing for the beef?

I could swagger about fortitude and contempt for riches as much as Seneca himself, and would undertake to write twice as much on behalf of poverty as ever he did, for the tenth part of his estate; I could teach the way to his *summum bonum* [= 'supreme good'] as exactly as I know my way home; I could tell people that to extricate themselves from all worldly engagements and purify their minds they must get rid of their passions, like removing furniture from a room in order to clean it thoroughly. I am quite sure that the malice and most severe strokes of fortune can do no more injury to a mind thus stripped of all fears, wishes and inclinations than a blind horse can do in an empty barn. In the theory of all this I am perfect, but the practice is difficult; and if you tried to pick my pocket or to take the victuals from before me when I am hungry, or if you made even the least motion of spitting in my face, I dare not promise how philosophically I would behave myself. But the fact that I am forced to submit to every caprice of *my* unruly nature (you'll say) does not show that others are as little masters of *theirs*; so I am willing to worship virtue wherever I can meet with it, as long as I shall not be obliged •to admit anything as virtue where I can see no self-denial, or •to judge men's sentiments

from their *words* when I have their *lives* before me.

Having searched through every degree and station of men, I have found nowhere more austerity of manners or greater contempt for earthly pleasures, than in some religious houses where people—freely resigning and retiring from the world to combat themselves—have no other business but to subdue their appetites. What can be better evidence of perfect chastity and a superlative love for immaculate purity in men and women than that in the prime of their age, when lust is most raging, they should actually seclude themselves from each others' company and voluntarily debar themselves for life not only from uncleanness but from even the most lawful embraces? [He adds self-flagellation, midnight prayers, refusal even to touch money, eating only what they can get by begging.]

Such fair instances of self-denial would make me bow down to virtue, if I were not deterred and warned from it by so many eminent and learned persons who unanimously tell me that I am mistaken and all I have seen is farce and hypocrisy; that whatever seraphic love they may pretend to, there is nothing but discord among them; and that however penitential the nuns and friars may appear in their convents, none of them sacrifice their darling lusts; that among the women not all are virgins who pass for such, and that if I were let into their secrets and examined some of their subterraneous privacies, I would soon be convinced by scenes of horror that some of them must have been mothers. That among the men I would find calumny, envy and ill-nature in the highest degree, or else gluttony, drunkenness, and impurities of a worse kind than adultery itself. And as for the mendicant orders, that they differ only in their clothing from other sturdy beggars who deceive people with a pitiful tone and an outward show of misery, and as soon as they are out of sight indulge their appetites and enjoy one another.

If the strict rules, and so many outward signs of devotion observed among those religious orders, deserve such harsh censures, we may well despair of meeting with virtue anywhere else; for if we look into the actions of the antagonists and greatest accusers of those votaries we shall not find so much as the appearance of self-denial. [He goes into some detail about how pleasantly ‘reverend divines of all sects’ manage to live, including taking care of the comforts of (and he puts this in Latin, quoting Luther) the stomach and what is below the stomach.]

I have nothing against all this, but I see no self-denial, and without that there can be no virtue. Is it such a mortification [see Glossary] not to want a greater share of worldly blessings than what every reasonable man ought to be satisfied with? Is there any mighty merit in not being villainous, forbearing indecencies that no prudent man would be guilty of even if he had no religion at all?

I shall be told that the reason why the clergy are so violent in their resentments when at any time they are even slightly disparaged, and so impatient when their rights are invaded, is their great care to preserve their calling—their *profession*—from contempt, not for their own sakes but to be more serviceable to others. It is the same reason that makes them care about the comforts and conveniences of life; for if they allowed themselves to be insulted, or were content with a coarser diet and more ordinary clothes than other people, the multitude—who judge from outward appearances—would be apt to think that the clergy were no more the immediate care of providence than other folks, and so would not only undervalue their persons but despise all the reproofs and instructions that came from them. This is an admirable plea, and as it is much made use of I’ll test it. [The test, which is much longer in the original than in this version, ends at ■ on page 50.]

I do not agree with the learned Dr. Echard that poverty brings the clergy into contempt, except that it may be an occasion of their revealing their blind side; for when men are always struggling with their low condition and cannot bear the burden of it willingly, they show how uneasily their poverty sits on them, how glad they would be to have their situation upgraded. and what a real value they have for the good things of this world. Someone

- who harangues on the contempt of riches and the vanity of earthly enjoyments, in a rusty threadbare gown because he has no other, and would wear his old greasy hat no longer if anyone gave him a better,
- who drinks small-beer at home with a heavy countenance but leaps at a glass of wine if he can catch it elsewhere,
- who with little appetite feeds upon his own coarse food mess but falls to greedily where he can please his palate and expresses an uncommon joy at an invitation to a splendid dinner,

is despised not because he is poor but because he does not know how to be poor with the contentment and resignation that he preaches to others, and so reveals his inclinations to be contrary to his doctrine. But when a man—from the greatness of his soul (or an obstinate vanity, which will do as well)—resolves to subdue his appetites in good earnest, refuses all offers of ease and luxury, embraces a voluntary poverty with cheerfulness, rejects whatever may gratify the senses, and actually sacrifices all his passions to his pride in acting this part, the vulgar will be ready to deify and adore him. How famous have the cynic philosophers made themselves purely by refusing to dissimulate and make use of superfluities? Did not the most ambitious monarch the world has ever seen condescend to visit Diogenes in his tub, and reply to a deliberate piece of rudeness with the highest

compliment a man of his pride was able to make?

Mankind are very willing to take one another's word when they see things that corroborate what is told them; but when our actions directly contradict what we say, it is regarded as impudent to desire belief. [He gives examples.] If there are any who want to be thought not to care for the world, and to value the soul above the body, they have only to forbear showing more concern for their sensual pleasures than they generally do for their spiritual ones and they can be sure of not being brought into contempt by poverty, however dire, if they bear it with fortitude. . . .

[He develops a story about a greatly admired pastor who is devoted to his 'little flock', and lives in voluntary penury on less than half of his small salary; imagines someone objecting this this is unfair to the pastor's wife and children; and continues:] I confess I forgot the wives and children, mainly because I thought poor priests could have no occasion for them. Who could imagine that the parson who is to teach others by example as well as precept was not able to withstand desires that the wicked world itself calls unreasonable? When an apprentice marries before his apprenticeship is over, unless he meets with a good fortune all his relations are angry with him and everybody blames him. Why? Simply because at that time he has no money at his disposal, no leisure (because he is still bound to his master's service), and perhaps little capacity to provide for a family. Then what must we say to a parson who has twenty or forty pounds a year, is bound more strictly to all the services a parish and his duty require, and has little time and generally much less ability to get any more? Is it not very unreasonable for him to marry? . . .

When we see so many of the clergy, to indulge their lust (a brutish appetite), run themselves into inevitable poverty in this way

—poverty that is sure to make them contemptible to all the world unless they bear it with more fortitude than they show in all their actions—

how are we to believe them when they claim that they conform themselves to the world not because they take delight in its various decencies, conveniences, and ornaments but only to preserve their profession from contempt, in order to be more useful to others? Don't we have reason to believe that what they say is full of hypocrisy and falsehood, and that sexual desire is not the only appetite they want to gratify; that the haughty airs and quick sense of injuries, the elaborate elegance in dress, and delicacy of palate that are to be seen in most of them who are able to show them, are the results of pride and luxury in them as they are in other people, and that the clergy are not possessed of more intrinsic virtue than any other profession?■

If the great ones of the clergy as well as the laity of any country had no value for earthly pleasures and did not try to gratify their appetites, why are envy and revenge so raging among them, and all the other passions improved and refined on in courts of princes more than anywhere else, and why is their whole manner of living always of the kind approved of, coveted, and imitated by the most sensual people of that same country? If they despise all visible decorations and love only the embellishments of the mind, why do they use the most darling toys of the luxurious? Why should a lord treasurer—or a bishop, or even the grand signior, or the Pope of Rome—wanting to be good and virtuous and trying to master his passions, need greater revenues, richer furniture, or more personal servants than a private man? What virtue is it the exercise of which requires as much pomp and superfluity as all men in power are seen to have? A man who has only one dish at a meal has as much opportunity to practise temperance as one who is constantly served with

three courses; one may exercise as much endurance and be as full of self-denial on a skimpy mattress as in a velvet bed sixteen feet high. The virtuous possessions of the mind are not a load or a burden; a man may bear misfortunes with fortitude in a garret, forgive injuries when he is on foot, and be chaste when he has not a shirt to his back. So I believe that all the learning and religion that one man can contain might be carried as well by a second-rate solo boatman as by a barge with six oars, especially if it was only to cross from Lambeth to Westminster; and that humility is not such a heavy virtue that it requires six horses to draw it.

It has been said that men are not so easily governed by their equals as by their superiors, so those who rule over us must, to keep the multitude in awe, excel others in outward appearance. This is a frivolous objection. **(a)** It applies only to poor princes and weak and precarious governments which, being actually unable to maintain the public peace, are obliged to make up with a pageant show for what they lack in real power. . . . **(b)** What must protect the lives and wealth of people from the efforts of wicked men in all societies is the severity of the laws and diligent administration of impartial justice. Theft, house-breaking and murder are not to be prevented by the scarlet gowns of the aldermen, the gold chains of the sheriffs, the fine trappings of their horses, or any gaudy show whatever. . . . If my Lord Mayor had nothing to defend himself but his great two-handed sword, the huge cap of maintenance and his gilded mace, he would soon be stripped in the very streets of the city of all his finery in his coach.

[He goes on about extravagances that grandees indulge in that the public don't even know about and so can't be defended as needed to maintain their dignity and power; and then cites historical examples of leaders and rules who lived frugally without losing respect and authority, ending

with a striking case:] There has not for many years been a prince less inclined to pomp and luxury than the present King of Sweden, who. . . .has sacrificed not only the lives of his subjects and welfare of his dominions but (what is more uncommon in sovereigns) his own ease and all the comforts of life, to an implacable spirit of revenge; yet he is obeyed in obstinately maintaining a war that has almost utterly destroyed his kingdom.

Thus I have proved that the real pleasures of all men in nature are worldly and sensual, if we judge from their conduct; I say all men 'in nature' because devout Christians cannot be said to be in nature, because they are regenerated and supernaturally assisted by the divine grace. How strange it is that they should all so unanimously deny it! Ask not only the divines and moralists of every nation but likewise all who are rich and powerful about real pleasure and they'll tell you as the Stoics did that there can be no true felicity in worldly and corruptible things; but then look at their lives and you will find they take delight in no other.

What must we do in this dilemma? Shall we be so uncharitable as to say, judging from men's actions, that **(a)** all the world prevaricates and that this is not their opinion, whatever they say? Or shall we be so silly as to think them sincere in their sentiments, relying on what they say and not believing our own eyes? Or shall we rather try to believe ourselves and them too, and say with Montaigne that **(b)** they are fully persuaded that they believe something that in fact they do not believe? These are his words:

'Some impose on the world, and would be thought to believe what they really don't; but a much greater number impose on themselves, not considering or thoroughly grasping what it is to believe.'

But this is making all mankind either **(b)** fools or **(a)** impostors. Our only other resource is to say what Mr. Bayle

has tried to prove at large in his reflections on comets: that **(c)** man is so unaccountable a creature as to act most commonly against his principles; and this is so far from being insulting that it is a *compliment* to human nature because the only alternatives are worse.

This contradiction in man's make-up is the reason why the •theory of virtue is so well understood and the •practice of it so rarely met with. If you ask me where to look for those beautiful shining qualities of prime ministers and favourites of princes that are so finely painted in dedications, addresses, epitaphs, funeral sermons and inscriptions, I answer: *there* and nowhere else. Where would you look for the excellence of a statue but in the part you see? Only the polished outside has the skill and labour of the sculptor to boast of; what's out of sight is untouched. If you broke the head or cut open the breast to look for the brains or the heart, you would only show your ignorance, and destroy the workmanship. This has often made me compare great men's virtues to large china jars: they make a fine show, and are ornamental even to a chimney; judging by their bulk and the value that is set upon them, one would think they might be very useful; but look into a thousand of them and you'll find nothing but dust and cobwebs.

Remark P

'the very poor lived better than the rich before'

If we trace the most flourishing nations in their origin we'll find that in the remote beginnings of every society the richest and most considerable men were for a long time destitute of many comforts of life that are now enjoyed by the lowest and most humble wretches; so that many things once regarded as the invention of luxury are now counted as so necessary that we think no human creature ought to be without them.

In the first ages, no doubt, man fed on the fruits of the earth without any previous preparation, and reposed himself naked like other animals on the lap of their common parent. Whatever has since contributed to making life more comfortable must have been the result of thought, experience, and some labour, so its entitlement to be called 'luxury' depends on how much trouble it required and how far it deviated from the primitive simplicity. Our admiration is extended only to what is new to us, and we all overlook the excellence of things we are used to, however curious [see Glossary] they are. You would be laughed at if you described as 'luxury' the plain dress of a poor creature who walks along in a thick parish gown with a coarse shirt under it; yet how many people, how many trades, and what a variety of skill and tools must be employed to produce the most ordinary Yorkshire cloth? What depth of thought and ingenuity, what toil and labour, and what length of time must it have cost before man could learn to get from a seed to such a useful product as linen?

[He talks about the fastidiousness of a society that regarded linen as unfit to be worn, even by the poorest people, when it is a bit dirty; describes this as requiring the use of fire to boil water to dissolve 'one of the most difficult compositions that chemistry can boast of'; and says that there was a time when laundering clothes was seen in that way.] But the age we live in would call a man fool if he described as 'extravagant' and 'fastidious' a poor woman who, after wearing her smock for a whole week, washed it with a bit of stinking soap costing a groat a pound.

The arts of brewing and making bread have gradually been brought to the perfection they are now in, but to have invented them all at once would have required more knowledge and a deeper insight into the nature of fermentation than the greatest philosopher has yet been endowed with;

but the products of both are now enjoyed by the lowest of our species—a starving wretch cannot make a more humble and modest request than by asking for a bit of bread or a draught of small beer.

Man has learned by experience that the small plumes and down of birds, heaped together, would gently resist any incumbent weight and heave up again as soon as the pressure is over. The first use of them to sleep on was, no doubt, aimed at complimenting the vanity as well as ease of the wealthy and potent; but they have now become so common that almost everybody lies on featherbeds, and to replace them by flocks [= 'tufts of wool'] is looked on a miserable shift of the most necessitous. What a vast height luxury must have achieved for sleeping on the soft wool of animals to be reckoned a hardship!

[Similarly with buildings. 'If the ancient Britons and Gauls came out of their graves', they might envy the care with which paupers are now treated in 'stately palaces' such as Greenwich Hospital or the *Invalides* in Paris.]

·EATING MEAT·

Another piece of luxury the poor enjoy that is not looked on as such is their making use of the flesh of animals to eat. There is no doubt that in a golden age the wealthiest would abstain from this. I have often thought that if it were not for the tyranny that custom usurps over us [he devotes a paragraph to this], men of any tolerable good nature could never be reconciled to the killing of so many **animals** for their daily food, as long as the bountiful earth so plentifully provides them with varieties of **vegetable** dainties. I know that reason arouses our compassion only faintly, so I am not surprised that men so little commiserate such imperfect creatures as crayfish, oysters, cockles, and indeed all fish in general: as they are mute, and different from us in their

inward formation and outward shape, and they express themselves unintelligibly to us; so it is not strange that their grief does not affect our *understanding*, which it cannot reach; for nothing stirs us to pity so effectively as when the symptoms of misery strike immediately on our senses. . . . But in such perfect animals as sheep and oxen, whose heart, brain and nerves differ so little from ours, and in whom the organs of sense and consequently feeling itself are the same as they are in human creatures, I can't imagine how a man not hardened in blood and massacre is able to see a violent death, and the pangs of it, without concern.

Most people will think it a sufficient answer to this to say that there can be no cruelty in putting creatures to the use they were designed for; but I have heard men say this while their inner nature has reproached them with the falsehood of the assertion. Almost everyone who was not brought up in a slaughter-house will admit that of all trades he could never have been a butcher; and I question whether anyone, ever, so much as killed a chicken without reluctance the first time. Some people refuse to eat poultry that they fed and took care of themselves; yet they will feed heartily and without remorse on beef, mutton and fowls bought in the market. This behaviour seems to show something like a consciousness of guilt; it looks as if they tried to save themselves from the imputation of a crime (which they know sticks somewhere) by removing the cause of it as far as they can from themselves; and I find in this some strong remains of primitive pity and innocence, which the arbitrary power of custom has not yet been able to conquer.

What I am building on here, I shall be told, is a folly that wise men are not guilty of. I admit that; but it comes from a real passion inherent in our nature, and demonstrates that we are born with a repugnance to the killing and thus to the eating of animals. . . .

[After a paragraph based on his belief (mistaken, in fact) that English law would not allow surgeons or butchers to serve on juries in capital cases because they might be too callous, Mandeville tells a 'fable' in which an eloquent lion debates with a castaway Roman merchant about whether the lion should refrain from eating him. The merchant eventually pleads the superiority of the human species, whereupon the lion pitches in at great length, with a very Mandevillean series of put-downs, focussing on the faults that have led humans to be carnivores. After all this—which Mandeville cheerfully invites us to skip—he sums up.]

The lion, in my opinion, has stretched the point too far. But when to soften the flesh of male animals we have by castration prevented their tendons from becoming tough, I confess that I think it ought to move a human creature when he reflects on the cruel care with which they are

fattened for destruction. When a large and gentle bullock after many blows falls stunned at last, and his armed head is fastened to the ground with cords; as soon as the wide wound is made and the jugulars are cut, what mortal can without compassion •hear the painful bellowings intercepted by his blood, the bitter sighs that declare the sharpness of his anguish, and the deep groans fetched with anxiety from the bottom of his strong and palpitating heart; •look on the trembling and violent convulsions of his limbs; •see his eyes become dim and languid; and •behold his strugglings, gasps and last efforts for life, the certain signs of his approaching fate? When a creature has given such convincing and undeniable proofs of the terrors on him, and the pains and agonies he feels, is there a follower of Descartes so inured to blood as not to refute by his commiseration the philosophy of that vain reasoner?

Remarks Q and R

Remark Q

'for frugally they now lived on their salary'

When people have small incomes and are honest, *that* is when most of them begin to be frugal, and not before. In ethics 'frugality' is the name for the virtue whose principle leads men to •abstain from superfluities, •despise laborious artificial contrivances to procure ease or pleasure, •content themselves with the natural simplicity of things, and •be carefully temperate in the enjoyment of them, without a touch of covetousness. Thus defined, 'frugality' may be scarcer than many imagine; but what is generally understood by the word is a commoner quality, consisting in a medium between profuseness and avarice, rather leaning to the latter—a prudent economy that some people call 'saving'. In private families it is the most certain method to increase an estate, and some people imagine that this holds also for whole nations, and that (for example) the English would be much richer than they are if they were as frugal as some of their neighbours. This (I think) is an error. To prove my case I first refer the reader to what I said about this in Remark L, and then go on thus.

Experience teaches us •that just as people differ in their views and perceptions of things, so they vary in their inclinations; one man is given to covetousness, another to prodigality, and a third is only saving. And •that men are very seldom reclaimed from their favourite passions by reason or by precept, and that if anything ever draws them away from what they are naturally attracted to, it must be a change in their circumstances or their fortunes. These observations show us that to make a nation as a whole

lavish, the product of the country must be considerable in proportion to the inhabitants, and what they are lavish with must be cheap; that on the contrary to make a nation as a whole frugal, the necessities of life must be scarce and consequently expensive; and that therefore—let the best politician [see Glossary] do what he can—the profuseness or frugality of a people in general must always depend on and be proportioned to the fruitfulness and product of the country, the number of inhabitants, and the taxes they are to bear. If anyone would refute this, let him prove from history that any country ever had a national frugality without a national necessity.

Let us examine, then, what is needed to aggrandise and enrich a nation. The first desirable blessings for any society of men are a fertile soil and a happy climate, a mild government, and more land than people. These things will make men easy, loving, honest and sincere. In this condition they may be as virtuous as they can, without the least injury to the public, and consequently as happy as they please themselves [that sentence is exactly as Mandeville wrote it]. But they will have no arts or sciences, and will be quiet as long as their neighbours will let them; they will be poor, ignorant, and almost wholly destitute of what we call the comforts of life, and all the cardinal virtues together won't so much as procure a tolerable coat or a porridge-pot among them; for in this state of slothful ease and stupid innocence, while you need not fear great vices you must not expect any considerable virtues. Man never exerts himself except when aroused by his desires: while they lie dormant and there is nothing to raise them, his excellence and abilities will be forever undiscovered, and the lumpish machine without the

influence of his passions can be fairly compared to a huge windmill without a breath of air.

To make a society of men strong and powerful, you must touch their passions. Divide the land (even if there is plenty to spare) and their possessions will make them covetous; arouse them from their idleness with joking praises, and pride will set them to work seriously; teach them trades and handicrafts and you'll bring envy and emulation among them. To increase their numbers, set up a variety of manufactures and leave no ground uncultivated; let property be inviolably secured, and privileges equal to all men; allow nobody to act unlawfully and everybody to think what he pleases; for a country where anyone willing to work can be maintained. . . . must always be thronged and can never lack people as long as there are any in the world. If you want them to be bold and warlike, turn to military discipline, make good use of their fear, and flatter their vanity with skill and persistence; but if you want them also to be an opulent, knowing and polite nation, teach them commerce with foreign countries, and do everything you possibly can to get them to use the sea; then promote navigation, cherish the merchant, and encourage every branch of trade. This will bring riches, and where there are riches there will soon be arts and sciences. By doing these things, and by good management, politicians can make a people potent, renowned and flourishing.

But if you want a frugal and honest society, the best policy is to preserve men in their native simplicity, try not to increase their numbers; let them never be acquainted with strangers or superfluities, but keep from them anything that might raise their desires or improve their understanding. Great wealth and foreign treasure will never consent to come among men unless they can bring their inseparable companions, avarice and luxury; where trade is considerable,

fraud will intrude. To be both *well-bred and sincere* is a contradiction: while man advances in knowledge and his manners are polished, we must expect to see his desires enlarged, his appetites refined and his vices increased.

·THE FLOURISHING OF THE DUTCH·

[Mandeville was Dutch. He first went to England and began to learn the language at the age of 21. What follows reflects how thoroughly he came to think of himself as English.]

The Dutch ascribe their present grandeur to the virtue and frugality of their ancestors, but actually what made that negligible patch of ground so considerable among the principal powers of Europe has been •their political wisdom in making everything secondary to merchandise and navigation, •the unlimited liberty of conscience that is enjoyed among them, and •their tireless efforts to use the most effective means to encourage and increase trade in general.

They never were noted for frugality before Philip II of Spain began to rage over them with that unheard-of tyranny. Their laws were trampled on, their rights and large immunities taken from them, and their constitution torn to pieces. Several of their chief nobles were summarily condemned and executed. Complaints were punished as severely as resistance, and those who escaped being massacred were plundered by ravenous soldiers. This was intolerable to a people that had always had the mildest of governments and greater privileges than any of the neighbouring nations; so they chose to die in arms rather than perish by cruel executioners. Given Spain's strength at the time and the low circumstances those distressed Dutch states, there never was a more unequal strife; yet such was their fortitude and resolution that those provinces jointly maintained against the greatest and best-disciplined nation in Europe the most protracted and bloody war in all of history.

Rather than become a victim to the Spanish fury, they were willing to live on one third of their revenues, and spend the greatest part of their income on defending themselves against their merciless enemies. These hardships and calamities started them on that extraordinary frugality, and continuance of the same difficulties for more than 80 years inevitably made it customary and habitual to them.

But all their arts of saving, and penurious way of living, could never have enabled them to overcome such a powerful enemy if their industry in promoting their fishery and navigation in general had not helped to make up for the natural wants and disadvantages they laboured under.

The country is so small and so populous that there is not land enough (though hardly an inch of it is unimproved) to feed the tenth part of the inhabitants. Holland itself is full of large rivers, and lies lower than the sea, which would run over it every tide and wash it away in one winter if it weren't kept out by vast banks and huge walls. The repairs of those—and their sluices, keys, mills, and other things they need to keep from being drowned—are a greater expense to them than could be raised by a general land tax of four shillings in the pound deducted from the neat product of the landlord's revenue.

It is not surprising that people in such circumstances, including greater taxes than any other nation, are obliged to be *saving*. But why must they be a pattern to others who

- are more happily situated,
- are much richer within themselves, and
- have ten times as much ground per person?

The Dutch and we often buy and sell at the same markets, and to that extent our views may be said to be the same; but apart from that, the interests and political reasons for the economies of the two nations are very different. It is in *their* interest to be frugal and spend little because they have to

get everything from abroad except butter, cheese and fish, of which they consume three times as much per person as we do here. It is in *our* interest to eat plenty of beef and mutton to maintain the farmer, and further improve our land, of which we have enough to feed twice our population if it was better cultivated. The Dutch may have more shipping and more ready money than we, but those are only the tools they work with. Similarly, a carrier may have more horses than a man of ten times his worth, and a banker may usually have more ready cash at hand than a gentleman who is vastly wealthier. . . .

Those who are frugal *on principle* are frugal in everything; but in Holland the people are sparing only in things that are daily wanted and soon consumed. In things that are lasting they are quite otherwise: in pictures and marble they are profuse; in their buildings and gardens they are extravagant to the point of folly. Other countries have stately courts and extensive palaces that belong to princes, which nobody can expect in a commonwealth that has as much equality as Holland does; but in all Europe you'll find no private buildings so sumptuously magnificent as many of the merchants' and other gentlemen's houses are in Amsterdam and some other great cities of that small province. . . .

Those who maintain that the frugality of that nation flows not so much from necessity as from a general aversion to vice and luxury point us to their public administration and smallness of salaries, their prudence in bargaining for and buying commodities, their great care not to be imposed upon by those who serve them, and their severity against those who break their contracts. But what these people ascribe to the virtue and honesty of ministers is wholly due to their strict regulations governing the management of the public treasure, from which their admirable form of government will not allow them to depart. One good man may take

another's word, if they so agree, but a whole nation ought never to trust to any honesty except what is built upon necessity; for a people will be unhappy and their constitution always precarious if their welfare depends on the virtues and consciences of ministers and politicians.

The Dutch generally try to promote as much frugality among their subjects as possible, not because it is a virtue but because it is generally speaking in their interest, as I have shown; for as their interest changes, so do their maxims, as can be seen from this:

As soon as their East-India ships come home, the company pays off the men, and many of them receive the greatest part of what they have earned in seven or eight or more years. These poor fellows are encouraged to spend their money with all profuseness imaginable; and—considering that have been so long kept at hard labour without money, with a miserable diet, in the midst of danger—it cannot be difficult to make them lavish as soon as they have plenty. They squander away in wine, women and music as much as people of their taste and education are capable of, and are allowed (as long as they abstain from doing mischief) to revel and riot with greater licentiousness than is usually allowed to others. [He gives details.] This madness continues in most of them while they have anything left, which never lasts long. After about six weeks the company has other ships ready to depart; where these infatuated wretches (their money being gone) are forced to enter themselves again, and may have leisure to repent their folly.

In this stratagem there is a double policy. **(i)** If these sailors who have become accustomed to hot climates and unwholesome air and diet were to be frugal and stay in their own country, the ·East-India· company would be continually

obliged to employ fresh men who would not be so fit for their business. . . . **(ii)** The large sums so often distributed among those sailors are in this way put immediately into circulation throughout the country, from which most of it is soon drawn back into the public treasury by heavy excises and other impositions.

·SUPPOSING FRUGALITY IN GREAT BRITAIN·

Suppose that I am mistaken in everything I said in Remark L on behalf of luxury, and the need for it to maintain trade. Then let us examine what general frugality, if forced on people whether they have occasion for it or not, would produce in such a nation as ours. Let us suppose then that all the people in Great Britain consume only four fifths of what they do now, and so save one fifth of their income; and let us further suppose—though this is impossible—that this has no harmful effect on trade or agriculture. . . . The consequence would be that, unless money suddenly fell prodigiously in value while everything else (contrary to reason) became very expensive, at the end of five years all the working people and the poorest of labourers would be have as much ready cash as they now spend in a whole year.

Let us now, overjoyed with this increase of wealth, consider the condition the working people would be in (I'm not going to discuss anyone else); reasoning from experience and what we daily observe of them, let us judge what their behaviour would be in such a case. Everyone knows that there are many journeymen weavers, tailors, clothworkers, and twenty other handicrafts who, if they can maintain themselves by four days' labour in a week, will hardly be persuaded to work the fifth; and that there are thousands of labouring men who, though they hardly enough to live on, put themselves to fifty inconveniences, disoblige their masters, pinch their bellies and run in debt so as to have

holidays. When men show such an extraordinary proclivity to idleness and pleasure, what reason have we to think that they would ever work unless they were forced to it by immediate necessity? . . .

What would become of our manufactures? If the merchant would send cloth abroad, he must make it himself, for the clothier cannot get one man out of twelve that used to work for him [meaning that a merchant wanting to export cloth won't be able to get it made for him here, because the clothier won't be able to re-hire one in twelve of his previous workers]. If this happened only with the journeymen shoemakers and nobody else, half of us would go barefoot in less than a year. The chief and most pressing use for money in a nation is to pay for the labour of the poor, and when there is a real scarcity of money, those who have many workmen to pay will always feel it first; but despite this great necessity for cash, it would be easier (if property was well secured) to live without money than to live without poor people; for who would do the work? For this reason •the quantity of circulating coin in a country ought to be proportioned to the number of hands that are employed; and •the wages of labourers ought to be proportioned to the price of provisions—they ought to be kept from starving, but should receive nothing worth saving. If here and there one of the lowest class manages—by uncommon industry [see Glossary] and pinching his belly—to lift himself above the condition he was brought up in, nobody ought to hinder him; indeed, it is undeniably the wisest course for every person and every private family to be frugal; but it is in the interest of all rich nations that most of the poor should almost never be idle, and yet keep spending what they earn.

Sir William Temple rightly says that all men are more prone to ease and pleasure than they are to labour when they are not prompted to it by •pride or •avarice; and those who get their living by their daily labour are seldom powerfully

influenced by •either, so that they have nothing to push them to work but their *wants*, which it is prudence to relieve but folly to cure. The only thing that can make the labouring man industrious is a moderate quantity of money; too little will either dispirit him or make him desperate (depending on his temperament), whereas too much will make him insolent and lazy.

Most people would laugh at a man who maintained that too much money could undo a nation; yet this has been the fate of Spain. [He goes into details of how 'a fertile country where trade and manufactures flourished' was ruined by acquiring 'that mighty treasure that was obtained with more hazard and cruelty than the world had ever known, costing the lives of twenty million Indians'. Summing up:] Thus by too much money, the making of colonies and other mismanagements caused by having too much money, Spain has gone from being •a fruitful and well-peopled country, with mighty titles and possessions to being •a barren and empty thoroughfare through which gold and silver pass from America to the rest of the world; and from being •rich, acute, diligent and laborious to being •slow, idle, proud and beggarly. So much for Spain. The next country where money may be called the product is Portugal, and the figure that kingdom makes in Europe with all its gold is not much to be envied.

So the great art of making a nation happy and flourishing consists in giving everybody an opportunity to be employed; and to bring that about a government's first care should be to promote as **(i)** great a variety of manufactures, arts, and handicrafts as human wit can invent; and the second to encourage **(ii)** agriculture and fishery in all their branches; for as **(i)** is an infallible way of drawing vast multitudes of people into a nation, so **(ii)** is the only method to maintain them.

The greatness and felicity of nations must be expected from this policy, not from trivial regulating of lavishness and frugality; for whether the value of gold and silver rises or falls, the enjoyment of all societies will always depend on **(ii)** the fruits of the earth and **(i)** the labour of the people. These two, taken together, are a more certain, more inexhaustible, and more real treasure than the gold of Brazil or the silver of Bolivia.

Remark R

'no honour now' etc.

'Honour' in its figurative sense is a chimera without truth or being, an invention of moralists and politicians, signifying a certain principle [see Glossary] of virtue—not related to religion—that some men have and are kept by it close to their duty and commitments, whatever they may be. For example: a man of honour enters into a conspiracy with others to murder a king; he is obliged to go through with it; and if—overcome by remorse or good nature—he is jolted by the wickedness of his purpose, reveals the plot, and turns a witness against his accomplices, he thereby forfeits his honour, at least among the party he belonged to. The excellence of this principle is that the vulgar are destitute of it, and it is only in people of the better sort, as some oranges have pips and others not, though the outside is the same. In great families it is like the gout, generally regarded as hereditary, and all lords' children are born with it. In some who never felt anything of it, it is acquired by conversation and reading (especially of romances), in others by promotion; but there is nothing that encourages the growth of honour more than a sword, and upon the first wearing of one some people have felt considerable shoots of it in 24 hours.

The chief and most important care a man of honour ought

to have is the preservation of this principle. Rather than forfeit it, he must lose his employments and estate, indeed life itself; for which reason, whatever humility he may show by way of good breeding, he is allowed to put an inestimable value upon himself as a possessor of this invisible ornament. The only way to preserve this principle is to live up to the rules of honour, the laws he is to walk by; he is obliged always to be faithful to his trust, to prefer the public interest to his own, not to tell lies or defraud or wrong anyone, and from others to allow no affront, which is a term of art [= 'a technical term'] for every action aimed at undervaluing him.

The men of ancient honour, of whom I reckon Don Quixote to have been the last on record, were very exact observers of all these laws and many others; but the moderns seem to be more remiss; they have a profound veneration for the last of them—about not allowing any affront—but they do not pay equal obedience to any of the others; and anyone who strictly complies with that one will have plenty of infringements of all the other laws connived at [see Glossary].

A man of honour is always regarded as impartial and as a man of sense (*of course*, for nobody ever heard of a man of honour who was a fool); and for this reason he has nothing to do with the law and is always allowed to be a judge in his own case. If the least injury is done to himself or his friend, his relation, his servant, his dog, or anything he is pleased to take under his honourable protection, satisfaction must be demanded; and if it proves to be an affront and he who gave it is also a man of honour, a battle must ensue. This makes it evident that a man of honour must have courage, without which his other principle—honour—would be no more than a sword without a point. Let us therefore examine what courage consists in, and whether it is what most people think it is, a real something that valiant men have in their nature distinct from all their other qualities.

There is nothing on earth as universally sincere as the love that all creatures have for themselves; and as all love implies a care to preserve the thing beloved, so there is nothing more sincere in any creature than his wishes and attempts to preserve himself. This is the law of nature, by which no creature is endowed with any appetite or passion that does not directly or indirectly tend to the preservation of himself or his species.

The means by which nature makes every creature continually engage in this business of self-preservation are grafted into him; in man they are called *desires*; they compel him to crave what he thinks will sustain or please him or command him to avoid what he imagines might displease, hurt or destroy him. These desires or passions all have their different symptoms, and from the variety of disturbances they make within us their various labels have been given them, as I showed with pride and shame.

·FEAR·

The passion that is raised in us when we think mischief [see Glossary] is approaching us is called 'fear'. The violence of the disturbance it makes within us is always proportional not to the danger but to our apprehension of the mischief dreaded, whether real or imaginary; and because our fear is always proportioned to our apprehension of the danger, it follows that while that apprehension lasts a man can no more shake off his fear than he can shake off a leg or an arm. . . .

Most people think that this apprehension is to be conquered by reason, but I confess I do not. Those who have been frightened will tell you that as soon as they could recollect themselves—i.e. make use of their reason—their apprehension was conquered. But this is no conquest at all, for in such a case the danger either was altogether imaginary or was past by the time they could use their reason; so if

they found there was no danger, it is no wonder that they didn't apprehend any. But when the danger is permanent, *then* let them use their reason to examine the greatness and reality of the danger; if they find it less than they imagined, their apprehension will be lessened accordingly, but if the danger proves to be real and exactly what they took it to be at first, then their reason will *increase* their apprehension. No creature can fight offensively while this fear lasts; yet we see brutes fight obstinately and worry one another to death; so some other passion must be able to overcome this fear, and the most contrary to it is anger. To get to the bottom of that, I beg leave to make another digression.

·ANGER·

No creature can subsist without food, and no species of the more perfect animals can continue for long unless young ones are continually born as fast as the old ones die. So the first and fiercest appetite that nature has given them is *hunger*, the next is *lust*; one prompting them to procreate, as the other tells them to eat. Now, if we observe that anger is the passion raised in us when we are thwarted in our desires, and that it sums up all the strength in creatures and was given them to exert themselves more vigorously in trying to remove, overcome, or destroy whatever obstructs them in the pursuit of self-preservation, we shall find that brutes—except when they or what they love, or the liberty of either, are threatened—have nothing significant that can move them to anger but hunger or lust. Those are what make them more fierce, for we must observe that the thwarting of creatures' appetites that occurs when they are hindered from enjoying what they have in view also occurs (though perhaps with less violence) when they want something and cannot find it. This will appear more plainly if we bear in mind that all creatures on earth live •on the fruits and products of it

or •on the flesh of other animals, their fellow-creatures. The latter, which we call 'beasts of prey', have been armed by nature with **(i)** weapons and strength to overcome and tear asunder those it has designed for their food, and been given **(ii)** a much keener appetite than herbivores have. For as to **(i)**: if a cow loved mutton as well as she does grass, having no claws or talons and only one row of teeth, all of equal length, she would be starved even among a flock of sheep. As to **(ii)** their voraciousness: the hunger that can make a creature fatigue, harass and expose himself to danger for every bit he eats is—it stands to reason, and our experience confirms it—more piercing than the hunger that only tells him to eat what stands before him, which he can have merely by stooping down. Also, just as beasts of prey have an instinct to crave, trace and discover the creatures that are good food for them, so the latter have a matching instinct to shun, conceal themselves, and run away from those that hunt after them; from which it follows that beasts of prey go more often with empty bellies than do other creatures whose victuals neither fly from nor oppose them. This must perpetuate as well as increase their hunger, making it a constant fuel to their anger.

What stirs up this anger in bulls and cocks that will fight to death and yet are not very voracious and not animals of prey? I answer, *lust*. [He follows this thread in some detail, emphasising the facts about species in which a male remains peaceful if, but only if, it has a considerable harem of females at its disposal.]

For evidence that the influence of hunger and lust on the temper of animals is not as whimsical as some may imagine, consider our own case. Although our hunger is infinitely less violent than that of wolves and other ravenous creatures, we see that when healthy people with good digestions have to wait beyond the usual time for their food, they are more

fretful and more easily annoyed by trifles than at any other time. And although lust in man is not as raging as it is in bulls and other salacious creatures, nothing provokes men and women to anger sooner and more violently than what thwarts their amours when they are heartily in love; and the most timid and gently brought up folk of either sex have slighted the greatest dangers, and set aside all other considerations, to bring about the destruction of a rival.

I have tried to demonstrate that

- no creature can fight offensively as long as his fear lasts;
- fear can be conquered only by another passion;
- the passion most contrary to it and most effective in overcoming it is anger;
- the two principal appetites which when disappointed can stir up anger are hunger and lust; and
- in all brute beasts the proneness to anger and obstinacy in fighting generally depend upon the violence of either or both those appetites together;

from which it must follow that what we call 'prowess' or 'natural courage' in creatures is nothing but the effect of anger, and that all fierce animals must be very ravenous or very lustful or both.

Let us now examine how in the light of this we ought to judge of our own species. From •the tenderness of man's skin, •the great care that is required for years together to rear him, •the structure of his jaws, •the evenness of his teeth, •the breadth of his nails, and •the slowness of both, it is not probable that nature designed him for rapine [see Glossary], which is why his hunger is not voracious as it is in beasts of prey. Nor is he as salacious as other animals that are called 'salacious'. And being very industrious to supply his wants, he can have no reigning appetite to perpetuate his anger, and must consequently be a timorous animal.

This is to be understood only of man in his savage state; for if we examine him as a member of a society and a taught animal, we shall find him quite another creature: as soon as his pride has room to play, and envy, avarice and ambition begin to catch hold of him, he is roused from his natural innocence and stupor. As his knowledge increases, his desires are enlarged, and consequently his wants and appetites are multiplied; so he will often be thwarted in the pursuit of them, and meet with vastly more disappointment to stir up his anger than he did in his former condition; and before long man would become the most hurtful and noxious creature in the world, if let alone, whenever he could overpower his adversary with no harm to fear except from the person who angered him.

The first care of all governments, therefore, is by severe punishments to curb his anger when it does harm, and so by increasing his fears prevent the damage it might produce. When various laws to restrain him from using force are strictly enforced, self-preservation must teach him to be peaceable; and as it is everybody's business to be as little disturbed as is possible, his fears will be continually augmented and enlarged as he advances in experience, understanding and foresight. The inevitable consequence is that just as the provocations to anger he will receive in the civilised state will be infinite, so will his fears to damp it down; and thus in a little time he'll be taught by his fears to destroy his anger, and to use skill to pursue in a different way the same self-preservation for which nature had provided him with anger and his other passions.

The only useful passion, then, that man is possessed of toward the peace and quiet of a society is his fear, and the more you work on that the more orderly and governable he'll be; for however useful anger may be to man as a single creature by himself, society has no place for it. . . .

All men, whether born in courts or in forests, are susceptible of anger. When this passion overcomes a man's whole set of fears (as among all degrees of people it sometimes does), then the man has true courage, and will fight as boldly as a lion or a tiger—*then* and only then. I shall argue that whatever is called 'courage' in a man who is not angry is spurious and artificial.

·'COURAGE' WITHOUT ANGER·

It is possible by good government to keep a society always quiet within itself, but nobody can ensure peace from without for ever. The society may have occasion to enlarge their territories, or others may invade theirs, or something else will happen that man must be brought to fight; for however civilised men may be, they never forget that force goes beyond reason. The politician now must alter his procedures and take off some of man's fears; he must try to persuade him that •everything he had been told about the barbarity of killing men ceases when these men are enemies to the public, and that •his adversaries are neither so good nor so strong as himself. When these things are well managed they seldom fail to draw the hardiest, most quarrelsome, and most mischievous men into combat; but if those are their only qualities, I won't answer for their behaviour in battle. Once you make them undervalue their enemies, they'll soon be stirred up to anger, and while that lasts they'll fight with greater obstinacy than any disciplined troop; but if anything unforeseen happens—a sudden great noise, a tempest, or any strange or uncommon event that seems threatening—fear seizes them, disarms their anger, and makes every man of them run away.

[He says that 'natural courage' is useless for military purposes: •those who have been in battle won't believe the propaganda saying that the enemy is weak, and won't be

easy to make angry; •anger is a brief passion, and the enemy won't feel the 'shock' of it for long; and •angry soldiers will be impervious to advice and discipline, and so won't fight intelligently. Therefore:] Anger, without which no creature has natural courage, is altogether useless in a war to be managed by stratagem, so the government must find an equivalent for courage that will make men fight.

Whoever wants to civilise men and establish them into a body politic must be thoroughly acquainted with all their passions and appetites, strengths and weaknesses, and understand how to turn their greatest frailties to public advantage. I showed in the *Enquiry into the origin of moral virtue* [page 14] how easily men were induced to believe anything said in their praise. So if a law-giver or politician whom they have a great veneration for should tell them that

most men had within them a principle [see Glossary] of valour distinct from anger or any other passion, which made them despise danger and face death itself with intrepidity, and that those who had the most of it were the most valuable of their kind,

it is very likely that most of them, though they felt nothing of this principle, would swallow it for truth, and that the proudest feeling themselves moved at this piece of flattery, and not skilled in distinguishing the passions, might—mistaking pride for courage—imagine that they felt courage heaving in their breasts. If a mere 10% can be persuaded to declare openly that they have this principle, and maintain it against all gainsayers, it won't be long before 60% say the same. Then the politician has only to take all imaginable care to flatter the pride of those that brag of this and are willing to stand by it. The same pride that drew a man in initially will oblige him to defend the assertion from then on, till at last the fear of revealing the reality of his heart comes to be so great that it outdoes the fear of death itself. Increase man's

pride and his fear of shame will grow proportionally, for the greater the value a man sets upon himself, the more pains he'll take and the greater hardships he'll undergo to avoid shame.

·'COURAGE' BASED ON HONOUR AND SHAME·

The great art to make man courageous, then, is first to make him claim this principle of valour within him, and then to inspire him with as much horror against shame as nature has given him against death. That there *are* things man may be more averse to than he is to death is evident from suicide. Someone who makes death his choice must regard it as less terrible than what he shuns by it; for nobody would deliberately kill himself except to avoid something, whether present or to come, real or imaginary. [He presents a somewhat confused account of Lucretia's suicide after being raped by Tarquin, concluding that 'she valued her virtue less than her glory, and her life less than either'.] So the 'courage' that is only useful to the body politic and is generally called 'true valour' is artificial, and consists in an extreme horror of shame, infused by flattery into men of exalted pride.

As soon as the notions of honour and shame are received in a society, it is not hard to make men fight. First, make sure they are convinced of the justice of their cause, for no man fights heartily who thinks himself in the wrong; then show them that their altars, their possessions, wives, children, and everything near and dear to them is concerned in the present quarrel or may be affected by it later; then put feathers in their caps and distinguish them from civilians, talk of public spiritedness, the love of their country, facing an enemy with intrepidity, despising death, the bed of honour, and such high-sounding words, and every proud man will take up arms and fight himself to death before he'll turn tail—

if it is in daylight. One man in an army is a check on another; and a hundred of them who single and without any witness would all be cowards are for fear of incurring one another's contempt made valiant by being together. To continue and heighten this artificial courage, all who run away ought to be punished with ignominy; those who fought well, whether they won or lost, must be flattered and solemnly commended; those who lost limbs should be rewarded; and, above all, those who were killed ought to be taken notice of, artfully [see Glossary] lamented, and have extraordinary encomiums bestowed upon them. Paying honours to the dead will always be a sure method of making dupes of the living.

·THE PHYSICAL BASIS OF COURAGE, REAL OR ARTIFICIAL·

When I say that the courage made use of in the wars is artificial, I don't imagine that all men can be made equally valiant by the same art. Because men do not have an equal share of pride, and differ from one another in shape and inward structure, they cannot possibly all be equally fit for the same uses. Some men will never be able to learn music, yet make good mathematicians; others will play excellently on the violin and yet be coxcombs [= 'foolish fops'] as long as they live, whoever they converse with. But to show that there is no evasion, I shall set aside what I have said about artificial courage and prove that what the greatest hero differs in from the rankest coward is altogether corporeal, and depends upon their constitutions, i.e. the mixture of the fluids in their bodies. The constitution that favours courage consists in the natural •strength, •elasticity, and due •contexture of the finer spirits; and these qualities are the sole source of what we call steadfastness, resolution and obstinacy. They are the only thing common to natural and artificial bravery, and are to either of them what *consistency of the mixture* is to plaster walls, which hinders them from coming off and makes

them lasting. That some people are very much frightened at things that are strange and sudden to them others very little is entirely due to the firmness or flabbiness in the tone of their spirits. Pride is useless in a fright, because while the fright lasts we can't think; and because this is counted as a disgrace, people are always angry with anything that frightens them as soon as the surprise is over. When at the turn of a battle the conquerors give no quarter and are very cruel, this is a sign that their enemies fought well and had put them first into great fears.

The effects of strong liquors confirm that resolution depends upon this tone of the spirits. The fiery particles of the liquors crowd into the brain, strengthen the spirits, and produce an imitation of anger. [He •offers to explain why brandy is more apt to make men angry than wine 'at the same pitch of drunkenness'; •says that the 'contexture of spirits is so weak' in some people that even drink doesn't make them angry enough to fight any significant opponent; and •presents this weakness as a physical defect comparable with (say) a club foot:] This is a defect in the principle of the fluids, as other deformities are faults of the solids. . . . This constitution is often influenced by health and sickness, and impaired by great losses of blood; sometimes it is corrected by diet. It is what La Rochefoucauld means when he says: 'Vanity, shame, and above all *constitution* very often make up the courage of men and the virtue of women.'

There is nothing that more improves the useful martial courage I am discussing, and at the same time shows it to be artificial, than *practice*. When men are disciplined, and become familiar with all the tools of death and engines of destruction, the shouts, the outcries, the fire and smoke, the groans of wounded and ghostly looks of the dying, their fears quickly abate; not that they become less afraid to die, but being used so often to see the same dangers, they *apprehend*

the reality of them [Mandeville's words] less than they did. These men are, as they deserve to be, valued for every siege they are at and every battle they are in; so that inevitably the military actions they participate in must serve as solid steps by which their pride mounts up, and with it their fear of shame, which (as I said before) will always be proportional to their pride. Their fear of shame increases as their apprehension of the danger decreases, so it is no wonder that most of them learn to display little or no fear of danger; and some great generals can preserve a presence of mind and counterfeit a calm serenity in the midst of all the noise, horror and confusion of a battle.

·'COURAGE' AND VANITY·

Man is such a silly creature that, intoxicated with the fumes of vanity, he can feast on thoughts of the praises that will be paid his memory in future ages, doing this with so much ecstasy as to neglect his present life—indeed to court and covet death, if he imagines it will add to the glory he had acquired before. There is no pitch of self-denial that a man of pride and constitution cannot reach. . . . I cannot help wondering at the simplicity [here = 'simple-mindedness'] of some good men who, hearing of the joy and alacrity with which holy men in persecutions have suffered for their faith, imagine that such constancy must exceed all human force unless supported by miraculous assistance from heaven. Just as most people are unwilling to acknowledge all the *frailties* of their species, so they are unacquainted with the *strength* of our nature, and don't know that men with firm constitutions can work themselves up into enthusiasm [see Glossary] with no help but the violence of their passions. There have been men who, assisted only by pride and constitution to maintain the worst of causes, have undergone death and torments with as much cheerfulness as the best of men, animated

with piety and devotion, ever did for the true religion. [He describes three historical examples.]

I have made this digression chiefly to show the strength of human nature, and what mere man may perform by pride and constitution alone. Man may be roused by his vanity as violently as a lion is by its anger; and almost every passion (avarice, revenge, ambition, even pity), when it is extraordinary, can by overcoming fear serve him instead of valour, and be mistaken for valour even by himself. . . . To see more clearly what this supposed principle of courage is really built on, let us look into the management of military affairs, and we shall find that pride is nowhere so openly encouraged as there. [He exclaims at the gullibility of soldiers who are proud of their rather shabby uniforms, and can be drawn into battle by 'the noise made on a calf's skin'. Especially the lowest rank in the cavalry:] A trooper is even worse than a foot-soldier; for he has the mortification of being groom to a horse that spends more money than himself. When a man reflects on all this, the way they are generally treated by their officers, their pay, and the care taken of them when they are not wanted, must he not wonder how wretches can be so silly as to be proud of being called 'gentlemen soldiers'? But if they were not called that, no art, discipline or money could make them as brave as thousands of them are.

·KNIGHTS ERRANT·

If we think about what would come from an army if man's bravery did not have other qualifications to sweeten him, we shall find that it would be very pernicious to the civil society; for if man could conquer all his fears, you would hear of nothing but rapes, murders and violences of all sorts, and valiant men would be like giants in Romances. That is why politicians revealed in men a mixed-mettle principle made

up of justice, honesty and all the moral virtues joined to courage; and all who had it automatically became knights errant. They did a great deal of good throughout the world by taming monsters, delivering the distressed and killing the oppressors; but the wings of all the dragons being clipped, the giants destroyed and the damsels everywhere set at liberty (except a few in Spain and Italy who remained imprisoned by their monsters), the order of chivalry, to whom the standard of ancient honour belonged, has been laid aside for some time. It was (like their armours) very massy and heavy; the many virtues it involved made it troublesome, and as ages grew wiser and wiser, the principle of honour in the beginning of the last century was melted and brought to a new standard, like melting and reminting coinage. They put in the same weight of courage, half the amount of honesty, a very little justice, and not a scrap of any other virtue; which has made it easy to carry around compared to what it was. However, such as it is, there would be no living without honour in a large nation; it is the tie of society, and though its chief ingredient comes from our frailties, I know of no virtue that has been half so instrumental in civilising men, who in great societies would soon degenerate into cruel villains and treacherous slaves if honour were removed from among them.

·DUELLING·

As for the duelling part of it: I pity the unfortunate whose lot it is to be involved in duelling; but to say that those who are guilty of it go by false rules, or mistake the notions of honour, is ridiculous; for if there is any honour at all, it teaches men to resent injuries and accept challenges. To say that demanding and giving satisfaction is against the laws of true honour is as absurd as saying that what you see everybody wear is not in fashion.

Those who rail at duelling don't consider the benefit the society receives from that fashion: if every ill-bred fellow could use what language he pleased without being called to account for it, all conversation would be spoiled. Some solemn people tell us that the Greeks and Romans were valiant men, and yet knew nothing of duelling except in their country's quarrel; this is very true, but for that reason the kings and princes in Homer gave one another worse language than our porters and hackney coachmen would be able to bear without resentment.

If you want to hinder duelling, pardon nobody that offends that way, and make the laws against it as severe as you can; but don't take away the thing itself, the custom of it. Keeping it will polish and brighten society in general by making the most resolute and powerful men cautious and circumspect in their behaviour. Nothing civilises a man as much as his fear, and most men would be cowards if they dared; the dread of being called to account keeps many of them in awe, and there are thousands of mannerly and well-accomplished gentlemen in Europe who would have been insolent and intolerable coxcombs without it. [He acknowledges that duelling will lead to a few deaths, but contends that this is a small price to pay for the benefits.] It is strange that a nation should grudge seeing perhaps half a dozen *men* sacrificed in a year to obtain such a valuable blessing as the politeness of manners, the pleasure of conversation, and the happiness of company in general, given that it is often willing to expose (and sometimes loses) as many *thousands of men* in a few hours, without knowing whether it will do any good.

. . . . The governors of societies and those in high stations are greater dupes to pride than anyone else. If some great men did not have a superlative pride and everyone understood the enjoyment of life, who would be a Lord Chancellor of England, a Prime Minister of state in France, or—with

more work and not a sixth part of the profit of either—a Grand Pensionary of Holland? The reciprocal services that all men pay to one another are the foundation of the society. The great ones are not flattered with their high birth for nothing: we extol their family (whether or not it deserves it) so as to arouse their pride and excite them to glorious actions; and some men have been complimented on the greatness of their family and the merit of their ancestors, when in the whole lot of them you could not find two who were not uxorious fools, silly bigots, noted poltroons, or debauched whore-masters. The established pride that is inseparable from those who already have titles makes them often put as much effort into not seeming unworthy of them as the ambition of others who don't yet have titles put into deserving them. . . .

The only thing of weight that can be said against modern honour is that it is directly opposite to religion. The one tells you to bear injuries with patience, the other tells you that if you don't resent them you are not fit to live. Religion commands you to leave all revenge to God, honour bids you trust your revenge to nobody but yourself, even where the law would do it for you. Religion mainly forbids murder, honour openly justifies it; religion bids you not shed blood on any account, honour bids you fight for the least trifle;

religion is built on humility and honour on pride. How to reconcile these must be left to wiser heads than mine.

Why are there so few men of real virtue, and so many of real honour? It is because all the recompense a man has for a virtuous action is the pleasure of doing it, which most people regard as poor pay; whereas the self-denial a man of honour submits to in one appetite is immediately rewarded by the satisfaction he receives from another, and what he loses on the score of avarice or any other passion is doubly repaid to his pride. Also, honour makes large allowances, and virtue none. A man of honour must not cheat or tell a lie; he must punctually repay what he borrows in gambling, though the creditor has nothing to show for it; but he may drink and swear and owe money to all the tradesmen in town without taking notice of their bills. A man of honour must be true to his prince and country while he is in their service; but if he thinks himself not well used, he may leave their service and do them all the harm he can. A man of honour must never change his religion for interest, but he may be as debauched as he pleases and never practise any religion. He must make no attempts upon his friend's wife, daughter, sister, or anyone entrusted to his care, but he may lie with anyone else.

Remarks S, T, V, X and Y

Remark S

'no limner for his art is famed, stone-cutters, carvers are not named'

Among the consequences of nation-wide honesty and frugality would be that no-one would build new houses or use new materials as long as there were enough old ones to serve; and by this three-quarters of the masons, carpenters, bricklayers etc. would lack employment. And with the building trade thus destroyed, what would become of limning [see Glossary], carving, and other arts that are ministering to luxury, and have been thoughtfully forbidden by lawgivers who preferred a good and honest society to a great and wealthy one, and tried to make their subjects virtuous rather than rich? [Two anecdotes from Plutarch, and then:] The same lack of employment would reach innumerable callings; and among the rest, that of the 'weavers that joined rich silk with plate, / and all the trades subordinate' (as the fable has it) would be one of the first to have reason to complain. With (on one hand) the price of land and houses having sunk very low because of the vast numbers that had left the hive, and (on the other) everyone shrinking from all ways of gain that were not strictly honest, it is not probable that many would be able without pride or prodigality to wear cloth of gold and silver, or rich brocades. The consequence of this would be that not only the weaver but also the makers of metal jewellery [he lists five branches of this trade] would soon be affected with this frugality.

Remark T

'to live great, had made her husband rob the state'

When our common rogues are going to be hanged, what they chiefly complain of as the cause of their untimely end—second to the neglect of the Sabbath—is their having kept company with ill women, meaning whores; and I don't doubt that many of the lesser villains venture their necks to satisfy their low amours. But great men are often caused by their •wives to undertake projects as dangerous, and to do things as pernicious, as the most subtle •mistress could have persuaded them to. I have shown that the worst of women and most profligate of the sex did contribute to the consumption of superfluities as well as necessities, and consequently were beneficial to many peaceful drudges who work hard to maintain their families and have no worse plan than an honest livelihood. 'Let them be banished nevertheless', says a good man: 'When every strumpet is gone and the land wholly freed from lewdness, God Almighty will pour upon it blessings that will vastly exceed the profits that are now got by harlots.' This might be true; but I can make it evident that—with or without prostitutes—nothing could make amends for the harm trade would suffer if all the females who enjoy the happy state of matrimony were to behave themselves as a sober wise man could wish them to.

The variety of work that is performed (and the number of hands employed) to gratify the fickleness and luxury of women is prodigious. If only the married ones were to hearken to reason and just protests, think themselves sufficiently answered with the first refusal and never ask a second time, and spend no money except what their husbands knew of

and freely allowed, the consumption of a thousand things they now make use of would be lessened by at least a fourth part. Let us go from house to house and observe the way of the world only among the middling people, creditable shop-keepers who spend two or three hundred a year. We shall find that the women, when they have a dozen suits of clothes, two or three of them hardly worn, will think it a sufficient plea for new ones if they can say that they don't have a gown or petticoat that they haven't often been seen in, and are known by, especially at church. I am speaking not of extravagant women but of ones who as are regarded as prudent and moderate in their desires.

If we look in the same way at the highest ranks, where the richest clothes are a mere trifle compared to their other expenses, and take account of the furniture of all sorts, equipages, jewels, and buildings of persons of quality, we would find a fourth part of *this* to be a vast article in trade. The loss of it would be a greater calamity to such a nation as ours than any other we can conceive. A raging pestilence not excepted; for the death of half a million of people could not cause a tenth part of the disturbance to the kingdom that would be created by the addition of half a million poor unemployed to those who are already a burden to the society in one way or another.

A few men have a real passion for their wives, and are fond of them without reserve; others that don't care for women are nevertheless seemingly uxorious; they take delight in a handsome wife, as a coxcomb does in a fine horse, not for the use he makes of it but because it is his: the pleasure lies in the consciousness of an indisputable possession, and the consequent reflection on the mighty thoughts he imagines others to have of his happiness. The men of each sort may be very lavish to their wives, and often lavish new clothes and other finery on them faster than they can ask for it; but

most are wiser than to indulge the extravagances of their wives so far as to give them immediately everything they are pleased to fancy.

It is incredible what a vast quantity of trinkets as well as apparel are purchased by women, which they could never have acquired except by **(i)** pinching their families, marketing, and other ways of cheating and pilfering from their husbands; others by **(ii)** constantly nagging their spouses, tiring them into compliance and conquering even obstinate churls by perseverance; a third sort **(iii)** are outraged at a denial, and by downright noise and scolding bully their tame fools out of anything they want; while thousands by **(iv)** the force of wheedling know how to overcome the best weighed reasons and the most positive reiterated refusals; the young and beautiful especially laugh at all protests and denials, and few of them scruple to employ the most tender minutes of wedlock to promote a sordid interest. If I had time, I would go on about those base, wicked women who calmly play their arts and false deluding charms against our strength and prudence, and act the harlots with their husbands! Indeed, compared with a whore who impiously profanes and prostitutes the sacred rites of love to vile ignoble ends, a woman who first excites to passion and invites to joys with seeming ardour, then tortures our fondness solely to extort a gift, is worse.

Forgive that digression. I ask the experienced reader to •weigh what I have said on the main topic, then to •call to mind the temporal [see Glossary] blessings that men daily hear not only toasted and wished for when people are merry and idle but likewise gravely and solemnly prayed for in churches and other religious assemblies by clergymen of all sorts and sizes, and to •put these things together with what he has observed in the common affairs of life. When he has reasoned on them without prejudice I dare flatter

myself that he will be obliged to agree that a considerable portion of what makes up the prosperity of London and trade in general, and thus makes up the honour, strength, safety, and all the worldly interest of the nation, depends entirely on the deceit and vile stratagems of women; and that humility, contentedness, meekness, obedience to reasonable husbands, frugality, and all the virtues together, if they had them to the highest degree, could not possibly be a thousandth part as serviceable as their most hateful qualities are in making an opulent, powerful, and what we call a flourishing kingdom.

No doubt many of my readers will be startled at this assertion, and I shall be asked:

(i) Can people not be virtuous in a populous, rich, wide, extended kingdom as well as in a small, indigent state or principality that is poorly inhabited? And if that is impossible, **(ii)** is it the duty of all sovereigns to reduce the wealth and the numbers of their subjects as much as they can?

If I answer Yes to **(i)** I am admitting myself to be wrong; and if I answer Yes to **(ii)** my tenets will justly be called impious or at least dangerous to all large societies. There are many places in my book where such questions might be raised even by a well-meaning reader; so I shall here explain myself, and try to resolve those difficulties that several passages might have raised in him, in order to demonstrate that my opinion is consistent with reason and the strictest morality.

I lay down as a first principle that in all societies, great or small, it is the duty of every member of it to be good, and that it ought to be the case that

- virtue is encouraged,
- vice is discountenanced,

- the laws are obeyed, and
- transgressors are punished.

I next affirm that if we consult history, ancient and modern, for a view of what has passed in the world, we shall find that human nature since the fall of Adam has always been the same, and that its strength and frailties have always been conspicuous around the globe, without any regard to ages, climates, or religion. I never said or thought that man could not be virtuous in a rich and mighty kingdom as well as in the most pitiful commonwealth; but I confess to thinking that no society can become such a rich and mighty kingdom, or stay that way for long, without the vices of man.

This is sufficiently proved throughout the book, I think; and as human nature still continues the same as it has always been for so many thousand years, we have no great reason to suspect a future change in it while the world endures. Now, I cannot see what immorality there is in showing a man the origin and power of the passions that so often, even without his knowing it, hurry him away from his reason; or that there is any impiety in putting him on his guard against himself and the secret stratagems of self-love, and teaching him how actions that come from a victory over the passions differ from those that are only the result of one passion's conquest over another; that is, how real virtue differs from counterfeit. It is an admirable saying of a worthy divine that though many discoveries have been made in the world of self-love there is plenty of *terra incognita* still unexplored.¹ What harm do I do a man if I make him more known to himself than he was before? But we are all so desperately in love with flattery that we can never relish a truth that is humiliating; and I don't believe that the immortality of the soul—a truth broached long before

¹ [The 'saying' is by the famous François de la Rochefoucauld. Mandeville ('divine') may have confused him with a French cardinal of the same name.]

Christianity—would have been so well received if it had not been a pleasing doctrine that extolled and complimented the whole species, including the meanest and most miserable.

Everyone loves to hear the thing he has a share in spoken well of. Even bailiffs, jail-keepers, and the hangman himself want you to think well of their functions; indeed, thieves and house-breakers have more regard for those of their fraternity than for honest people; and I sincerely believe that what has gained this treatise so many enemies is chiefly self-love. Everyone sees it as an affront to himself, because it detracts from the dignity—and lessens the fine notions he had conceived—of mankind, the most worshipful company he belongs to. When I say that societies cannot be raised to wealth, power, and the top of earthly glory without vices, I don't think that by so saying I am telling men to be vicious, any more than I am telling them to be quarrelsome or covetous when I say that the profession of the law could not be maintained in such numbers and splendor if there was not an abundance of too selfish and litigious people.

But as nothing would more clearly demonstrate the falsity of my notions than that the generality of the people should fall in with them, so I don't expect the approval of the multitude. I do not write for the many, but for the few who can think abstractly and have their minds elevated above the vulgar. If I have *shown* the way to worldly greatness, I have always without hesitation *preferred* the road that leads to virtue.

If you want to banish fraud and luxury, prevent profaneness and irreligion, and make the generality of the people charitable, good and virtuous, you should

- break down the printing presses, melt the type, and burn all the books in the island except those at the universities, where they remain unmolested; and allow no volume in private hands except a Bible;

- knock down foreign trade, prohibit all commerce with foreigners, and permit no ships (except fisher boats) to go to sea that ever will return;
- restore to the clergy, the king and the barons their ancient privileges, prerogatives and possessions;
- build new churches, and convert all the coin you can get into sacred utensils;
- erect monasteries and almshouses in abundance, and let no parish be without a charity school;
- enact sumptuary laws [see Glossary], and let your youth be inured to hardship; inspire them with delicately refined notions of honour and shame, friendship and heroism, and introduce them to a variety of imaginary rewards; and then
- let the clergy preach abstinence and self-denial to others and take what liberty they please for themselves; let them have the greatest sway in the management of state affairs, and let no-one but a bishop be made Lord Treasurer.

By such pious efforts and wholesome regulations, the scene would be soon altered. Most of the covetous, the discontented, the restless and ambitious villains would leave the land; vast swarms of cheating knaves would abandon the city and be dispersed throughout the country; artificers would learn to hold the plough, merchants turn farmers; and the sinful over-populated Jerusalem [here meaning 'London'] would be emptied in the most easy manner—without famine, war, pestilence or compulsion—and would for ever after cease to be a source of fear for her sovereigns. The happy reformed kingdom would no longer be crowded in any part of it, and everything necessary for the sustenance of man would be cheap and plentiful. And the root of so many thousand evils, *money*, would be scarce and very little wanted, where every man would enjoy the fruits of his own labour. . . . Such

a change of circumstances would have to influence the manners of a nation, making them temperate, honest, and sincere; and from the next generation we might reasonably expect a more healthy and robust offspring than the present. We would have here a harmless, innocent and well-meaning people who would never dispute the doctrine of passive obedience [= 'unquestioning obedience to the monarch'] or any other orthodox principles, and would be submissive to superiors and unanimous in religious worship.

Here I imagine being interrupted by a self-indulgent epicure who tells me •that goodness and probity can be had at a cheaper rate than the ruin of a nation and the destruction of all the comforts of life; •that liberty and property may be maintained without wickedness or fraud, and men can be good subjects without being slaves, and religious without letting themselves be priest-ridden; •that to be frugal and saving is a duty incumbent only on those, whose circumstances require it, whereas a man of a good estate does his country a service by living up to the income of it. [The imagined epicure now talks about his own ability to 'abstain from anything upon occasion', showing that he is 'master of his appetites', citing occasions when he has settled for something less than the very best wine in his cellar!] He'll quote my Lord Shaftesbury against me, telling me that people can be virtuous and sociable without self-denial, that it is an affront to virtue to make it inaccessible, that I make a bugbear of it to frighten men from it as something impracticable. . . . Finally he'll ask me:

When the legislature do all they can to discourage profaneness and immorality and to promote the glory of God, don't they also openly profess to have nothing more at heart than the ease and welfare of the subject, the wealth, strength, honour, and whatever else is called the 'true interest' of the country?

When the most devout and learned of our prelates in their concern for our conversion beseech the deity to turn our hearts and theirs from the world and all carnal desires, don't they in the same prayer loudly beg him to pour all earthly blessings and temporal felicity on the kingdom they belong to?

These are the apologies, excuses and pleas not only of those who are notoriously vicious, but of the general run of mankind when you touch on the sources of their inclinations and. . . try to strip them of what their minds are wholly bent upon. Ashamed of the many frailties they feel within, all men try to hide themselves—to hide their ugly nakedness—from each other. Wrapping up the true motives of their hearts in the attractive cloak of sociableness and concern for the public good, they hope to conceal their filthy appetites and the ugliness of their desires; while they are conscious of their fondness for their favourite lusts and their inability to tread the arduous, rugged path of virtue.

As to those two questions, I admit they are very puzzling. I am obliged to answer each of the epicure's questions in the affirmative; and unless I am willing (which God forbid!) to challenge the sincerity of kings, bishops, and the whole legislative power, the objection stands good against me. All I can say on my own behalf is that in the connection of the facts there is a mystery past human understanding; and to convince you that this is not an evasion I shall illustrate the incomprehensibility of the mystery in the following parable.

•A PARABLE ABOUT THIRST•

In old heathen times there was a whimsical country where the people talked much about religion, and most of them seemed outwardly to be really devout. The chief moral evil among them was *thirst*, and to quench it was a damnable sin; but they unanimously agreed that everyone was born thirsty,

more or less, so small beer in moderation was allowed to all. Anyone who claimed that one could live altogether without it was regarded as a hypocrite, a cynic or a madman; but those who admitted that they loved it and drank it to excess were regarded as wicked. The beer itself was reckoned a blessing from heaven, and there was no harm in the use of it; all the wickedness lay in the abuse, the motive of the heart that made them drink it. He who took the least drop of it to quench his thirst was committing a dreadful crime, while others drank large quantities without any guilt as long as they did it indifferently, purely to mend their complexion.

They brewed for other countries as well as their own, and in return for the small beer they sent abroad they received large quantities of Westphalia hams, neats' tongues, hung beef, Bolonia sausages, red herrings, pickled sturgeon, caviar, anchovies, and everything that would make their liquor go down with pleasure. Those who kept great stores of small beer on hand without making use of it were generally envied, and at the same time very odious to the public; and nobody was comfortable who did not have enough of it come to his own share. The greatest calamity they thought could befall them was to keep their hops and barley upon their hands, and the more of them they consumed each year in making small beer, the more they thought the country was flourishing.

The government had many wise regulations concerning the returns that were made for their exports, encouraged the importing of salt and pepper, and laid heavy duties on everything that was not well seasoned and might in any way obstruct the sale of their own hops and barley. Those at the helm, when they acted in public, showed themselves perfectly exempt from thirst, and made laws to prevent the growth of it and punish the wicked who openly dared to quench it. If you pried narrowly into their private lives and

conversations, they seemed to be more fond of small beer than others were, or at least drank larger draughts of it, but always claiming that the mending of complexions required more liquor in them than it did in those they ruled over; and that what they had chiefly at heart—without any concern for themselves—was to procure a great plenty of small beer among the subjects in general and a great demand for their hops and barley.

As nobody was debarred from small beer, the clergy made use of it as well as the laity, some of them very plentifully; but they all wanted it to be thought that their religious function made them less thirsty than others, and would never admit that they drank anything for any reason but to mend their complexions. In their religious assemblies they were more sincere; for as soon as they came there, they all openly confessed—the clergy as well as the laity, from the highest to the lowest—that they were thirsty, that mending their complexions was what they cared about the least, and that all their hearts were set on small beer and quenching their thirst, whatever they might claim to the contrary. But when a cleric made such a confession, it would have been counted very impertinent to hold that against him out of his temple, and everyone thought it a heinous insult to be called thirsty even if he had been seen to drink small beer by the gallon. The chief topic of their preachers was the great evil of thirst, and the folly of quenching it. They exhorted their hearers to resist its temptations, inveighed against small beer, and often told them it was poison if they drank it with pleasure or for any purpose except to mend their complexions.

In their acknowledgments to the gods, they thanked them for the abundance of comfortable small beer they had received from them, despite so little deserving it, and continually quenched their thirst with it; whereas they were

so thoroughly satisfied that it was given them for a better use. Having asked pardon for those offences, they asked the gods to lessen their thirst and give them strength to resist its aggressions; yet, in the midst of their sorest repentance and most humble supplications, they never forgot small beer, and prayed that they might continue to have it in great plenty, with a solemn promise that however neglectful they might hitherto have been about this they would in future not drink a drop of it for any purpose but to mend their complexions.

These were standing petitions put together to last; and having continued to be made unaltered for several centuries, it was thought by some that the gods, who understood futurity and knew that the promise they heard in June would be made to them again in January, did not rely much on those vows. . . . They often began their prayers very mystically and spoke many things in a spiritual sense; but in them they were never so abstracted from the world as to end a prayer without beseeching the gods to bless and prosper the brewing trade in all its branches and, for the good of the whole, more and more to increase the consumption of hops and barley.

Remark V

'content, the bane of industry'

I have been told by many that the bane of industry is laziness and not content [see Glossary]; therefore, to prove my assertion (which seems a paradox to some) I shall discuss **a** laziness and **b** content separately, and afterwards speak of **c** industry, so that the reader may judge which of **a** **b** the two former is most opposite to **c** the latter.

·LAZINESS·

Laziness is an aversion to work, generally accompanied by an unreasonable desire to remain inactive; and anyone is lazy

if, without being hindered by any other proper employment, refuses or postpones any work that he ought to do for himself or others. We seldom call anyone lazy unless we count him as inferior to us and expect some service from him. Children don't think their parents lazy, or servants their masters; and if a gentleman indulges his ease and sloth so abominably that he won't put on his own shoes, though he is young and slender, nobody will call him 'lazy' for this if he can keep a footman or someone else to do it for him.

[Two anecdotes about extreme laziness, one illustrating the claim that 'we often reproach others with laziness, because we are guilty of it ourselves'. Then:]

A thousand wretches are always working the marrow out of their bones for next to nothing, because they are unthinking and ignorant of what the trouble they take is worth; while others, who are cunning and understand the true value of their work, refuse to be employed at under-rates, not because they are inactive but because they won't beat down the price of their labour. A country gentleman sees a porter walking to and fro with his hands in his pockets, and addresses him: 'Pray, friend, if I give you a penny will you take this letter for me as far as Bow Church?' 'I'll go with all my heart,' says the other, 'but I must have twopence, master.' The gentleman refused, and the fellow turned his back and told him that he'd rather play for nothing than work for nothing. The gentleman thought it an unaccountable piece of laziness in a porter, to saunter up and down for nothing rather than earning a penny with no more trouble. [The anecdote continues: some hours later the gentleman is with friends in a tavern; one remembers an urgent bit of business that requires a document to be fetched for him; but it is a rainy wintry night, and all the porters are in bed. A bar-tender says he knows a porter who will do the job if it is worth his while, and the client says he will pay a

crown—60 pennies—if the porter brings the document before midnight. The bar-tender goes to find the porter, and returns with the news that he has accepted the job. Just before midnight he arrives, soaked and sweating, with the wanted document. He is praised, paid his crown, and given a glass of wine. Then:] As the fellow came nearer the light to take up the wine, the country gentleman I mentioned at first recognised him, to his amazement, as the porter who had refused to earn his penny and whom he thought the laziest mortal alive.

The story teaches us that •those who remain unemployed for lack of an opportunity to exert themselves to the best advantage ought not to be confounded with •those who for lack of spirit hug themselves in their sloth, and would rather starve than stir. Without this caution, we must pronounce all the world more or less lazy according to their estimation of the pay they are to get for their labour, and by that standard the most industrious can be called ‘lazy’.

•CONTENTMENT•

I label as ‘content’ [see Glossary] the calm serenity of the mind enjoyed by men when they think themselves happy and are satisfied with the station they are in. It implies a favourable construction of one’s present circumstances, and a peaceful tranquillity that men cannot have while they are anxious to improve their condition. Applause for this virtue is very precarious and uncertain, because men will be either blamed or commended for having it, depending on their circumstances.

A single man who works hard at a laborious trade has a hundred a year left him by a relative; this change of fortune soon makes him weary of working, and, not being industrious enough to put himself forward in the world, he decides to do nothing at all and to live on his income. As

long as he lives within his limits, pays for what he has, and offends nobody, he will be called an honest quiet man. The victualler, his landlady, the tailor, and others divide what he has between them, and the society is every year the better for his revenue; whereas if he followed any trade he would hinder others, and someone would have less because of what he earned. Therefore, even if he is the idlest fellow in the world, lies in bed more than half the time and does nothing but saunter up and down for the rest of it, nobody would criticise him, and his inactive spirit is honoured with the name of ‘content’.

But if the same man marries, gets three or four children, and still continues with the same easy temperament, rests satisfied with what he has, and without trying to get a penny indulges his former sloth; first his relatives and then all those who now him will be alarmed by his negligence: they foresee that his income will not be sufficient to bring up so many children handsomely, and are afraid that some of the children may in time become a burden to *them*, or if not a burden then a disgrace. When these fears have for some time been whispered about among them, his Uncle Gripe takes him to task:

‘What, nephew, no business yet! I can’t imagine how you spend your time. If you won’t work at your own trade, there are fifty ways for a man to pick up a penny. You have a hundred a year, it’s true, but your expenses increase every year, and what are you to do when your children are grown up? I myself have a better estate than yours, but you don’t see me leave off my business. I could not lead the life you do, whatever I was paid for it. It is not my business, I admit, but everybody cries that it’s a shame that a young man like you, who has his limbs and his health, should not turn his hands to something or other.’

If these admonitions do not soon reform him, and he continues half a year longer without employment, he'll become a topic for the whole neighbourhood, and the qualifications that previously got him to be regarded as a quiet contented man now get him to be called the worst of husbands and the laziest fellow on earth. It is evident from this that when we pronounce actions good or evil we are attending only to the harm or benefit society receives from them, and not the person who commits them.

·INDUSTRY·

'Diligence' and 'industry' [see Glossary] are often used sloppily to signify the same thing, but there is a great difference between them. A poor wretch may have diligence and ingenuity and be a frugal painstaking man, yet without striving to mend his circumstances remain contented with the station he lives in. Whereas 'industry' implies—along with other qualities—a thirst for gain and a tireless desire to improve one's condition. When men think the customary profits of their calling or the share of their business should be larger, they have two ways to deserve to be called industrious: they must either •be ingenious enough to find out uncommon but permissible methods to increase their business or their profit, or •make up for the short-fall by a multiplicity of occupations. If a tradesman takes care to provision his shop and attends properly to his customers, he is **diligent** in his business; but if he also takes particular trouble to sell a better commodity than his neighbours sell, or if. . . he uses all possible efforts to draw customers to his shop, then he may be called **industrious**. A cobbler who is not employed half the time, if he neglects no business and deals promptly with any that comes his way, is a **diligent** man; but if he runs errands when he has no work, or serves as a watchman at nights, he deserves the name of **industrious**.

If what I have said in this Remark is duly weighed, it will be found either that laziness and content are very much alike or if they are very different content is more contrary to industry than laziness.

Remark X

'to make a great an honest hive'

This *might* be done where people are contented to be poor and hardy; but if they want to enjoy their ease and the comforts of the world while also being an opulent, powerful, flourishing, warlike nation, that is utterly impossible. I have heard people speak of the mighty figure the Spartans made above all the commonwealths of Greece, despite their frugality and other exemplary virtues. But there never was a nation whose greatness was more empty than theirs; the splendour they lived in was inferior to that of a theatre, and the only thing they could be proud of was that they had no pleasures. They were indeed feared and admired abroad; they were so famed for valour and skill in military affairs that their neighbours not only •courted their friendship and assistance in their wars but •thought themselves sure of victory if only they could get a Spartan general to command their armies. But then their discipline was so rigid, and their manner of living so austere and empty of all comfort, that the most temperate man among us would refuse to submit to the harshness of such uncouth laws. There was a perfect equality among them: gold and silver coin were cried down; their currency was made of iron, to make it bulky and of little worth; to store 20 or 30 pounds required a pretty large room, and to move it required a yoke of oxen. . . .

In training their youth, says Plutarch, their chief care was to make them good subjects, to fit them to endure the fatigues of long and tedious marches, and never to

return without victory from the field. When they were twelve years old they lodged in little bands on beds made of the rushes growing by the banks of the river Eurotas. . . . These circumstances make it clear that no nation on earth was less effeminate; but being debarred from all the comforts of life, they could have nothing for their pains but the glory of being a warlike people inured to toils and hardships—a happiness that few people would have cared for on those terms. Even if they had been masters of the world, as long as they *enjoyed* no more of it, Englishmen would hardly have envied the Spartans their greatness. What men want nowadays has sufficiently been shown in Remark O, where I have treated of real pleasures.

Remark Y

'to enjoy the world's conveniencies'

I have already hinted in remark L that the words 'decency' and 'convenience' are very ambiguous and can't be understood unless we know the quality and circumstances of the persons who use them. The goldsmith, mercer, or any other of the most creditable shopkeepers who has three or four thousand pounds to set up with, must have two servings of meat every day and something special for Sundays. His wife must have a damask bed for childbirth, and two or three rooms very well furnished; the following summer she must have a house or good lodgings in the country. A man that has a home out of town must have a horse; his footman must have another. If he has a tolerable trade, he expects in eight or ten years time to have a coach; despite which he hopes that after he has slaved (as he calls it) for twenty-odd years he will be worth at least a thousand a year for his eldest son to inherit, and two or three thousand pounds for each of his other children to begin the world with. When

men of such circumstances pray for their 'daily bread' and mean nothing more extravagant by it, they are counted pretty modest people. Call this pride, luxury, superfluity, or what you please, it is nothing but what ought to be in the capital of a flourishing nation; those of inferior condition must content themselves with less costly conveniences, as others of higher rank will be sure to make theirs more expensive. . . .

Since the first edition of this book, several have attacked me with demonstrations of the certain ruin that excessive luxury must bring upon all nations. I soon answered them, showing them the limits within which I had confined my thesis; and therefore so that no reader in the future may misconstrue me, I shall point out the cautions I have given and the provisos I have made in the former edition as well as this one; if they are attended to, that must prevent all rational censure and block several objections that otherwise might be made against me. I have laid down as maxims never to be departed from that the poor should be kept strictly to work, and that it was prudence to *relieve* their wants but folly to *cure* them; that agriculture and fishery should be promoted in all their branches so as to keep down the cost of provisions and consequently of labour; and I have named ignorance as a necessary ingredient in the mixture of society. That all makes it obvious that I could never have imagined that luxury was to be made general through every part of a kingdom. Similarly, I have required that property should be well secured, justice impartially administered, and in everything the interest of the nation taken care of; but what I have insisted on the most is the great regard that is to be had to the balance of trade, and the care the legislature ought to take that the annual imports never exceed the exports. Where this balance of trade is observed, and the other things I spoke of are not neglected, I still maintain that no foreign luxury can undo a country: the height of luxury is never

seen except in vastly populous nations, and only in the upper part of them; most of the population must be the lowest, the support of all the rest, the working poor.

Those who would too closely imitate others of superior fortune must thank themselves if they are ruined. This does not count against luxury; for anyone who earns enough to live on and lives above his income is a fool. Some persons of quality may keep three or four coaches and six, and also save money for their children; while a young shopkeeper is undone for keeping one sorry horse. There cannot possibly be a rich nation without prodigals [see Glossary], but I never knew a city where the spendthrifts were outnumbered by the covetous people. An old merchant goes bankrupt through being extravagant or careless for a long time, while a young beginner in the same business gets an estate before he is 40 years old, through being frugal or more industrious. Furthermore, the frailties of men often work by contraries: some narrow souls can never thrive because they are too stingy, while others amass great wealth by spending their money freely and seeming to despise it. But the vicissitudes of fortune are necessary, and the most lamentable of them are no more harmful to society than the deaths of the individual members of it. Those who immediately lose by the misfortunes of others are very sorry, complain and make a noise; but the others who gain by these misfortunes—and there always are some—hold their tongues, because it is odious to be thought to have profited from the losses and calamities of our neighbour. The various ups and downs constitute a wheel that keeps turning and giving motion to the whole machine. Philosophers, who dare extend their thoughts beyond the narrow limits of what is immediately before them, look on the alternate changes in the civil society in the way they look on the inflations and deflations of the lungs. The deflations are as much a part of respiration as the

inflations; so that the fickle breath of never-stable fortune is to the body politic the same as floating air is to a living creature.

Thus, avarice and prodigality are equally necessary to the society. Men in some countries are more generally lavish than men in others; which comes from differences in circumstances that dispose people to one vice or the other; and these arise from •the condition of the social body as well as •the temperament of the natural body. On behalf of readers with short memories—and with apologies to the others—I repeat some things that I have already said in Remark Q. Things that dispose to avarice:

- more money than land,
- heavy taxes and scarcity of provisions,
- industry,
- laboriousness,
- an active and stirring spirit,
- ill-nature and saturnine temper;
- old age,
- wisdom,
- trade,
- riches acquired by our own labour,
- liberty and property well secured.

Circumstances that make men prone to prodigality:

- indolence,
- content,
- good-nature,
- a jovial temperament,
- youth,
- folly,
- arbitrary power,
- money easily got,
- plenty of provisions,
- uncertainty of possessions.

Where there is the most of the first, the prevailing vice will be avarice; where the second turns the scale, prodigality. But nation-wide frugality never did and never will occur without nation-wide necessity.

Sumptuary laws [see Glossary] may be of use to an indigent country after great calamities of war, pestilence or famine, when work has stood still and the labour of the poor has

been interrupted; but to introduce them into an affluent kingdom is the wrong way to serve its interests. I shall end my Remarks on the grumbling hive by assuring the champions of nation-wide frugality that the Persians and other eastern people could not purchase the vast quantities of fine English cloth that they take if we loaded our women with fewer cargoes of Asiatic silks.

An essay on charity and charity schools

Charity is the virtue by which part of our sincere love for ourselves is transferred pure and unmixed to others who are not tied to us by the bonds of friendship or consanguinity, and even to mere strangers whom we have no obligation to and do not hope or expect anything from. If we loosen this definition, part of the virtue must be lost. What we do for our friends and kindred we do partly for ourselves; when a man acts on behalf of nephews or nieces and says ‘They are my brother’s children, I do it out of charity’, he deceives you. For it is expected from him, and he does it partly for his own sake: if he values the esteem of the world and cares about honour and reputation, he is obliged to have a greater regard for them than for strangers.

The exercise of this virtue relates either to **a** opinion or to **b** action, and is manifested in **a** what we think of others or **b** what we do for them. To be charitable in **a** the first way, we ought to put the best possible construction on what others do or say. If someone who has not one symptom of humility builds a fine house, furnishes it richly and spends a great deal on plate and pictures, we ought to think that he does it not out of vanity but to encourage artists, employ hands, and set the poor to work for the good of his country. If a man sleeps at church, we ought to think—as long as he does not snore—that he shuts his eyes to increase his attention. The reason is that we in our turn want our utmost avarice to pass for frugality; and what we know to be hypocrisy to pass for religion. The virtue is conspicuous in us in **b** the second way when we bestow our time and labour for nothing, or employ our credit with others on behalf of those who need it and could not expect such help from friends or relatives. The last branch of charity consists in giving away (while we are alive)

what we value ourselves, to such as I have already named; choosing to have and enjoy less rather than not relieve those who are in need and are the objects of our choice.

Pity

This virtue, ‘charity’, is often counterfeited by a passion of ours called ‘pity’ or ‘compassion’, which consists in a fellow-feeling and condolence for the misfortunes and calamities of others; all mankind are more or less affected with it, but the weakest minds generally the most. It is aroused in us when the sufferings and misery of other creatures make such a forcible impression upon us that we are disturbed by it. It comes in at the eye or the ear or both; and the nearer and more violently the object of compassion strikes those senses, the greater the disturbance it causes in us, often to a level that occasions great pain and anxiety.

Suppose we are locked up in a ground-floor room from which we can see through the barred window a charming toddler playing and prattling in the adjoining yard, and then a nasty overgrown sow comes into the yard and frightens the screaming child out of its wits. It is natural to think that this would disturb us and that we would try to drive the sow away by making threatening noises. But if the sow is a half-starved creature roaming about in quest of food, and we see the ravenous brute—in spite of our threatening noises and gestures—actually destroy and devour the helpless infant [and he gives gory details of the ‘horrid banquet’], what indescribable tortures it would give the soul to hear and see all this! . . . This pity would be free from all other passions. There would be no need for virtue or self-denial to

be moved at such a scene; and not only a humane man with good morals and sympathies but likewise a highwayman, a burglar or a murderer could feel anxieties on such an occasion. However calamitous a man's circumstances might be, he would briefly forget his misfortunes and his most troublesome passion would give way to pity. Not one of our species has a heart so obdurate or engaged that it would not ache at such a sight. . . .

Many will wonder at my saying that pity comes in at the eye or ear; but to see the truth of this, consider the fact that the nearer the object is the more we suffer, and the further away it is the less we are troubled by it. When someone is executed for a crime, if we see this at a considerable distance it moves us much less than when we are close enough to see the motion of the soul in man's eyes, observe his fears and agonies, and read the pangs in every feature of his face. When the object is entirely removed from our senses, reading or being told about the calamities can never raise in us the passion called 'pity'. We may be concerned at bad news, the loss and misfortunes of friends and those whose cause we espouse, but this is grief or sorrow, not pity.

When we hear that several thousand men, all strangers to us, are killed by the sword or forced into a river where they are drowned, we say we pity them, and perhaps we believe we do. Humaneness tells us to have compassion with the sufferings of others, and reason tells us that our sentiments about an event ought to be the same whether it is far off or occurs in our sight, and that we should be ashamed to admit that we felt no commiseration when anything requires it—'He is a cruel man', 'He has no bowels of compassion'. So much for reason and humaneness! But nature makes no compliments; when the object does not strike, the body does not feel it; and when men talk of pitying people who are out of sight they are to be believed in the same way as

when they say that they are our 'humble servant'. . . . Pity is not a thing of choice any more than fear or anger are. Those who have a strong and lively imagination, and can make representations of things in their minds as they would be if they were actually present, may work themselves up into something like compassion; but this is done by art, often helped by a little enthusiasm [see Glossary], and is only an imitation of pity. The heart feels little of it, and it is as faint as what we suffer at the acting of a tragedy, where our judgment leaves part of the mind uninformed and allows it to be led into an error that is needed for the arousing of a passion the slight strokes of which are not unpleasant to us when the soul is in an idle inactive mood.

Pity often assumes the shape and borrows the name of charity. A beggar asks you to show 'charity' for Jesus Christ's sake, when he is really trying to arouse your pity. . . . While he seems to pray to God to open your heart, he is actually at work on your ears. [Fairly sordid details are given of how he goes about this.] When people who are not used to great cities are thus attacked on all sides by beggars, they are commonly forced to yield and can't help giving something though they can hardly spare it themselves. How oddly are we managed by self-love! It is constantly on the alert in our defence, and yet to soothe a predominant passion it obliges us to act against our interest. . . . [Mandeville continues with a withering account of bullying tactics used by 'impudent and designedly persecuting rascals' to get money from people who just want them to go away, concluding:] Yet all this by the courtesy of the country is called 'charity'.

The reverse of pity is *malice*. I have spoken of this where I talk about *envy* [page 43]. Those who know how to examine themselves will soon acknowledge that it is hard to trace the root and origin of this passion. It is among the ones we are most ashamed of, and therefore the hurtful part of it

is easily subdued and corrected by a judicious education. When anyone near us stumbles, it is natural automatically to stretch out our hands to hinder or at least break the fall, which shows that while we are calm we are inclined towards pity. But although malice by itself is little to be feared, when it is assisted by pride it is often harmful, and it becomes most terrible when egged on and heightened by anger. Nothing more readily or effectively extinguishes pity than this mixture of anger and malice, which is called 'cruelty'. From this we can learn that to perform a meritorious action it is not enough merely to conquer a passion, unless it is done from a laudable principle, and consequently how necessary that clause was in the definition of 'virtue' that our efforts must come from 'a rational wish to be good' [page 16].

Pity is the most amiable of all our passions, and there are few occasions where we ought to conquer or curb it. A surgeon may be as compassionate as he pleases, provided it does not stop him from doing what he ought to do. Judges likewise and juries may be influenced by pity, if they take care that plain laws and justice itself are not infringed and do not suffer by it. No pity does more harm than what is aroused by the tenderness of parents, hindering them from managing their children as their rational love for them would require and as they themselves could wish it. Also, the sway that this passion bears in the affections of women is more considerable than is commonly imagined; they daily commit faults that are totally ascribed to lust and yet are largely products of pity.

·OTHER PASSIONS THAT RESEMBLE CHARITY·

Pity is not the only passion that mocks and resembles charity; pride and vanity have built more hospitals than all the virtues together. Men are so tenacious of their possessions, and selfishness is so riveted in our nature, that anyone who

can somehow conquer it will get the applause of the public and all imaginable encouragement to conceal his frailty and soothe any other appetite he may be inclined to indulge. The man who provides from his private fortune something that otherwise the society would have had to pay for obliges every member of the society; so all the world are ready to acknowledge him and think themselves in duty bound to pronounce all such actions virtuous, without even *glancing* at the motives behind them. Nothing is more destructive to virtue or religion itself than to make men believe that giving money to the poor—even if only after death—will make a full atonement in the next world for the sins they have committed in this. A villain who has committed a barbarous murder escapes the punishment he deserves by the help of false witnesses; he prospers, heaps up great wealth, and by the advice of his father confessor leaves his entire estate to a monastery, leaving his children beggars. What fine amends has this good Christian made for his crime, and what sort of honest man was the priest who directed his conscience? He who parts with all he has during his lifetime, whatever his motive, only gives away what was his own; but the rich miser who refuses to help his nearest relatives. . . .and disposes of his money for so-called 'charitable' uses after his death, is robbing his posterity, whatever he may imagine of his goodness. I am now thinking of a recent 'charitable' gift that has made a great noise in the world. I want to set it in the light I think it deserves, so please let me treat it rhetorically.

·DR RADCLIFE'S BEQUEST·

[This concerns Dr John Radcliffe, who died in 1714, leaving his vast fortune to Oxford University. Mandeville's 'rhetorical' account of him overdoes his applause from the world—he was in fact widely disliked.]

That a man with small skill in medicine and hardly any learning should by vile arts get into medical practice and

accumulate great wealth is no mighty wonder. But that he should so deeply work himself into the good opinion of the world as to gain the general esteem of a nation, and establish a reputation beyond all his contemporaries—having no qualities except •a perfect knowledge of mankind and •the ability to make the most of it—is extraordinary.

- If a man arrived at such a height of glory should be almost distracted with pride, sometimes attending to a servant for nothing while neglecting a nobleman who pays exorbitant fees, at other times refusing to leave his bottle for his business, without regard to the quality of the persons who sent for him or the danger they are in;

- if he should be surly and morose, affect to be a humourist, treat his patients like dogs though they are people of distinction, and value only men who would deify him and never call in question the certainty of his oracles;

- if he should insult all the world, affront the first nobility, and extend his insolence even to the royal family;

- if to maintain and increase the fame of his competence he should scorn to consult with his betters in any emergency, look down with contempt on the most deserving of his profession, and never confer with any other physician except one who will pay homage to his superior genius, and approach him only with all the slavish obsequiousness a court-flatterer can treat a prince with;

- if a man in his lifetime should reveal on the one hand such manifest symptoms of superlative pride and an insatiable greed for wealth, and on the other no regard for religion, no affection for his kindred, no compassion for the poor, and hardly any humanity towards his fellow-creatures;

- if he gave no proofs that he loved his country, had a public spirit, or was a lover of arts, of books or of literature, what must we judge of his motive—the principle he acted

from—when after his death we find that he has left a trifle among his relatives who needed it, and an immense treasure to a university that did not?

Let a man be as charitable as it is possible for him to be without forfeiting his reason or good sense; can he avoid thinking that this famous physician in the making of his will (as in everything else) indulged his favourite passion, entertaining his vanity with the satisfactoriness of the contrivance?

- When he thought about the monuments and inscriptions, with all the sacrifices of praise that would be made to him, and above all the yearly tribute of thanks, reverence and veneration that would be paid to his memory with so much pomp and solemnity;

- when he considered how in all these performances wit and invention would be racked, art and eloquence ransacked to find out praises suitable to the benefactor's public spirit, generosity and dignity, and the artful gratitude of the receivers;

it must have thrown his ambitious soul into vast ecstasies of pleasure, especially when he ruminated on the duration of his glory and the perpetuity he would in this way get for his name. Charitable opinions are often stupidly false; when men are dead and gone we ought to judge their actions as we judge books, doing justice to their understandings and to our own. The British *Æsculapius* [= Radcliffe] was undeniably a man of sense, and if he had been acting from charity, public spirit or the love of learning, and aiming at the good of mankind in general or of his own profession in particular, he could never have made such a will; because so much wealth could have been better managed, and a much less able man would have discovered several better ways of laying out the money. But if we bear in mind that he was as undeniably a man of vast pride as he was a man of sense, and allow

ourselves only to guess that this extraordinary gift might have been motivated by pride, we shall quickly discover the excellence of his intelligence and his consummate knowledge of the world. If a man wants to make himself immortal, be praised and deified for ever after his death, and have paid to his memory all the acknowledgement, honours and compliments that vainglory itself could wish for, I don't think human skill *could* invent a more effective method than the one he adopted. If he had

- followed arms, conducted himself in two dozen sieges and as many battles with the bravery of an Alexander, and exposed his life and limbs to all the fatigues and dangers of war for fifty campaigns; or
- devoting himself to the muses, sacrificed to literature his pleasure, his rest, and his health, and spent his days in laborious study and the toils of learning; or
- abandoning all worldly interests, excelled in probity, temperance, and austerity of life, always treading the strictest path of virtue,

he would not have provided for the eternity of his name as effectively as he has now done, after a voluptuous life and the luxurious gratification of his passions, without any trouble or self-denial, purely by his choice of how to dispose of his money when he was forced to leave it.

•CHARITABLE BEQUESTS GENERALLY•

A rich miser who is thoroughly selfish and wants to receive the interest on his money even after his death, has only to defraud his relatives and leave his estate to some famous university. They are the best markets at which to buy immortality at a low cost in merit; in them knowledge, wit and penetration are the growth—I almost said the 'manufacture'—of the place; men there are profoundly skilled

in human nature, and know what their benefactors want; and *there* extraordinary bounties will always meet with an extraordinary recompense. The standard of their praises is always the size of the gift, whether the donor is a physician or a tinker, once the living witnesses who might laugh at them have died out. I can never think about the anniversary of the thanksgiving day decreed to a great man without being put in mind of the miraculous cures and other surprising things that will be said of him a hundred years hence; I venture to predict that before the end of the present century he will have stories forged in his favour (for rhetoricians are never upon oath) that will be at least as fabulous as any legends of the saints.

Of all this our subtle benefactor [Radcliffe] was not ignorant. He understood universities, their genius, and their politics, and this enabled him to foresee that the incense to be offered to him would not cease within a few generations, or last only for the trifling space of three or four centuries, but that it would continue to be paid to him through all changes and revolutions of government and religion, as long as the nation survives and the island itself remains.¹

It is deplorable that the proud should have such temptations to wrong their lawful heirs. The temptations are great; for when an affluent man, brimful of vainglory and humoured in his pride by the greatest people in a polite nation, has in his heart such an infallible security for an everlasting homage to his name to be paid in such an extraordinary manner, he is like a hero in battle who in feasting on his own imagination tastes all the happiness of enthusiasm. It buoys him up in sickness, relieves him in pain, and either guards him against, or keeps out of his sight, all the terrors of death and the most dismal fears of what the future holds.

¹ [Only three centuries so far; but one of Oxford's most famous buildings is a handsome library still known as the 'Radcliffe Camera'.]

This may be said:

‘To be thus censorious, looking into matters and men’s consciences with so much precision, will discourage people from laying out their money in this way; and whatever the money is and whatever motive the donor has, he that receives the benefit gains by it.’

I don’t deny it. But I hold that it is no injury to the public to prevent men from crowding too much treasure into the dead stock of the kingdom. For a society to be happy, there needs to be a vast disproportion between its active and its inactive parts, and where this is ignored the multitude of gifts and endowments may soon be excessive and harmful to a nation. Where charity is too extensive it seldom fails to promote sloth and idleness, and is good for little in the commonwealth but to breed drones and destroy industry [see Glossary]. The more colleges and almshouses you build, the more you may do this. The first founders and benefactors may have just and good intentions, and would perhaps seem to labour for the most laudable purposes; but the executors of those wills have quite other views, and we seldom see charities long applied as they were at first intended to be.

I have no design that is cruel, nor the least aim that savours of inhumanity. I regard having enough hospitals for the sick and wounded as an indispensable duty both in peace and war; young children without parents, old folk without support, and all who are disabled from working, ought to be taken care of with tenderness and alacrity. But just as on the one hand I want none to be neglected who are helpless and really in need without there being anything intrinsically wrong with them, so on the other hand I do not want to encourage beggary or laziness in the poor. All who are in any way capable of it should be set to work, and scrutinies should be made even among the infirm: employments might be found for most of our lame people and many who are unfit

for hard labour, as well as the blind, as long as their health and strength would allow of it. This point leads me naturally to the distraction the nation has laboured under for some time, the fanatical passion for charity schools.

Charity schools

People in general are so bewitched by their usefulness and excellence that anyone who dares to oppose them openly is in danger of being stoned by the rabble.

‘Children who are taught the principles of religion and can read the word of God have a greater opportunity to improve in virtue and good morality, and must certainly be more civilised than others who are allowed to run at random with nobody to look after them. How perverse must be the judgment of those who would not rather •see children decently dressed, with clean linen at least once a week, in an orderly manner following their master to church than •see in every open place a company of shirtless blackguards who, insensible of their misery, are continually increasing it with oaths and imprecations! Can anyone doubt that these are the great nursery of thieves and pickpockets? What numbers of felons and other criminals we have tried and convicted every sessions! When the children of the poor receive a better education in charity schools, this will be prevented.’

This is the general cry, and he who speaks the least word against it is an uncharitable, hard-hearted and inhuman wretch, if not a wicked, profane, and atheistic one. Nobody disputes the attractiveness of the **sight**, it; but a nation should not pay too high a price for such a transient pleasure; and if we may set aside the finery of the *show*, everything that is *material* in this popular oration can soon be answered.

As for religion, the most knowledgeable and polished part of every nation has the least of it. Craft has a greater hand in making rogues than stupidity, and vice in general is nowhere more predominant than where arts and sciences flourish. Ignorance is the mother of devotion, and it is certain that we shall find innocence and honesty nowhere more general than among the most illiterate, the poor silly country people.

·CHARITY SCHOOLS AS TEACHERS OF MANNERS·

The next to be considered are the manners and civility that charity schools are to graft into the poor of the nation. I confess that in my opinion nothing is less requisite for the laborious poor than manners and civility, any degree of which is, for them, a frivolous if not a hurtful quality. It is not compliments that we want from them, but work and assiduity. And suppose I am wrong about this, and good manners *are* necessary for all people; how will children be provided with them in a charity school? Boys there may be taught to pull off their caps indiscriminately to everyone they meet except beggars, but that they should acquire in such a school any civility beyond that I can't conceive.

The master is not greatly qualified, as can be guessed by his salary, and even if he could teach them manners he has not time for it. While they are at school they are either learning or saying their lesson to him, or employed in writing or arithmetic, and as soon as school is over for the day they are as much at liberty as other poor people's children. It is precept and the example of parents and those they take meals and converse with that influence the minds of children. The offspring of reprobate parents who behave badly without regard for their children won't be mannerly and civilised offspring even if though they go to a charity school until they are married. Honest painstaking people with some notion of goodness and decency, however poor

they are, will keep their children in awe and never allow them to roam about the streets and sleep away from home. They will make their children do something that turns to profit as soon as they are able, be it never so little; and those who are so ungovernable that neither words nor blows can work on them will not be mended by any charity school. Indeed, experience teaches us that among the charity boys there are bad ones who swear and curse about, and apart from their clothes are as much blackguards as ever Tower Hill or St. James's produced.

Why there is so much crime

This brings me to the enormous crimes and vast multitude of malefactors that are blamed on the lack of this notable education. It is undeniable that many thefts and robberies are daily committed in and about the city, and that every year many people suffer death for those crimes; but because this is always hooked in when the usefulness of charity schools is called in question, as if it were agreed that they would in a great measure remedy those disorders and eventually prevent them, I shall examine the real causes of those mischiefs that are so justly complained of, and confidently expect to show that charity schools, and everything else that promotes idleness and keeps the poor from working, promote the growth of villainy more than the want of reading and writing, or even the grossest ignorance and stupidity.

Here I must interrupt myself to confront the clamours of some impatient people who will protest that charity schools, far from encouraging idleness, bring their children to handicrafts, trades, and all manner of honest labour. I promise them that I shall take notice of that later [page 98], and answer it without suppressing the least thing that can be said on behalf of charity schools.

In a populous city it is not difficult for a young rascal with a small hand and nimble fingers to push his way into a crowd and whip away a handkerchief or snuff-box from a man who is thinking about business and not attending to his pocket. Success in small crimes usually ushers in large ones, and he that picks pockets with impunity at 12 is likely to be a house-breaker at 16 and a thorough-paced villain long before he is 20. Those who are cautious as well as bold, and are not drunkards, may do a world of harm before they are discovered; and this is one of the greatest drawbacks of such vast over-grown cities as London or Paris, that they harbour rogues and villains as granaries do vermin; they provide a perpetual shelter to the worst of people, and are places of safety for thousands of criminals who daily commit thefts and burglaries and yet—by often changing their places of abode—may conceal themselves for many years, and may escape the hands of justice for ever unless by chance they are caught in the act. And when they *are* taken, it may happen that

- the evidence is unclear or otherwise insufficient,
- the depositions are not strong enough,
- juries and often judges are touched with compassion,
- prosecutors who were vigorous at first relent before the time of trial comes on.

Few men prefer the public safety to their own ease; a good-natured man is not easily reconciled to taking away another man's life even if he has deserved the gallows. To be the cause of someone's death, though justice requires it, is what most people are reluctant to do, especially men of conscience and probity when they lack judgment or resolution; and just as this is why thousands escape who deserve to be capitally punished, so also it is why there are so many offenders, who take risks in the hope that if they are caught they will have the same good fortune of getting off.

But if men were *convinced* that if they committed a crime that deserved hanging they would certainly be hanged, executions would be very rare, and the most desperate felon would almost as soon hang himself as break into a house. To be stupid and ignorant is seldom the character of a thief. Robberies on the highway and other bold crimes are generally perpetrated by rogues of spirit and intelligence, and villains of any fame are commonly subtle cunning fellows who are well versed in the method of trials, and acquainted with every quirk in the law that can be of use to them, who overlook not the smallest flaw in an indictment and know how to take advantage of the least slip in the prosecution.

...It is a terrible thing for a man to be put to death for a crime he is not guilty of; but a freak combination of circumstances may lead to its happening, despite all the wisdom of judges and all the conscientiousness of juries. But where men try to avoid this with all the care human prudence is capable of, if such a misfortune did happen once or twice in a dozen years, a period during which justice was administered with strictness and severity and no guilty person was allowed to escape with impunity, that would be a vast advantage to a nation. Not only would it secure everyone's property and the peace of the society in general, but it would save the lives of hundreds (if not thousands) of needy wretches who are hanged for trifles, and who would never have attempted any capital crimes if they hadn't been encouraged by the hope of getting off if they were caught. Therefore, where the laws are plain and severe, all the remissness in the execution of them, leniency of juries and frequency of pardons are over-all a much greater cruelty to a populous state or kingdom than the use of racks and the most fierce tortures.

[A paragraph saying that there would be less crime if people took more care to make their homes burglar-proof;

followed by one briefly repeating the previously listed encouragements to crime.]

To these you may add, as auxiliaries to mischief, a habit of sloth and idleness and strong aversion to labour and assiduity, which will be contracted by all young people who are not kept employed most days in the week, and the greatest part of the day. All children who are idle, even the best of either sex, are bad company to one another whenever they meet.

So it is not the lack of reading and writing, but the concurrence and a complication of more substantial evils, that are the perpetual nursery of abandoned profligates in great and affluent nations. If you want to accuse ignorance, stupidity and wickedness as the first and primary cause of crime, examine the lives and look closely into the conversations and actions of ordinary rogues and our common felons, and you will find the reverse to be true, and that the blame ought rather to be laid on the excessive cunning and subtlety, and too much knowledge in general, possessed by the worst of miscreants and the scum of the nation.

Human nature is everywhere the same: genius, wit and natural abilities are always sharpened by application, and can be improved in the practice of the meanest villainy as much as they can in the exercise of industry or the most heroic virtue. There is no station of life where pride, competitiveness and the love of glory cannot be displayed. A young pickpocket who laughs at his angry prosecutor and dextrously wheedles the old judge into thinking he is innocent is envied by his equals and admired by all the fraternity. Rogues have the same passions to gratify as other men, and value themselves on their honour and faithfulness to one another, their courage, intrepidity, and other manly virtues, as well as people of better professions; and in daring enterprises the resolution of a robber may be as much

supported by his pride as that of an honest soldier who fights for his country. So the evils we complain of are due to causes quite other than what we assign for them. . . .

Why charity schools became fashionable

But if the reasons alleged for this general education are not the true ones, how does it come about that the whole populace is so unanimously fond of it? There is no miraculous conversion to be perceived among us, no universal bent to goodness and morality that has suddenly overspread the island; there is as much wickedness as ever, charity is as cold, and real virtue as scarce. The year 1720 has been as prolific in deep villainy, and remarkable for selfish crimes and premeditated mischief, as can be picked out of any century whatever; crimes that are committed not by poor ignorant rogues who could neither read nor write but by educated wealthy people. I am afraid it will not be satisfactory to the curious to say that when a thing is once in vogue the multitude follows the common cry, that charity schools are in fashion through the same kind of whim as hooped petticoats, and that no more reason can be given for the one than the other. What I can add to that will, I suspect, not be thought of great weight by many of my readers. The real source of this present folly is certainly very abstruse and remote from sight, but anyone who lets the least light into matters of great obscurity does a kind service to enquirers.

I am willing to allow that in the beginning the first design of those schools was good and charitable, but to know what increases them so extravagantly, and who are the chief promoters of them now, we must look another way and address ourselves to the rigid party men who are zealous for their cause, whether Anglican or Presbyterian. But as the latter are only poor mimics of the former, though equally

pernicious, we shall confine ourselves to the national church and go for a stroll through a parish that is not yet blessed with a charity school.

First we must look among the young shopkeepers who have not half the business they could wish for and consequently have time to spare. If such a beginner has even a little more pride than ordinary and loves to be busy with things, he is soon humiliated in the vestry, where men of substance and long standing. . . . commonly have command. His stock and perhaps credit are inconsiderable, yet he finds within himself a strong inclination to govern. A man thus qualified thinks it a thousand pities there is no charity school in the parish; he communicates his thoughts to a few acquaintances first; they do the same to others, and in a month's time there is nothing else talked of in the parish.

'It is a shame to see so many poor who are not able to educate their children, and no provision made for them, where we have so many rich people.'

'The *rich*—they are the worst. They must have so many servants, coaches and horses; they spend hundreds or even thousands of pounds on jewels and furniture, but don't spare a shilling to a poor creature who needs it. They listen carefully when modes and fashions are talked of, but are wilfully deaf to the cries of the poor.'

'Indeed, neighbour, you are very right, I don't believe there is a worse parish in England for charity than ours. You and I would do good if it was in our power, but very few of those who are able are willing.'

While this is going on throughout the neighbourhood, the man who first broached the pious thought rejoices to hear so many join in with it, and congratulates himself on being the first cause of so much talk and bustle. But neither he nor his intimates are considerable enough to get such a thing

going, so someone more considerable must be found. He is to be approached and shown the necessity, the goodness, the usefulness, the Christianness of such a design; next he is to be flattered:

'Indeed, Sir, if you would espouse it, nobody has a greater influence over the best of the parish than yourself. . . . If you once would take it to heart, Sir, I would look on the thing as done, Sir.'

If by this kind of rhetoric they can draw in some old fool or conceited busybody who is rich or at least reputed to be so, the thing begins to be feasible, and is talked about among the better sort. The parson or his curate, and the lecturer are everywhere extolling the pious project. The first promoters meanwhile are tireless; if they have been guilty of any open vice, they sacrifice it to the love of reputation, or at least grow more cautious and learn to play the hypocrite, knowing that to be wicked or noted for bad conduct is inconsistent with their pretended zeal for works of excessive piety that go beyond the call of duty.

As the number of these diminutive patriots increases they form themselves into a society and appoint stated meetings, where everyone concealing his vices has liberty to display his talents. Religion is the theme, or else the misery of the times occasioned by atheism and profaneness. Men of worth who live in splendor, and thriving people who have a great deal of business of their own, are seldom seen among them. And men of sense and education who are at a loose end generally look out for better entertainment. [He lists kinds of people—clerics and laymen—who are drawn into the founding of charity schools, with varying disgraceful motives. Some who 'would have stood out and strenuously opposed the whole scheme' let themselves be nagged into supporting it on the grounds that for each individual the amount of money is tiny.]

The governors are middling people, and many below that class are also made use of if their zeal outweighs their low social status. If you asked these worthy rulers why they take so much trouble at the expense of their own affairs and loss of time, they would all answer:

It is their concern for religion and the church, and the pleasure they take in contributing to the eternal welfare of so many poor innocents who in all probability would otherwise run into perdition in these wicked times of scoffers and freethinkers.

Even those who deal in provisions for the charity schools have not the least design of gaining by this trade; and although in everything else their avarice and greed for money is glaringly conspicuous, in this matter they are (they say) wholly divested from selfishness and have no worldly ends. One of their motives—not the least of them—is carefully concealed. I mean the satisfaction of ordering and directing: the word ‘governor’ has a melodious sound that is charming to people low on the social scale; everybody admires sway and superiority; there is a pleasure in ruling over anything, and this is what chiefly supports human nature in the tedious slavery of schoolmasters. But if there is any satisfaction in governing the children, it must be ravishing to govern the schoolmaster himself. . . .

Those who look carefully will always find that what these people most lay claim to is their least motive, and that what they utterly deny is their greatest. No habit is more easily acquired than hypocrisy, nor anything sooner learned than to deny the sentiments of our hearts and the principle we act from; but the seeds of every passion—rather than being acquired or learned later on—are innate in us, and nobody comes into the world without them. . . . Young children who are allowed to do it take delight in playing with kittens and puppies, pulling the poor creatures about the house and

putting them into any posture they choose; they are doing with them whatever they please, and the pleasure they get from this is originally due to the love of *dominion* that all mankind are born with.

Why people are charmed by charity schools

When this great work of establishing a charity school is actually accomplished, joy and serenity seem to overspread the face of every inhabitant of the parish. To account for this, I must make a short digression.

There are everywhere slovenly fellows who are usually seen ragged and dirty; we look on them as miserable creatures in general, and unless they are very remarkable we take little notice of them; yet some of them are as handsome and well-shaped as you will find among their betters. If one of these turns soldier, how much better he looks as soon as he is dressed in his red coat and we see him looking smart with his grenadier’s cap and a great regulation sword! All who knew him before are struck with other ideas of his qualities, and the judgment men and women form of him in their minds is very different from what it was. There is something analogous to this in the sight of charity children; there is a natural beauty in uniformity that most people delight in. It is diverting to the eye to see boys or girls well matched, marching two abreast in good order; and the attractiveness of the sight is increased if they are all trim and neat in the same clothes. And what makes it still more generally entertaining is the *imaginary* share that even servants and the poorest in the parish have in it—‘*our* parish church’, ‘*our* charity children’. In all this there is a shadow of ownership that tickles everybody who has a right to use the words, especially those who actually contribute and had a great hand in advancing the pious work.

It is hardly conceivable that men should so little know their own hearts, and be so ignorant of their inward condition, as to mistake frailty, passion and fanaticism for goodness, virtue and charity; yet the satisfaction, the joy and transports they feel for the reasons I have named really are thought by these miserable judges to be principles of piety and religion. Consider what I have said in the past few pages, and let your imagination rove a little further on what you has heard and seen on this subject, and you will be provided with sufficient reasons—having nothing to do with the love of God and true Christianity—why charity schools are in such uncommon vogue, and so unanimously approved of and admired among all sorts and conditions of people. It is a theme that everyone can talk of and understands thoroughly; there is no more inexhaustible fund for tittle-tattle, and a variety of low conversation in fishing boats and stage coaches. If a governor has exerted himself more than most on behalf of the school, how he is commended by the women and his zeal and charitable disposition extolled to the skies! ‘Upon my word, Sir,’ says an old lady, ‘we are all very much obliged to you. I’m told that it was because of you that his Lordship came, though he was not very well; I don’t think any of the other governors could have procures us even a bishop.’ To which the governor replies very gravely that it is his duty, and that he does not care about trouble or fatigue so long as he can be serviceable to the children, poor lambs. . . .

Sometimes the school itself is talked of. [The need for a new building; who in the parish should pay for it; which visiting clergymen would be likeliest to preach in a way that would ‘force money out of people’s pockets’ in support of the school.]

Another charm that makes charity schools bewitching to the multitude is the general opinion that they are not only •beneficial to society as to our happiness in this life but

•required by Christianity for our welfare in the next. They are fervently recommended by the whole body of the clergy, and have more labour and eloquence laid out upon them than any other Christian duty; not by young parsons or poor scholars of little credit, but by the most learned of our prelates and the most eminent for orthodoxy, even those who do not put much effort into anything else. As to religion, no doubt they know what is chiefly required of us and consequently the most necessary to salvation; and as to the world, who would understand the kingdom’s interests better than the wisdom of the nation, of which the lords spiritual are so considerable a branch? This has two consequences. •Those whose purses or power help to increase or maintain these schools are tempted to accord to what they are doing a greater merit than they could otherwise suppose it deserves. •All the rest, who cannot or will not contribute towards the schools, have still a very good reason to speak well of them; for although it is difficult to *act* well in things that interfere with our passions, it is always in our power to *wish* well, because that is done with little cost. Even a wicked person among the superstitious vulgar imagines he sees a glimmering hope that his liking for charity schools will atone for his sins. . . .

But if all these were not sufficient inducements to make men stand up in defence of the idol I am writing about, there is another that will infallibly bribe most people to be advocates for it. We all naturally love triumph, and whoever engages in this cause is sure of conquest *in arguments*, at least in nine companies out of ten. Whoever he is disputing with, the superficial attractiveness of his position and the majority he has on his side make it a castle, an impregnable fortress that he can never be beaten out of. Even if the most sober, virtuous man alive produced all the arguments to prove the harm most charity schools do to society—arguments that I shall give shortly—against an

utter scoundrel who used only the common cant of 'charity' and 'religion', the vogue would be against the former and he would lose his cause in the opinion of the vulgar.

What is intrinsically wrong with charity schools

Although the bustle and clamour that is made throughout the kingdom on behalf of charity schools is chiefly built on frailty and human passion, it is perfectly possible that a nation should have the same zeal for them as ours does yet not be prompted to it by any 'spurious' principle of virtue or religion. Encouraged by this consideration, I shall now attack this vulgar error with greater liberty, trying to show that this forced education—far from being beneficial—is pernicious to the public. The welfare of the public matters more than any other laws or considerations; and that is my whole excuse for differing from the present sentiments of the learned and reverend body of our divines, and venturing to openly deny what I have admitted to be openly asserted by most of our bishops as well as the lower clergy. Our church does not claim to be infallible even in the spiritual matters that are her proper province, so it cannot be an affront to her to think she may err in temporal matters that are not so much under her immediate care.

·THE NEED FOR THE WORKING POOR·

Now to return to my task. The whole earth being cursed, with no bread to be had except by the sweat of our brows, vast toil must be undergone before man can provide himself with necessities for his sustenance and bare support as he is a single creature. Infinitely more toil is needed to make life comfortable in a civil society, where men have become trained animals and great numbers of them have by mutual compact formed themselves into a body politic;

and the more man's knowledge increases in this state, the greater will be the variety of labour required to make him comfortable. A society cannot possibly survive and allow many of its members to live in idleness and enjoy all the ease and pleasure they can invent without having at the same time great multitudes of people who get their bodies accustomed to working for others as well as for themselves.

The abundance and cheapness of provisions depends largely on the price and value that is set on this labour; so the welfare of all societies, even before they are tainted with foreign luxury, requires that this labour be performed by such of their members as •are sturdy and robust and not accustomed to ease or idleness, and •are easily contented as to the necessities of life—are glad to take up with the coarsest manufacture in everything they wear, in their diet have no aim except to feed their bodies when their stomachs prompt them to eat, and do not refuse any wholesome nourishment that can be swallowed when men are hungry or ask anything for their thirst but to quench it.

As the greatest part of the drudgery is to be done by daylight, it is only by this that they measure the time of their labour, with no thought of the hours they are employed or the weariness they feel; and the hireling in the country must get up in the morning not because he has rested enough but because the sun is going to rise. This last item alone would be an intolerable hardship to adults under 30 who during childhood had been used to lying in bed as long as they could sleep: but all three together—coarse clothing, tasteless food, long working hours—make up a condition of life that a more gently brought up man would hardly choose, even to deliver himself from a jail or a shrew [here = 'malignant persecutor'].

If there must be such people—and no great nation can be happy without vast numbers of them—would not a wise

legislature cultivate the breeding of them with all imaginable care, and provide against their scarcity as it would prevent the scarcity of food? No man would be poor and fatigue himself for a livelihood if he could help it; the absolute necessity that all have for victuals and drink, and in cold climates for clothes and lodging, makes them submit to anything that can be borne with. If nobody had wants, nobody would work; but the greatest hardships are looked on as solid pleasures when they keep a man from starving. All this makes it evident that in a free nation where slaves are not allowed, the surest wealth consists in a multitude of laborious poor; for as well as their being the never-failing nursery of fleets and armies, without them there could be no enjoyment and no product of any country could be valuable.

To make the society happy and people comfortable in the poorest circumstances, great numbers of them must be ignorant as well as poor. Knowledge both enlarges and multiplies our desires, and the fewer things a man wishes for the more easily his needs can be met. So the welfare and felicity of every state and kingdom require that the knowledge (as to things visible) of the working poor should be confined within the limits of their occupation and never extended beyond that. The more a shepherd, a ploughman or any other peasant knows of the world and things foreign to his labour or employment, the less fit he'll be to go through the fatigues and hardships of it with cheerfulness and contentment.

Reading, writing and arithmetic are very necessary to those whose business require such qualifications, but where people's livelihood does not depend on these skills they are very pernicious to the poor who are forced to get their daily bread by their daily labour. Children who are learning things at school could instead be employed in some business or other, so that every hour the children of poor people spend at their book is an hour lost to the society. Compared with

working, going to school is idleness, and the longer boys continue in this easy sort of life the less fit they'll be as adults for downright labour, both as to strength and inclination. If a man is to spend his days in a laborious, tiresome and painful station of life, the sooner he is started on it the more patiently he'll submit to it for ever after. Hard labour and the coarsest diet are a proper punishment for several kinds of malefactors, but to impose either of them on people who have not been brought up to them is the greatest cruelty when there is no crime you can charge them with.

Reading and writing are not learned without some labour of the brain and assiduity, and people who have some slight competence in them regard themselves as infinitely above those who are wholly ignorant of them, often as unfairly and extravagantly as if they were of another species. We are all apt to over-value qualifications that we have purchased at the expense of our ease and quiet for years together. Those who spent much of their youth in learning to read, write and cipher, not unreasonably expect to be employed where those qualifications will be of use to them; and most of them will look with the utmost contempt on downright labour—I mean labour performed in the service of others in the lowest station of life and for the meanest wages. A man who has had some education may follow farming by choice, and be diligent at the dirtiest and most laborious work; but then the concern must be his own, and avarice or the care of a family or some other pressing motive must drive him; but he won't make a good hireling and serve a farmer for a pitiful reward; at least he is not as fit for that as a day-labourer who has always been employed about the plough and dung cart, and does not remember ever living otherwise.

When obsequiousness and mean services are required, they are never so cheerfully or so heartily performed as from inferiors to superiors; I mean inferiors not only in riches

and quality but also in knowledge and understanding. A servant can have no honest respect for his master as soon as he has sense enough to find out that he is serving a fool. When it comes to **a** learning or **b** obeying, we will experience in ourselves that the greater opinion we have of the wisdom and capacity of those that are either to **a** teach or **b** command us, the greater deference we pay to their **a** laws and **b** instructions. No creatures submit contentedly to their equals. If a horse knew as much as a man, I would not want to be his rider.

·AGAINST PETTY TYRANTS IN SCHOOLS·

Here I am obliged again to make a **digression**, though I declare I never had less desire to do it than I have at this minute; but I see a thousand rods in piss,¹ and the whole posse of diminutive pedants against me for assaulting the alphabet and opposing the very elements of literature.

You will not imagine my fears ill-grounded if you consider what an army of petty tyrants I have to cope with, ones who do now persecute with birch or are applying for such a preferment. If my only adversaries were

the starving wretches of both sexes, throughout the kingdom of Great Britain, who from a natural antipathy to working have a great dislike for their present employment, and—finding within themselves a much stronger inclination to command than they ever felt to obey—think themselves qualified to be masters and mistresses of charity schools, and wish with all their hearts to be so,

the number of my enemies would by the most modest computation amount to 100,000 at least.

I think I hear them cry out that a more dangerous doctrine never was broached, and Popery's nothing compared to it, and ask what brute of a Saracen it is who draws his ugly

weapon for the destruction of learning. Ten to one they'll indict me for trying by instigation of the Prince of Darkness to introduce into these realms greater ignorance and barbarism than any nation was ever plunged into by Goths and Vandals since the light of the Gospel first appeared in the world. Anyone who labours under the public odium is charged with crimes he never was guilty of, and it will be suspected that it was at my request that the small Bibles published by patent in 1721 and chiefly used in charity schools were made illegible by badness of print and paper rendered illegible; which I protest I am as innocent of as the child unborn. But I have a thousand fears, and the more I consider my situation the worse I like it. My greatest comfort is in my sincere belief that hardly anyone will attend to a word of what I say. If the people ever suspected that what I write would be of any weight to any considerable part of the society, I would not have the courage barely to *think* of all the trades I would disoblige.

I cannot help smiling when I reflect on the variety of uncouth sufferings that would be prepared for me if their various punishments for me were emblematically to point at my crime. For if I was not suddenly stuck full of useless penknives up to the hilts, the company of stationers would either •have me buried alive in their hall under a great heap of primers and spelling-books that they could not sell, or else set me up to be bruised to death in a paper mill that would be obliged to stand still for a week on my account. The ink-makers would •offer to choke me with astringents or drown me in the black liquid that would be left on their hands. . . . And if I escaped the cruelty of these united bodies, the resentment of a private monopolist would be as fatal to me, and would •have me pelted and knocked on the head

¹ Sometimes called 'rods in pickle'; canes kept in an acidic bath, keeping them stiff.

with little squat bibles—clasped in brass and ready armed for mischief—which, now that charitable learning had ceased, would be fit for nothing but unopened to fight with.

The **digression** I spoke of just now is not the foolish trifle in the preceding paragraph. . . ., but a serious defensive one that I am going to make to clear myself from having any design against arts and sciences, as some heads of colleges and other careful preservers of human learning might have thought from my recommending ignorance as a necessary ingredient in the mixture of civil society.

How education should be organised

In the first place I would have nearly twice as many professors in every university as there are now. Theology with us is generally well provided for, but the two other faculties have very little to boast of, especially medicine. Every branch of that art ought to have two or three professors who would take pains to communicate their skill and knowledge to others. In public lectures a vain man has great opportunities to set off his abilities, but private instructions are more useful to students. Pharmacy and the knowledge of the simples are as necessary as anatomy or the history of diseases; it is a shame that when men have taken their ·university· degree and are authoritatively entrusted with people's lives, they should be forced to come to London to be acquainted with the *materia medica* and the composition of medicines, and receive instructions from others who never had university education themselves. It is certain that in London there is ten times more opportunity for a man to improve himself in anatomy, botany, pharmacy, and the practice of medicine than at **both universities** together. What has an oil shop to do with silks? Who would look for hams and pickles at a mercer's? Where things are well managed, hospitals are put

into the service of advancing students in the art of medicine as much as into the recovery of health in the poor.

Good sense ought to govern men in learning as well as in trade: no man ever apprenticed his son to a goldsmith in order to make him a linen-draper; so why should he have a clergyman for his tutor in order to become a lawyer or a physician? It is true that the languages, logic and philosophy should be the first studies in all the learned professions; but there is so little help for medicine in our universities—

our *rich* universities, where so many idle people are well paid for eating and drinking and being magnificently as well as commodiously lodged

—that apart from books and what is common to all the three faculties, a man may as well qualify himself at **Oxford or Cambridge** to be a turkey-merchant as he can to be a physician; which is in my humble opinion a great sign that some part of the great wealth they are possessed of is not so well applied as it might be.

As well as the stipends allowed them by the public, professors should receive gratifications [= 'gifts of money'] from every student they teach, so that they might be spurred on to labour and assiduity by ·low-level· self-interest as well as competitiveness and the love of glory. If a man excels in any one part of learning and is qualified to teach others, he ought to be procured if money will purchase him, whatever party he is of, and whatever country or nation, and whether he is black or white. Universities should be public markets for all kinds of literature, as the annual fairs in Leipzig, Frankfurt and other places in Germany are for different wares and merchandises, where no difference is made between natives and foreigners, and where men come from all parts of the world with equal freedom and equal privilege.

From paying the gratifications I spoke of I would excuse all students designed for the ministry of the Gospel. There is

no faculty so immediately necessary to the government of a nation as that of theology; we ought to have great numbers of divines for the service of this island, so I would not have the lower-level people discouraged from bringing up their children to that function. [There are reasons why a wealthy man might make one of his sons a clergyman, but not enough of them come in that way,] and for the bulk of the clergy we are indebted to another origin.

Among the middling people of all trades there are bigots who have a superstitious awe for a gown and cassock, and many of these ardently desire to have a son promoted to the ministry of the Gospel, without considering what is to become of them afterwards. . . . It is to this religious zeal, or at least to the human frailties that pass for it, that we owe the great abundance of poor scholars that the nation enjoys. . . . Without this happy disposition in parents of small fortune, we could not possibly be supplied with proper persons for the ministry to attend the cures of souls. They are so pitifully provided for that no mortal who had been brought up in any tolerable plenty could live in that way unless he was possessed of real virtue; and it is foolish and indeed harmful to expect more virtue from the clergy than we generally find in the laity.

The great care I would take to promote the part of learning that is more immediately useful to society would not make me neglect the more theoretical and polite. On the contrary, I would like all the liberal arts and every branch of literature to be encouraged more than they are throughout the kingdom. In every county there should be one or more large schools erected at the public charge for Latin and Greek; they should be divided into six or more classes, with particular masters in each. The whole should be under the care and inspection of some authoritative men of letters who would not only be called 'governors' but would put in an effort at least twice a

year to hear every class thoroughly examined by its master, not settling for judging the scholars' progress on the basis of essays and other exercises that they had done out of the governors' sight.

At the same time I would discourage and hinder the multiplicity of those petty schools that would never have existed if the masters in them not been extremely indigent. It is a vulgar error that nobody can spell or write English well without a little smattering of Latin. This is upheld by pedants for their own interest, and by none more strenuously maintained than such of them as are *poor scholars* in more than one sense of that phrase; and it is an abominable falsehood. I know several people, including some of the fair sex, who never learned any Latin but keep to strict spelling and write admirable good sense; whereas everyone may meet with the scribblings of pretended scholars who went to a grammar school for several years, scribblings that have grammatical faults and are badly spelled. A thorough understanding of Latin is highly necessary for all who are going into any of the learned professions, and I would like no gentleman to be without literature; even those who are brought up to be attorneys, surgeons and apothecaries should be much better versed in that language than generally they are. But to young folk who are to get a livelihood in trades and callings in which Latin is not daily wanted, it is useless, and the learning of it is an evident loss of all the time and money bestowed on it. When men come into business, the Latin they learned in those petty schools is either soon forgotten or only fit to make them pushy and often troublesome in company. Few men can help priding themselves on any knowledge they once had, even after they have lost it; and unless they are very modest and discreet, the undigested scraps of Latin that such people commonly remember usually make them, at one time or another, ridiculous to those who understand it.

I would treat reading and writing as we do music and dancing; I would not hinder them or force them on the society. As long as there was anything to be got by them, there would be plenty of masters to teach them; but nothing should be taught for nothing except at church. And even at church those who are designed for the ministry of the Gospel should have to pay; for if parents are so miserably poor that they can't afford their children these first elements of learning, it is impudence in them to aspire any further.

The lower sort of people would be encouraged to give their children this part of their education themselves if they could see them preferred to the children of idle sots who never knew what it was to provide a rag for their brats except by begging. But as things are, when a boy or a girl is wanted for any small service, we reckon it a duty to employ a charity child before any other. The education of them looks like a reward for being vicious and inactive, a benefit commonly bestowed on parents who deserve to be punished for shamefully neglecting their families. . . .

That ends the **digression** I mentioned on page 95 and began shortly thereafter. I thought it necessary to say this much about learning, to counter the clamours of the enemies to truth and fair dealing who would—if I had not so amply explained myself on this topic—have represented me as a mortal foe to all literature and useful knowledge, and a wicked advocate for universal ignorance and stupidity.

I shall now make good my promise of answering what I know the well-wishers to charity schools would object against me, namely that they bring up the children under their care to warrantable and laborious trades, and not to idleness as I insinuated.

Against putting poor children out to trades

I have sufficiently showed already why going to school was idleness if compared to working, and exploded this sort of education in the children of the poor on the ground that it incapacitates them ever after for downright labour. *This* is their proper province, and in every civil society it is a portion that they ought not to regret or grumble at if it is exacted from them with discretion and humanity. What remains is for me to speak about their putting children out to trades. I shall try to demonstrate that this is destructive to the harmony of a nation, and is an impertinent interference with something that few of these governors of charity schools know anything about.

First let us examine the nature of societies, and what the composition of our society ought to be if we are to raise it to as high a level of strength, beauty and perfection as the ground we are to do it upon will let us. The variety of services that are required to supply the luxurious and wanton desires of man as well as his real necessities, with all their subordinate callings, is in such a nation as ours *prodigious*; but it is far from being infinite, and if you add one more than is required it must be superfluous. If a man had a good stock and the best shop in Cheapside to sell *turbans* in, he would be ruined; and if a silversmith made nothing but shrines to Diana, he would not earn a living now that the worship of that goddess is out of fashion. And just as it is folly to set up trades that are not wanted, so it is foolish to increase the numbers within any one trade beyond what are required. As things are managed with us, it would be preposterous to have as many brewers as there are bakers, or as many woollen drapers as there are shoemakers. In every trade this numerical proportion works itself out, and is best maintained when no-one interferes with it.

People with children who must earn a living are always consulting and deliberating what trade or calling they are to bring them up to, until they are fixed; and thousands think about this who hardly think about anything else. First they confine themselves to what they can afford: someone who can give only ten pounds with his son must not look out for a trade where they ask for a hundred with an apprentice. After that, they think about which trade will be the most advantageous; if there's a calling where at that time more people are employed than in any other calling in the same territory, a dozen fathers are ready to supply it with their sons. So the greatest care that most companies have is about regulating the number of apprentices. Now, when all trades complain justly that they are overstocked, you manifestly injure any trade to which you add one member more than would flow from the nature of society.

The governors of charity schools don't think about what trade is the best as much as about what tradesmen they can get who will take the boys with the available sum of money; and few potential employers of substance and experience will have anything to do with these children, because they are afraid of a hundred drawbacks from their impoverished parents. So most of them are apprenticed to sots and neglectful masters, or to ones who are very needy and don't care what becomes of their apprentices after they have received the money that comes with them; by which it seems as if we all we were trying to do was to have a *perpetual* nursery for charity schools. [His point is that a boy who is so badly apprenticed will end up poverty-stricken and thereby inclined to put *his* children into charity schools.]

When all trades and handicrafts are overstocked, it is a certain sign there is a fault in the management of the whole; for there cannot be too many people if the country is able to feed them. Are provisions dear? Whose fault is that if

you have ground untilled and hands unemployed? I shall be answered that to increase plenty [here = 'agricultural production'] must eventually undo the farmer or lessen the rents all over England. To which I reply that what the farmer complains of most is what I would remedy. The greatest grievance of farmers, gardeners and others where hard labour is required and dirty work to be done is that they can't get servants for the same wages they used to pay them. The day-labourer grumbles at sixteen pence to do work that thirty years ago his grandfather did cheerfully for half the money. As for rents, they cannot fall while you increase your numbers, unless the cost of provisions and all labour in general falls with them if not before; and a man with 150 pounds a year has no reason to complain that his income is reduced to 100 if he can buy as much for that as would earlier have cost him 200.

[Mandeville now spends several pages complaining about the state of bottom-level labour in England. There are too few people willing to do it; 'Nobody will do the dirty slavish work, that can help it. I don't discommend them; but all these things show that the people of the lowest rank know too much to be serviceable to us.' Those who are not equipped to do anything else have been enabled to get ideas above their station, as have workers at higher levels such as footmen, indeed 'servants in general'. They all demand unduly high wages, show disrespect for their employers, and some are rumoured to be combining into unions. He emerges from all this with a return to the topic of charity schools.]

Servants in general are daily encroaching on masters and mistresses, and trying to be more on a level with them. They not only seem anxious to abolish the low dignity of their condition but have already considerably raised it in the common estimation from the original lowness that the public welfare requires it should always remain in. I don't say that

these things are altogether due to charity schools; there are other evils they may be partly ascribed to. . . . But can anyone who considers what I have said doubt that charity schools are accessory to these troubles, or at least that they are more likely to create and increase than to lessen or redress them?

Charity schools and religion

The only substantial thing that can be said on their behalf, then, is that so many thousand children are educated by them in the Christian faith and the principles of the church of England. To demonstrate that this is not a sufficient plea for them, I ask the reader (as I hate repetitions) to look back at what I have already said about this [page 87]; to which I shall add that whatever children learn •at school that is necessary to salvation and requisite for poor labouring people to know concerning religion can just as well be learned (from preaching or catechising) •at church. I would want the lowest level people in a parish, if they could walk, to attend church or some other place of worship on Sundays. It is the Sabbath, the most useful day in seven, that is set apart for divine service and religious exercise as well as for resting from bodily labour, and all magistrates have a duty to take particular care of that day. The poor more especially (and their children) should be made to go to church on that day, both in the morning and in the afternoon; because they have no time to go on any other day. By precept and example they ought to be encouraged and accustomed to it from their very infancy; the wilful neglect of it ought to be regarded as scandalous; and if outright compulsion to church attendance might seem too harsh and perhaps impracticable, at least all diversions ought strictly to be prohibited, and the poor hindered from every amusement abroad that might draw them away from it.

Where this care is taken by the magistrates as far as it lies in their power, ministers of the Gospel can instill more piety and devotion and better principles of virtue and religion than charity schools ever did or ever will produce. Preachers who complain, when they have such opportunities, that without the assistance of reading and writing they cannot imbue their parishioners with enough of the knowledge they need as Christians are either very lazy or very ignorant and undeserving themselves.

That the most knowledgeable people are not the most religious will be evident if we make a trial between people of different abilities even at this time when church-going is not made such an obligation on the poor and illiterate as it might be. Let us pick at random

(i) a hundred poor men, aged above 40, who were brought up to hard labour from their infancy, never went to school, and always lived remote from knowledge and great towns;

and let us compare them to

(ii) a hundred very good scholars, all with university education; half of them divines who are well versed in philology and polemical learning.

If we impartially examine the lives and conversations of both groups, and I am sure that among (i) those who can neither read nor write we shall meet with more union and neighbourly love, less wickedness and attachment to the world, more contentment, innocence, sincerity, and other good qualities that conduce to the public peace and real felicity, than we shall find among (ii) the second group, where we are sure to find the height of pride and insolence, eternal quarrels and dissensions, irreconcilable hatreds, strife, envy, calumny and other vices destructive to mutual concord, which (i) the illiterate labouring poor are hardly ever tainted with to any considerable degree.

This will be no news to most of my readers; but if it is true, why should it be suppressed, and why must our concern for religion be eternally made a cloak to hide our real worldly intentions?

[Mandeville moves straight on from that, in a very unclear manner, to remarks about two quite different parties of supporters of charity schools, and what we would find if they 'agreed to pull off their masks'. The labels the groups are given here are not in the original.]

Group A: They aim at nothing so much in charity schools as to strengthen their party. When the great sticklers for the church speak of 'educating children in the principles of religion', they mean inspiring them with a superlative veneration for the clergy of the church of England, and a strong aversion to all those who dissent from it. Evidence for this: the facts about which divines are most admired for their charity sermons and most fond of preaching them.

Group B: The grand asserters of liberty, who are always guarding themselves and skirmishing against arbitrary power, often when they are in no danger of it, are not in general very superstitious and don't seem to lay great stress on any modern apostleship; but some of these also speak up loudly for charity schools, though what they expect from them has no relation to religion or morality. They regard them only as the proper means to destroy and disappoint the power of the priests over the laity. Reading and writing increase knowledge, and the more men know the better they can judge for themselves, and these people imagine that if knowledge could be made universal, people would no longer be priest-ridden, which is the thing they fear the most. Evidence for this: the facts about whether in recent years we have had any riots or party scuffles in which the youth of a famous hospital in this city [Christ's Hospital, a famous London charity school] were not always the most forward ring-leaders.

I confess that **group A** will probably will get they are aiming at. But surely wise men who are not red-hot for a party, or bigots to the priests, will not think it worthwhile to suffer so many inconveniences as charity schools can cause merely to promote the ambition and power of the clergy. To **group B** I would answer that if all those who are educated at the charge of their parents or relations will *think for themselves* and refuse to have their reason imposed on by the priests, we need not be concerned for what the clergy will work on the ignorant who have no education at all. Let them make the most of them! Considering the schools we have for those who can and do pay for learning, it is ridiculous to think that abolishing charity schools would be a step towards any ignorance that could harm the nation.

I would not be thought cruel, and I am well assured that I abhor inhumanity; but to be compassionate to excess, where reason forbids it and the general interest of the society requires steadiness of thought and resolution, is an unpardonable weakness. I know it will be urged against me that it is barbarous that the children of the poor should have no opportunity of exerting themselves, as long as God has not debarred them from natural abilities and intellect more than the rich. But I cannot think this is harder than it is that they should not have money as long as they have the same inclinations to spend as others do. I don't deny that great and useful men have sprung from hospitals [here = 'charity schools']; but when they were first employed, that was probably to the disadvantage of many others—as capable as themselves, but not brought up in hospitals—who might have done as well as they did if they had been employed instead of them. There are many examples of women who have excelled in learning, and even in war, but this is no reason for us to bring them *all* up to Latin and Greek or else military discipline, instead of needle-work and housewifery.

There is no scarcity of sprightliness or natural abilities among us, and no soil or climate has human creatures better formed (inside and outside) than this island generally produces. However, it is not wit, genius or docility we want, but diligence, application, and assiduity. Hard and dirty labour has to be done, and coarse living has to be complied with; where shall we find a better nursery for these necessities than the children of the poor? None are nearer to it or fitter for it. Furthermore, what I have called 'hardships' do not seem to be—indeed, *are* not—hardships to those who have been brought up to them and know no better. There is not a more contented people among us than those who work the hardest and are the least acquainted with the pomp and delicacies of the world.

These truths are undeniable; yet few people will be pleased to have them divulged. What makes them odious is an unreasonable vein of petty reverence for the poor that runs through most multitudes, and more particularly in this nation, and arises from a mixture of pity, folly and superstition. It is from a lively sense of this compound that men cannot endure to hear or see anything said or done against the poor, without considering how just it is or how insolent the poor are. Thus, a beggar must not be beaten even if he strikes you first. Journeymen tailors go to law against their masters and are obstinate in a wrong cause, but they must be pitied; and complaining weavers must be relieved, and have fifty silly things done to humour them, although in the midst of their poverty they insult their betters and seem always to prefer making holidays and riots to working soberly.

[Now about a page on export/import matters with an emphasis on wool. The main thrust is that England is at a trade disadvantage because it has allowed its lowest-level workers to become too expensive.]

The cheerfulness of the working poor

Given that there is much work to be done, I think it is equally undeniable that the more cheerfully it is done the better, for those that perform it as well as for the rest of the society. The less notion a man has of a better way of living, the more contented he'll be with his own; and on the other hand, the greater a man's knowledge and experience of the world, the more discriminating his taste, and the more perfectly he can judge things in general, the harder it will be to please him. I would not support anything barbarous or inhuman; but when a man enjoys himself, laughs and sings, and in his gesture and behaviour shows me all the tokens of contentment and satisfaction, I pronounce him happy and do not inquire into his wit or capacity. I ought not to judge of the reasonableness of his mirth by my own standard, and argue from the effect the thing he is laughing over would have on me. . . . *De gustibus non est disputandum* ['One should not argue over tastes'] is as true in a metaphorical as it is in the literal sense, and the further apart people are in their condition, circumstances and manner of living, the less able they are to judge one another's troubles or pleasures.

If the lowest and most uncivilised peasant were able secretly to observe the greatest king for a fortnight, he might pick out things he would like for himself, but he would find many more that he would want to have immediately altered or redressed if the monarch and he were to exchange places—things he is amazed to see the king submit to. And if the sovereign was to examine the peasant in the same way, he would find his labour to be intolerable, the dirt and squalor, his diet and amours, his pastimes and recreations all abominable; but then what charms would he find in the peasant's peace of mind, the calmness and tranquility of his soul? No need for dissimulation with any of his family,

or pretended affection for his mortal enemies; no wife with foreign loyalties, no danger to fear from his children; no plots to unravel, no poison to fear; no popular statesman at home or cunning courts abroad to manage; no seeming patriots to bribe; no insatiable favourite to gratify; no selfish ministry to obey; no divided nation to please, or fickle mob to humour, that would direct and interfere with his pleasures.

If impartial reason were to judge between real good and real evil, and a catalogue made accordingly of the various delights and vexations of kings and peasants, I question whether the condition of kings would be preferable to that of peasants, even as ignorant and laborious as I seem to require the latter to be. Why would most people rather be kings than peasants? The first cause is pride and ambition, which is deeply rivetted in human nature; to gratify pride men daily undergo and despise the greatest hazards and difficulties. The second cause is the difference in how forcefully things affect us depending on whether they are material or spiritual.

- Things that immediately strike our outward senses act more violently on our passions than
- what is the result of thought; and there is a much stronger bias to gain our liking or aversion in the first than there is in the latter.

[He now returns to the link between working-poor wages and trade, deploring the fact that 'others grow rich by the same fish that we neglect, though it is ready to jump into our mouths'.]

National public works

There are several centuries of work for a hundred thousand more poor people than we have in this island. To make every part of the island useful, and the whole thoroughly inhabited, many rivers are to be made navigable and canals to be cut in hundreds of places. Some lands are to be

drained and secured from future floods; much barren soil is to be made fertile, and thousands of acres made more accessible and thus more beneficial. *Dii laboribus omnia vendunt* ['The gods sell everything for labour']; there is no difficulty of this sort that labour and patience cannot overcome. The highest mountains can be thrown into valleys standing ready to receive them, and bridges could be laid where now we would not dare to think of it. Let us look back on the stupendous works of the Romans, especially their highways and aqueducts. Let us compare:

- the vast extent of several of their roads, how substantial they made them, and how long they have lasted with
- a poor traveller who every ten miles is stopped by a turnpike and dunned for a penny for mending the roads with materials that everyone knows will be dirt before the next winter is over.

The convenience of the public ought always to be the public care; no private interest of a town or a county should ever block the carrying out of a project or construction that would clearly tend to the improvement of the whole country. Every member of the legislature who knows his duty and would rather act like a wise man than curry favour with his neighbours will prefer

- the least benefit coming to the whole kingdom to
- the most visible advantage of his own constituency.

We have materials of our own and no shortage of stone and timber; and if

- the money that people freely give to beggars who don't deserve it, and what every homeowner is obliged to pay to the poor of his parish who are otherwise employed or ill-applied
- were put together every year, it would make a sufficient fund to keep many thousands at work. I say this not because I

think it practicable but only to show that we have money enough to spare to employ vast multitudes of labourers. And they needn't cost as much as we might imagine. When it is taken for granted that a soldier, whose strength and vigour is to be kept up at least as much as anyone's, can live on sixpence a day, I can't see the need to pay a day-labourer sixteen or eighteen pence a day for most of the year.

The fearful and cautious people who are always protective of their liberty will protest that property and privileges would be insecure if the multitudes I speak of were constantly on the public payroll. But they might be answered that secure means might be devised—and such regulations made governing the hands in which to trust the management and direction of these labourers—so that it would be impossible for the prince or anyone else to make a bad use of their numbers.

What I have said in the last few paragraphs will be scornfully laughed at by many readers, and at best be called building castles in the air; but whether that is my fault or theirs is a question. When the public spirit has left a nation, its people not only lose their patience with it and all thoughts of perseverance, but become so narrow-souled that it is a pain for them even to *think* of things that are of uncommon extent or require great length of time; and whatever is noble or sublime in such conjunctures is regarded as chimerical. Where deep ignorance is entirely routed and expelled, and shallow learning is randomly scattered on all the people, self-love turns knowledge into cunning; and the more cunning prevails in any country, the more its people will fix all their cares, concern and application toward the present time, without concern for what is to come after them and hardly ever thinking beyond the next generation.

But cunning, according to my Lord Verulam [Francis Bacon], is only left-handed wisdom; so a prudent legislature ought

to provide against this disorder of the society as soon as its symptoms appear, among which the following are the most obvious. Imaginary rewards are generally despised; everybody is for turning the penny and short bargains; he who is cautious about everything and believes only what he sees with his own eyes is counted the most prudent, and in all their dealings men seem to act solely from the principle of the devil take the hindmost. Instead of planting oaks that will need 150 years before they are fit to be cut down, they build houses that they don't plan to have last for more than about a dozen years. All heads run upon the uncertainty of things, and the vicissitudes of human affairs. Mathematics becomes the only valuable study, and is used in everything, even where it is ridiculous, and men seem to have no more trust in providence than they would in a bankrupt merchant.

It is the business of the public to make up for the defects of the society and take in hand first whatever is most neglected by private persons. Contraries are best cured by contraries; and in amending national failings •example is more effective than •precept; so the legislature should decide on some great undertakings that must be the work of ages as well as requiring vast labour, and convince the world that they do nothing without an anxious concern for their most remote posterity. This will at least *help* to settle the volatile genius and fickle spirit of the kingdom, remind us that we are not born for ourselves only, and be a means of making men less distrustful, and inspiring them with a true love for their country and a tender affection for the ground itself—than which nothing is more necessary to make a nation great. Forms of government may alter, religions and even languages may change, but Great Britain—the island itself, even if its name changes—will remain, and in all human probability will last as long as any part of the globe. All ages have acknowledged the benefits derived from

their ancestors; a Christian who enjoys the multitude of fountains and vast abundance of water to be met with in the city of St. Peter is an ungrateful wretch if he never casts a thankful remembrance on old pagan Rome which took such prodigious pains to procure it.

When this island is cultivated and every inch of it made habitable and useful, and the whole the most convenient and agreeable spot upon earth, all the cost and labour spent

on it will be gloriously repaid by the incense of those who will come after us; and those who burn with the noble desire for immortality, and took such care to improve their country, will be able to rest satisfied that a thousand years hence—*two* thousand years hence—they will live in the memory and everlasting praises of the future ages that will then enjoy it. . . .

A search into the nature of society

The generality of moralists and philosophers have hitherto agreed that there could be no virtue without self-denial; but a late author who is now much read by men of sense is of a contrary opinion, and thinks that men can be naturally virtuous without any trouble or violence on themselves. He seems to require and expect goodness in members of his species, as we do a sweet taste in grapes and china oranges, which, if any of them are sour, we boldly say have not come to the perfection their nature is capable of. This noble writer (for it is Lord Shaftesbury I mean, in his *Characteristics*) fancies that because man is made for society he ought to be born with •a kind affection for the whole of which he is a part, and •a propensity to seek the welfare of it. In pursuance of this supposition he calls every action performed with concern for the public good *virtuous* and all selfishness that wholly excludes such a concern *vice*. In respect to our species, he looks on virtue and vice as permanent realities that must be the same in all countries and all ages, and imagines that a man of sound understanding can, by following the rules of good sense, not only •identify *pulchrum* and *honestum* [beautiful and good] in morality and in the works of art and nature but also •govern himself by his reason with as much ease and readiness as a good rider manages a well-trained horse by the bridle.

The attentive reader who has read the foregoing part of this book will soon see that two systems cannot be more opposite than his Lordship's and mine. His notions are admittedly generous and refined; they are a high compliment to human-kind, and with the help of a little enthusiasm [see Glossary] can inspire us with noble sentiments concerning the dignity of our exalted nature. What a pity it is that

they are not true! I would not say this if I had not already demonstrated on almost every page of this treatise that their substance is inconsistent with our daily experience. But so as not to leave unanswered the least shadow of a possible objection, I shall develop some things that I have so far only slightly touched on, so as to convince the reader not only that •the good and amiable qualities of man are not those that make him beyond other animals a sociable creature, but also that •it would be utterly impossible to raise any multitudes into a populous, rich and flourishing nation or to keep them in that condition without the assistance of what we call 'evil', both natural and moral.

Realism about beauty and goodness

To do this better, I shall first look into the reality of the *pulchrum* and *honestum* that the ancients talked about so much. That is, I shall discuss whether it is the case that

there is a real worth and excellence in things, a pre-eminence of one thing above another, that will be agreed to by everyone who understands them well;

or whether instead

there are few if any things that have the same esteem paid them, and on which the same judgment is passed, in all countries and all ages.

When we first set out in quest of this intrinsic worth, and find one thing better than another, a third better than that, and so on, we begin to entertain great hopes of success; but when we meet with several things that are all very good or all very bad, we are puzzled and can't always make up our own mind, let alone agree with others about them. There are faults that

will be differently disapproved of, as well as beauties that will be differently admired, as modes and fashions alter and men vary in their tastes and temperaments.

Judges of painting will never disagree in opinion when a fine picture is compared to the daubing of a novice; but how strongly they have differed regarding the works of eminent masters! There are factions among connoisseurs, and few of them agree in their esteem as to ages and countries, and the best pictures do not always command the best prices: a noted original will always be worth more than a copy of it by an unknown hand, even if the copy is better. The value that is set on paintings depends not only on the name of the master and the time in his life when he did them, but also in a great measure on the scarcity of his works and—what is still more unreasonable—on the quality of the persons who now own them and the length of time they have been in great families. If the drawings now at Hampton Court were done by someone less famous than Raphael, and were owned by a private person who was forced to sell them, they would never bring a tenth part of the money which they, with all their gross faults, are now esteemed to be worth.

Despite all this, I will readily admit that the judgment to be made of painting might acquire universal certainty, or at least become less alterable and precarious than almost anything else. The reasons for this is plain: there is a standard to go by that always remains the same. Painting is an imitation of nature, a copying of things which men have everywhere before them. [He side-tracks—'hoping that my good-humoured reader will forgive me'—into a theory of his about how the glories of the visual arts owe something to an imperfection in our eyesight.]

Worth and excellence are as uncertain in the works of nature as in works of art, and even in human creatures what is beautiful in one country is not so in another. How

whimsical is the florist in his choice! Sometimes the tulip, sometimes the auricula, and at other times the carnation will win his esteem; and every year a new flower in his judgment beats all the old ones, though it is much inferior to them in colour and shape. Three centuries ago men were shaved as closely as they are now; between then and now they wore beards, and cut them in a vast variety of forms that were all as handsome when fashionable as now they would be ridiculous. How comic an otherwise well-dressed man looks in a narrow-brimmed hat when everyone wears broad ones! How monstrous is a very large hat when the other extreme has been in fashion for some time! Experience has taught us that these fashions seldom last above a dozen years, and a man of 60 must have observed five or six revolutions of them. [He continues with examples: button-sizes, garden-designs. etc.]

Ever since Christians have been able to build them, churches have resembled the form of a cross, with the upper end pointing toward the east. Where there is room for this and it can conveniently be done, an architect who neglected it would be thought to have committed an unpardonable fault; but it would be foolish to expect this of a Turkish mosque or a pagan temple. [A century earlier, a law was enacted requiring that corpses at funerals be dressed in wool; much fuss from people who had conducted many funerals with the bodies dressed in linen. Continuing:] These days, with burying in linen being almost forgotten, it is the general opinion that nothing could be more decent than the present manner of dressing a corpse; which shows that our liking or disliking of things chiefly depends on fashion and custom. . . .

In morals there is no greater certainty. Plurality of wives is odious among Christians, and all the wit and learning of a great genius [Luther? Sir Thomas More? Plato?] in defence of it has been rejected with contempt; but polygamy is

not shocking to a Mahometan. What men have learned from their infancy enslaves them, and the force of •custom warps •nature and also imitates it in such a way that it is often difficult to know which of the two we are influenced by. In the east, sisters used to marry brothers, and it was meritorious for a man to marry his mother. Such alliances are abominable; but whatever horror we conceive at the thoughts of them, there is certainly nothing in nature opposed to them—only what is built upon fashion and custom. A religious Mahometan who has never tasted any alcoholic drink and has often seen people drunk may acquire as great an aversion against •wine as one of us who has the least tinge of morality and education will have against •lying with his sister; and each imagines that his antipathy proceeds from nature. *Which religion is the best?* is a question that has done more harm than all other questions together. Ask it at Peking, at Constantinople, and at Rome, and you'll get three extremely different answers, all delivered in a positive and peremptory manner. Christians are well assured of the falsity of the Pagan and Mahometan superstitions; on this point there is perfect concord among them; but ask their various sects 'Which is the true Church of Christ?' and all of them will tell you it is *theirs*, and to convince you they will start fighting one another.

So it is clear that hunting after this *pulchrum* and *honestum* is not much better than a wild-goose chase; but this is not the greatest fault I find with it. The fanciful idea that men can be virtuous without self-denial is a vast inlet to hypocrisy. Once this has become habitual, we not only deceive others but also become altogether unknown to ourselves. I am going to give an instance that will show how this might happen to a capable and erudite person of quality who does not

adequately examine himself. The person I shall describe greatly resembles the author of *Characteristics*. [Mandeville clearly intended what follows to be a portrait of Lord Shaftesbury.]

Hypocrisy and the 'calm virtues'

A man who has been brought up in ease and affluence, if he is of a quiet indolent nature, learns to shun everything troublesome and chooses to curb his passions, less because of any dislike for sensual enjoyments than because of the inconveniences that arise from eagerly pursuing pleasure and yielding to all the demands of our inclinations. And if such a man has been educated by a great philosopher who was a mild and good-natured tutor as well as an able one,¹ he may have a better opinion of his inward state than it really deserves, and believe himself virtuous because his passions lie dormant. He may form fine notions of the social virtues and the contempt for death, write well of them in his study and talk eloquently of them in company, but you will never catch him fighting for his country or labouring to retrieve any national losses. A man who deals in metaphysics can easily throw himself into an enthusiasm [see Glossary] and really believe that he does not fear death while it remains out of sight. But if he should be asked

- why—having this intrepidity either from nature or acquired by philosophy—he did not follow arms when his country was involved in war; or
- why—seeing the nation daily robbed by those at the helm, and the affairs of the exchequer perplexed—he did not go to Court, organise to become a Lord Treasurer, and restore the public credit through his integrity and wise management;

¹ John Locke was for many years a member of the household of Shaftesbury's grandfather, and had a large role in the grandson's upbringing.

he would probably answer that •he loved retirement, had no ambition except to be a good man, and never aspired to have any share in the government; or that •he hated all flattery and slavish attendance, the insincerity of Courts and bustle of the world. I am willing to believe him; but may not a man of indolent temper and inactive spirit say all this and be sincere in it and at the same time indulge his appetites without being able to subdue them, though his duty summons him to do so? Virtue consists in *action*; and someone who has this social love and kind affection for his species, and who by his birth or quality can claim some post in the public management, should exert himself to the utmost for the good of his fellow subjects rather than sitting still when he could be serviceable. If this noble person had had a warlike mind or a boisterous temperament, he would have chosen another role in the drama of life and preached a quite contrary doctrine; for we are always pushing our reason in whatever direction we feel passions pulling it, and self-love. . . .provides every individual with arguments to justify his inclinations.

That boasted middle way and the calm virtues recommended in the *Characteristics*. . . .might qualify a man for the stupid enjoyments of a monastic life, or at best a country justice of peace, but they would never fit him for labour and assiduity, or stir him up to great achievements and perilous undertakings. Man's natural love of ease and idleness, and proneness to indulge his sensual pleasures, cannot be cured by preaching; his strong habits and inclinations can only be subdued by passions of greater violence. Preach and demonstrate to a coward the unreasonableness of his fears and you'll not make him valiant, any more than you can make him taller by telling him to be ten foot high; whereas the secret to raise courage, as I have presented it in Remark R [see page 64], is almost infallible.

The fear of death is the strongest when we are in our greatest vigour, and our appetite is keen; when we are sharp-sighted, quick of hearing, and every part performs its office. That is clearly because that is when life is most delicious and we are most capable of enjoying it. So how does it come about that a man of honour so easily accepts a challenge •to a duel• when he is 30 and in perfect health? It is his pride that conquers his fear; for when his pride is not concerned, this fear will appear glaringly. Let him be in a storm if he is not used to the sea, let him have but a sore throat or a slight fever if he was never ill before, and he'll show a thousand anxieties, testifying to the inestimable value he sets on life. If man had been naturally humble and proof against flattery, the politician could never have achieved his purposes or known what to make of him. Without vices, the excellence of the species would have remained forever undiscovered, and every worthy who has made himself famous in the world is a strong evidence against this amiable system •of the 'middle way'•.

If the courage of the great Macedonian •Alexander the Great• rose to a frenzy when he fought alone against a whole garrison, his madness was not less when he fancied himself to be a god, or at least thought he might be; and as soon as we make this reflection, we discover both the passion and the extravagance of it that buoyed up his spirits in the most imminent dangers, and carried him through all the difficulties and fatigues he underwent.

There never was an abler and more complete magistrate than Cicero. When I think about

his care and vigilance, the real hazards he slighted, and the pains he took for the safety of Rome; his wisdom and sagacity in detecting and foiling the stratagems of the boldest and most subtle conspirators, and at the same time his love for literature, arts

and sciences, his capacity in metaphysics, the soundness of his reasonings, the force of his eloquence, the polish of his style, and the genteel spirit that runs through his writings,

I am struck with amazement, and the least I can say of him is that he was a prodigious man. But still it is evident to me that his vanity was as great as his greatest excellence, and that if it had not been, his good sense and knowledge of the world would never have let him be such an extravagant and noisy trumpeter of his own praises, or allowed him to proclaim his own merit in a verse that a schoolboy would have been laughed at for—*O fortunatam natam me consule Romam!* ['O lucky Rome! Born to have me as Consul!']

How strict and severe was the morality of rigid Cato, how steady and unaffected the virtue of that grand asserter of Roman liberty! . . . But by his suicide it plainly appeared that he was governed by a tyrannical power greater than his love for his country, and that his implacable hatred and superlative envy for Caesar's glory, real greatness and personal merit had for a long time swayed all his actions under the most noble pretences. If this violent motive had not overruled his consummate prudence, he might have saved not only himself but also most of his friends who were ruined by the loss of him, and he would in all probability have been the second man in Rome, if he could have stooped to it. But he knew the boundless mind and unlimited generosity of the victor; it was his *clemency* that he feared, and therefore chose death because it was less terrible to his pride than the thought of giving his mortal foe such a tempting opportunity to show the magnanimity of his soul, as Caesar would have found in forgiving and offering friendship to such an inveterate enemy as Cato. . . .

Another argument that is supposed to prove the kind disposition and real affection we naturally have for our

species is our love of company, and the aversion that men who are in their senses generally have to solitude. This bears a fine gloss in the *Characteristics*, and is set off in very good language to the best advantage. The day after I first read it, I heard crowds of people crying 'Fresh herrings!', and that, along with the thought of the vast shoals of that and other fish that are caught together, made me very cheerful, though I was alone. But as I was entertaining myself with this contemplation, along came an impertinent idle fellow whom I had the misfortune to be known by, and asked me how I did, though I was and probably looked as healthy as ever I was in my life. I forget what I answered, but I remember that I could not get rid of him for a good while, and felt all the uneasiness my friend Horace complains of from a similar persecution.

Sociableness

I would have no sagacious critic pronounce me a man-hater on the evidence of this short story; whoever does is very much mistaken. I am a great lover of company, and if you are not quite tired of mine, before I get on with my main theme I shall give you a description of the man I would choose for conversation. I promise that before you have come to the end of what at first you might think to be a mere side-tracking digression, you will find the use of it.

By early and artful instruction he should be thoroughly imbued with the notions of honour and shame, and have contracted an habitual aversion to everything that has the least tendency to impudence, rudeness or inhumanity. He should be well versed in the Latin tongue and not ignorant of the Greek, and moreover understand one or two modern languages besides his own. He should be acquainted with the fashions and customs of the ancients, but thoroughly

skilled in the history of his own country and the manners of the age he lives in. He should besides literature have studied some useful science or other, seen some foreign courts and universities, and made the true use of travelling. He should at times take delight in dancing, fencing, riding the great horse, and knowing something of hunting and other country sports, without being attached to any, and he should treat them all as exercises for health or else diversions that should never interfere with business or the attaining of more valuable qualifications. He should have a smattering of geometry and astronomy as well as anatomy and the economy of human bodies. To understand music so as to perform is an accomplishment, but there is a lot to be said against it; and I would prefer him to know a bit about drawing. . . . He should be very early used to the company of modest women, and never go a fortnight without conversing with the ladies.

Gross vices such as irreligion, whoring, gaming, drinking and quarrelling I won't mention; even the poorest education guards us against them. I would always recommend to him the practice of virtue, but I am not in favour of a gentleman's being voluntarily ignorant of anything that is done in Court or city. It is impossible for a man to be perfect, and therefore there are faults I would connive [see Glossary] at if I could not prevent them; and if between the ages of 19 and 23

- youthful heat sometimes got the better of his chastity, provided it was done with caution;

- on some special occasion, overcome by the urgings of jovial friends, he drank more than was consistent with strict sobriety, provided it happened very seldom and did not interfere with his health or temperament;

- by the height of his mettle and great provocation in a just cause he was drawn into a quarrel which true wisdom and

a less strict adherence to the rules of honour might have declined or prevented, provided it did not happen more than once;

if he happened to be guilty of these things, but never spoke (much less brag) of them, they might be pardoned or at least overlooked at the age I have named. The very disasters of youth have sometimes frightened gentlemen into a more steady prudence than they would have been likely to command otherwise. To keep him from turpitude and things that are openly scandalous, there is nothing better than to give him free access to one or two noble families where his frequent attendance is counted a duty; that preserves his pride while also keeping him in a continual dread of shame.

[He speaks of the pleasures of good conversation among a few men of the kind he has been describing, and continues:] Most people of any taste would like such a conversation, and rightly prefer it to being alone when they were at a loose end; but if they could do something from which they expected a more solid or a more lasting satisfaction, they would deny themselves this pleasure and follow what was of greater consequence to them.

- And almost anything is preferable to *bad* 'conversation'.
- Would not a man who had seen no-one for a fortnight rather remain alone for another fortnight than get into company with noisy fellows who take delight in contradiction and place a glory in picking a quarrel?
- Would not anyone who has books prefer reading for ever, or setting himself to write on some subject or other, to being every night with political zealots who regard the island as good for nothing while their adversaries are allowed to live on it?
- Would not a man prefer to be by himself for a month and go to bed before 7 p.m. to mixing with fox-hunters who—having all day long tried in vain to break their necks—at night make a second attempt on their lives by drinking. . . .? I have no great value for a

man who would not rather tire himself with walking—or if he was shut up, scatter pins about the room in order to pick them up again—than keep company for six hours with a dozen common sailors on the day their ship was paid off.

I grant that most of mankind, rather than being alone for any considerable time, would submit to the things I have named; but I cannot see why this love of company—this strong desire for society—should count so much in our favour as a supposed mark of some intrinsic worth in man that is not to be found in other animals. If man's being a sociable creature came from the goodness of his nature—from his generous love for the rest of his species—this eagerness for company and aversion of being alone ought to have been most conspicuous and fervent in the best of their kind, the men of the greatest genius, abilities and accomplishments, and those who are the least subject to vice. But in fact the opposite of that is true. The weakest minds who can the least govern their passions, guilty consciences that abhor reflection, and worthless people who are incapable of producing anything of their own that's useful—those are the greatest enemies to solitude, and will take up with any company rather than be alone; whereas men of sense and knowledge who can think and contemplate on things, and ones who are little disturbed by their passions, can bear to be by themselves the longest without reluctance; and to avoid noise, folly, and impertinence they will run away from twenty companies; and, rather than meet with anything disagreeable to their good taste, will prefer their study or a garden—indeed, a common or a desert—to the society of some men.

Suppose it were true that the love of company is so inseparable from our species that no man could endure being alone for one moment, what conclusions could be drawn from this? Does not man love company, as he does

everything else, for his own sake? [He goes into details of the self-involved reasons why people of various kinds get satisfaction from 'friendships and civilities', and offers evidence that 'in all clubs and societies of conversable people everyone has the greatest consideration for himself'.]

In these instances, the friendly qualities arise from our perpetually contriving our own satisfaction; on other occasions they proceed from man's natural timidity and the solicitous care he takes of himself. Two Londoners whose businesses do not oblige them to have any dealings with one another may know, see, and pass by one another every day on the exchange, with not much greater civility than bulls would; but let them meet in Bristol and they'll pull off their hats and on the least opportunity enter into conversation, being glad of one another's company. When French, English and Dutch meet in any pagan country, they look on one another as fellow countrymen, and if no passion interferes they will feel a natural propensity to love one another. Indeed, two men who are at enmity, if they are forced to travel together, will often lay by their animosities and converse in a friendly manner, especially if the road is unsafe and they are both strangers in the place they are to go to. Superficial judges attribute these things to man's sociableness, his natural propensity for friendship and love of company; but if you look into man more closely you'll find that on all these occasions the causes are the ones I have cited.

The nature of society

I have been trying to prove that the *pulchrum* and *honestum*—excellence and real worth—of things are most commonly precarious and alterable as fashions and customs vary; that consequently the inferences drawn from their certainty are pointless; and that the big-hearted notions of the natural

goodness of man are harmful because they tend to mislead and are merely chimerical. . . . I have spoken of our love of company and aversion to solitude, examined thoroughly their various motives, and made it appear that they all centre in self-love. I intend now to investigate the nature of society and, diving into the very origin of it, make it evident that the first causes of man's becoming more sociable than other animals the moment after he lost paradise are not his good and amiable qualities but the bad and hateful ones, his imperfections and lack of excellences that other creatures are endowed with; and that if he had remained in his primitive innocence and continued to enjoy the blessings that came with it, there is no shadow of probability that he would ever have become that sociable creature he is now.

I have sufficiently proved throughout the book how necessary our appetites and passions are for the welfare of all trades and handicrafts; and no-one denies that our appetites and passions *are* our bad qualities or at least *produce* them. It remains for me to set forth the various obstacles that hinder and perplex man in the labour he is constantly employed in, the procuring of what he wants, the business of self-preservation; while at the same time I demonstrate that the sociableness of man arises only from **(i)** the multiplicity of his desires and **(ii)** the continual opposition he meets with in his efforts to gratify them.

The obstacles I speak of relate to **a** our own frame and to **b** the globe we inhabit—I mean its condition since it was cursed. I have often tried to think separately about those two things, but could never keep them apart; they always interfere and mix with one another, eventually combining to form a frightful chaos of evil. All the elements are our enemies, water drowns and fire consumes those who unskillfully approach them. The earth in a thousand places produces plants that are hurtful to man, while she feeds and protects

a variety of creatures that are noxious to him, and allows a legion of poisons to dwell within her. But the most unkind of all the elements is the one we cannot live for one moment without; it is impossible to repeat all the injuries we receive from the wind and weather. . . .

Hurricanes do not happen often, and few men are swallowed up by earthquakes or devoured by lions; but while we escape those gigantic mischiefs we are persecuted by trifles. What a vast variety of insects are tormenting to us! What multitudes of them insult and make game of us with impunity! . . . We put up with them when they don't overdo things; but here again our clemency becomes a vice, and so ruthless is their cruelty and contempt for our pity that they make laystalls [= 'garbage dumps'] of our heads and devour our young ones if we are not daily vigilant in pursuing and destroying them.

No innocence or integrity can protect a man from a thousand mischiefs that surround him; on the contrary, everything that art and experience have not taught us to turn into a blessing is an evil. At harvest time how diligently the farmer gets in his crop and shelters it from rain, without which he would not have *had* a crop! As seasons differ with the climates, we have learned from experience how to make use of them: we see the farmer sow in one part of the globe while he is reaping in another part; all of which tells us how vastly this earth must have been altered since the Fall of our first parents. Let us trace man from his beautiful—his *divine*—origin, not proud of wisdom acquired by haughty precept or tedious experience but endowed with consummate knowledge the moment he was formed; I mean his state of innocence, in which no animal or plant or underground mineral was noxious to him, and he was secure from the injuries of the air as well as all other harms, and was contented with the necessities of life, which the globe he

inhabited provided for him without his assistance. When not yet conscious of guilt, he found himself to be everywhere the unchallenged lord of all, and unspoiled by his greatness was wholly caught up in sublime meditations on the infinity of his Creator, who visited him daily and spoke in a language he understood.

In such a golden age there was no reason why mankind should ever have raised themselves into such large societies as there have been in the world for as far back as we have any tolerable records. Where a man has everything he desires and nothing to vex or disturb him, nothing can be added to his happiness; and it is impossible to name a trade, art, science, dignity or employment that would not be superfluous in such a blessed state. If we follow out this thought we'll easily see that no societies could have sprung from man's amiable virtues and loving qualities, but on the contrary that all of them must have had their origin in his wants, his imperfections, and the variety of his appetites; and we'll also find that the more men's pride and vanity are displayed and the more their desires are enlarged, the more capable they must be of being raised into large and vastly numerous societies.

With the air being always as inoffensive to our naked bodies and as pleasant as we think it is to most birds in fair weather, and man not being affected with pride, luxury and hypocrisy, or with lust, I cannot see what could have led us to invent clothes and houses. (Never mind jewels, plate, painting, sculpture, fine furniture, and all that rigid moralists have called unnecessary and superfluous.) If we were not soon tired from walking on foot, and were as nimble as some other animals; if men were naturally hard-working and none were unreasonable in seeking and indulging their ease; and if the ground was everywhere even, solid and clean, who would have thought of coaches or ventured on a horse's

back? What use has the dolphin for a ship? What carriage would an eagle ask to travel in?

I hope it is clear that by 'society' I mean a body politic in which man—either subdued by superior force or drawn by persuasion from his savage state—becomes a disciplined creature who can find his own ends in labouring for others, and where under some form of government each member is made subservient to the whole, and all of them are by cunning management made to act as one. If by 'society' we only mean a number of people who without rule or government keep together out of natural affection for their species or love of company, like a herd of cows or a flock of sheep, then nothing in the world is a more unfit creature for society than man. A hundred of them who should all be equals, under no subjection or fear of any superior on earth, could not live together awake for two hours without quarrelling; and the more knowledge, strength, wit, courage and resolution there was among them, the worse it would be.

[He writes about parental authority, and how it fades away: 'once the old stock is dead, the sons would quarrel'.] Man, being a fearful animal and naturally not rapacious, loves peace and quiet and would never fight if nobody offended him and he could have what he wanted without fighting for it. This fearful disposition and his aversion to being disturbed are the source of all the various projects and forms of government. Monarchy without doubt was the first. Aristocracy and democracy were two different methods of mending the inconveniences of the first, and a mixture of these three is an improvement on all the rest.

But whether we are savages or politicians [see Glossary], it is impossible that man—mere fallen man—should act with any purpose but to please himself while he has the use of his organs, and the greatest extravagance of love or of despair can have no other centre but that. There is no difference

between will and pleasure in one sense, and every motion made in defiance of them must be unnatural and convulsive. Thus, since action is so confined and we are always forced to do what we please, and at the same time our thoughts are free and uncontrolled, we could not possibly be sociable creatures without hypocrisy. We cannot *prevent* the ideas that are continually arising within us, but all civil commerce would be lost if we had not learned to *hide and stifle* them by art and prudent dissimulation. If all our thoughts were laid open to others in the same way that they are to ourselves, it is impossible that endowed with speech we could be tolerable to one another. I am sure every reader feels the truth of what I say. . . . In all civil societies men are taught insensibly to be hypocrites from their cradle, nobody dares to make public what he gets by public calamities or even by the losses of private persons. The sexton would be stoned if he wished openly for the death of the parishioners, though everybody knows that he has nothing else to live on.

When I look on the affairs of human life, it is a great pleasure to behold the various and often strangely opposite forms men are shaped into by the hope of gain and thoughts of lucre according to their different employments and stations. How gay and merry every face appears at a well-ordered ball, and what a solemn sadness is observed at the masquerade of a funeral! But the undertaker is as much pleased with his gains as the dancing-master is with his; they are equally tired in their occupations, and the jollity of the one is as much forced as the gravity of the other is affected. Those who have never attended to the conversation between a mercer and a young lady, his customer, who comes to his shop, have neglected a scene of life that is very entertaining. I ask my serious reader to set aside his gravity for a while and allow me to examine these people separately, as to the different motives they act from.

Two comic scenes

[A] His business is to sell as much silk as he can at a price he thinks to be reasonable according to the customary profits of the trade. As for the lady: what she is up to is pleasing her fancy and buying the things she wants at sixpence per yard less than are commonly sold at. From the impression the gallantry of our sex has made upon her, she imagines (if she isn't very ugly) that she has a fine appearance and easy behaviour, and a peculiar sweetness of voice; that she is handsome, and if not beautiful at least more agreeable than most young women she knows. She is relying on her good qualities to get her better bargains than other people, so she sets herself off to the best advantage her wit and discretion will permit her. . . . She has no room for playing the tyrant and giving herself angry and peevish airs, and she gives herself more liberty to speak kindly and be affable than she can have on almost any other occasion. She knows that many well-bred people come to his shop, and tries to make herself as amiable as virtue and the rules of decency permit. Coming with such a plan for her behaviour, she cannot meet with anything to ruffle her temper.

Before her coach has quite stopped, she is approached by a gentlemanly man with everything clean and fashionable about him; with a deep bow he pays her homage, and as soon as her pleasure is known that she wants to come in he hands her into the shop, where immediately he slips from her and nimbly entrenches himself behind the counter. Facing her from there, he with a profound reverence and modish phrase begs the favour of knowing her commands. Let her say and dislike what she pleases, she will never be directly contradicted; she is dealing with a man in whom consummate patience is one of the mysteries of his trade, and whatever trouble she creates, she is sure to hear nothing

but the most obliging language, and always has before her a cheerful countenance in which joy and respect seem to be blended with good humour—creating an artificial serenity more engaging than any that untaught nature can produce.

When two persons are so well met, the conversation must be very agreeable and mannerly, even if they talk only about trifles. While she remains irresolute about what to take, he seems to be irresolute in advising her, and is very cautious how to direct her choice; but once she has settled on a choice, he immediately becomes sure that it is the best of the sort, and says that the more he looks at it the more he wonders at how long it has taken him to realise that it is the best thing he has in his shop. By precept, example and great application he has learned to slide unobserved into the inmost recesses of the soul, sound the abilities of his customers, and find out their blind side unknown to them; by all which he is instructed in fifty other tactics to make her over-value her own judgment as well as the commodity she plans to purchase. His greatest advantage over her concerns the most material part of the commerce between them, namely the price, which he knows to a farthing and she is wholly ignorant of. . . . Though he can tell what lies he pleases about the prime cost and the money he has refused, he does not rely on them only. Rather, by attacking her vanity he makes her believe most incredible things concerning his own weakness and her superior abilities; he had taken a resolution, he says, never to part with that piece under such-and-such a price, but she has more power to talk him out of his goods than anyone he ever sold to; he protests that he loses by this sale but seeing that she has a fancy for his silk and won't pay any more for it, rather than disoblige a lady he values so highly he'll let her have it, and only begs that next time she won't drive so hard a bargain. In the meantime the buyer, who knows that she is no fool

and has a voluble tongue, is easily persuaded that she has a very winning way of talking, and—thinking it sufficient for the sake of good-breeding to disown her merit and in some witty repartee reject the compliment—swallows very contentedly the substance of everything he tells her. The upshot is that she, pleased with having saved ninepence per yard, has bought her silk at exactly the same price as anyone else might have done. . . . [He makes some remarks about the 'whimsical' reasons that determine which shop a woman goes to in the first place, ending with this:] Among the fashionable mercers the dealer must stand before his own door, and draw in random customers purely through an obsequious air, a submissive posture, and a bow to every well-dressed female who offers to look towards his shop.

[B] That reminds me of another way of inviting customers, the most distant in the world from the one I have been speaking of, namely that which is practised by the London-watermen, especially on those whose appearance and clothes show them to be peasants. [In the following scene, each waterman is trying to get the peasant to hire him to row him across the river.] It is not unpleasant to see half a dozen people surround a man they never saw in their lives before, and two of them who can get the nearest each clapping an arm over his neck and hugging him in as loving a manner as if he was their brother newly returned from an East-India voyage; a third lays hold of his hand, another of his sleeve, his coat, the buttons of it, or anything he can come at, while a fifth or a sixth, who has scampered twice round him already without being able to get at him, plants himself directly in front of the man and within three inches of his nose contradicts his rivals with an open-mouthed cry, showing him a dreadful set of large teeth and a small remainder of chewed bread and cheese that the countryman's arrival had stopped him from swallowing.

No offence is taken at all this, and the peasant rightly thinks they are making much of him; therefore far from opposing them he patiently allows himself to be pushed or pulled in whatever direction the strength that surrounds him dictates. He has not the delicacy to find fault with the breath of a man who has just blown out his pipe, or a greasy head of hair that is rubbing against his cheeks; he has been used to dirt and sweat from his cradle, and it is no disturbance to him to hear a dozen people—some at his ear, the furthest not five feet away—bawl out as if he were a hundred yards distant; he is aware that he makes just as much noise when he is merry himself, and is secretly pleased with their boisterous usages. The hauling and pulling him about he construes the way it is intended; it is a courtship he can feel and understand. He can't help wishing them well for the esteem they seem to have for him; he loves to be taken notice of, and admires the Londoners for being so pressing in their offers of service to him, for the value of threepence or less; whereas at the shop he uses in the country he can't have anything without first telling them what he wants, and, though he spends three or four shillings at a time, hardly a word is spoken to him except in answer to a question he is forced to ask first. This alacrity on his behalf moves his gratitude, and unwilling to disoblige any he does not know whom to choose. I have seen a man think all this, or something like it, as plainly as I could see the nose on his face; and at the same time move along very contentedly under a load of watermen, and with a smiling countenance carry a hundred pounds more than his own weight to the water-side.

Returning to the main theme of the book

If it is unsuitable for me to have a little fun in drawing these two images from low life, I apologise; but I promise not to be guilty of that fault any more, and will now proceed with my argument in artless dull simplicity, and demonstrate the gross error of those who imagine that the social virtues and the amiable qualities that are praiseworthy in us are as beneficial to the public as they are to the individual persons who have them, and that whatever conduces to the welfare and real happiness of private families must have the same effect upon the whole society. I have been working for this all along, and I flatter myself not unsuccessfully; but I hope nobody will like a problem the worse for seeing the solution of it proved more ways than one.

It is certain that

- the fewer desires a man has and the less he covets, the more easy he is to himself;
- the more active he is in meeting his own needs and the less he requires to be waited upon, the more beloved and untroublesome he is in a family;
- the more he loves peace and concord, the more charity he has for his neighbour; and
- the more he shines in real virtue, the more acceptable he is to God and man.

But let us be just: what benefit can these things bring, what earthly good can they do, to promote the wealth, glory and worldly greatness of nations? It is •the sensual courtier who sets no limits to his luxury; •the fickle strumpet who invents new fashions every week; •the haughty duchess who wants to imitate a princess in equipage, entertainments, and all her behaviour; •the profuse rake and lavish heir who scatter their money around without wit or judgment, buy everything they see and destroy or give it away the next day; •the covetous

and perjured villain who squeezed an immense treasure from the tears of widows and orphans, and left the prodigals the money to spend; it is *these* who are the prey and proper food of a full-grown Leviathan [see Glossary]. That is, such is the calamitous condition of human affairs that we need the plagues and monsters I named to have all the variety of labour performed. . . .to procure an honest livelihood for the vast multitudes of working poor that are required to make a large society. It is folly to imagine that great and wealthy nations can survive, and be both powerful and polite [see Glossary], without such multitudes.

I protest against Popery as much as ever •Luther and Calvin did, or Queen Elizabeth herself, but I believe from my heart that the Reformation has hardly been more instrumental in making the kingdoms and states that have embraced it flourishing beyond other nations than the silly and capricious invention of hooped and quilted petticoats. If the enemies of priestly power deny this, at least I am sure that—apart from the great men who have fought for and against •that layman’s blessing—the Reformation has from its beginning up to today not employed as many hands, honest industrious labouring hands, as those petticoats have employed in a few years. Religion is one thing and trade is another. He who gives most trouble to thousands of his neighbours, and invents the most operose [see Glossary] manufactures is the greatest friend to the society.

What a bustle has to be made in several parts of the world before a fine scarlet or crimson cloth can be produced, what multiplicity of trades and artificers must be employed! [He lists the ‘obvious’ ones and then some that are less obvious but equally necessary for the product, such as the makers of cloth-making tools. Then the dyes: the skill to make them, and the hazardous sea-voyages needed to bring them to England.]

When we are thoroughly acquainted with all the variety of toil and labour, the hardships and calamities that must be undergone to produce scarlet or crimson cloth, and when we consider the vast risks and perils that are run in those voyages, and that most of them are made at the expense of the health and welfare and even of the lives of many, it is hardly possible to conceive a tyrant so inhuman and void of shame that he could, while seeing all this, exact such terrible services from his innocent slaves; and at the same time dare to admit that he did it for no other reason, than the satisfaction a man receives from having a garment made of scarlet or crimson cloth. But what height of luxury must have been reached by a nation where not only the king’s officers but also his guards and even the private soldiers have such impudent desires!

But if we redirect our gaze and take in that

- all those labours are voluntary actions belonging to different occupations that men are brought up to for a livelihood, and in which everyone works for himself, however much he may seem to labour for others; and
- that even the sailors who undergo the greatest hardships, as soon as one voyage is ended (even one in which there was a ship-wreck), try to find employment in another;

we shall find that the labour of the poor is so far from being a burden and an imposition on them that to have employment is a blessing that they ask for in their prayers. To procure it for the general run of them is the greatest care of every legislature.

All young people have an ardent desire to be men and women, and often become ridiculous by their impatient efforts to appear what everyone sees they are not; and all large societies are considerably indebted to this folly for the long continuance of certain trades. What pains young will people

take, and what violence they will commit on themselves, to acquire insignificant (and often blameworthy) qualifications that their lack of judgment and experience leads them to admire in others who are older than them! This fondness of imitation makes them gradually accustom themselves to the use of things that were irksome (or worse) to them at first, until they don't know how to leave them, and are often sorry that they thoughtlessly and needlessly increased the necessities of life. What estates have been acquired through tea and coffee! What a vast traffic is driven—what a variety of labour is performed in the world—for the maintenance of thousands of families that entirely depend on two silly if not odious customs, the taking of snuff and smoking of tobacco; both which certainly do infinitely more harm than good to those who are addicted to them! I shall go further, and demonstrate the usefulness to the public of private losses and misfortunes, and the folly of our wishes when we claim to be most wise and serious. The fire of London was a great calamity, but if we set off

- the carpenters, bricklayers, smiths, and others employed in building, and also those who made and dealt in the same manufactures and other merchandises that were burned, as well as other trades that gained by those when they were in full employment

against

- those who lost by the fire,

the rejoicings would equal if not exceed the complaints. A considerable part of trade consists in making good for what is lost and destroyed by fire, storms, sea-fights, sieges, battles. The truth of this and of what I have said about the nature of society will plainly appear from what follows.

The risks and benefits of shipping

It would be hard to list all the advantages and benefits that come to a nation through shipping and navigation; but if we take into consideration only

the ships themselves, and every vessel great and small that is used for water-carriage, from the least wherry to a first-rate man of war; the timber and hands that are employed in building them; the pitch, tar, rosin, grease; the masts, yards, sails and riggings; the variety of smith's work, the cables, oars and everything else belonging to them,

we shall find that to provide only such a nation as ours with all these necessities makes up a considerable part of the traffic of Europe; quite apart from the stores of all sorts that are consumed in ships, and the mariners, watermen and others with their families that are maintained by them.

But if we look at the manifold mischiefs and variety of evils—moral as well as natural—that befall nations through seafaring and foreign trade, the prospect is frightful. And if we suppose a large populous island that was wholly unacquainted with ships and sea affairs but otherwise a wise and well-governed people, and suppose that some angel laid before them a scheme or draught that would show them

- all the riches and real advantages that would be acquired by navigation in a thousand years, and
- the wealth and lives that would be lost, and all the other calamities that would be unavoidably sustained because of navigation during that same period,

I am confident that they would look on ships with horror and detestation, and that their prudent rulers would severely forbid the making of all machines to go to sea with, of whatever kind, and would prohibit all such abominable contrivances on great penalties, if not the pain of death.

Setting aside the corruption of manners and the plagues, poxes, and other diseases that are brought to us by shipping, if we look only at

- what is to be •attributed to the wind and weather, the treachery of the seas, the ice of the north, the vermin of the south, the darkness of nights and the unwholesomeness of climates, or else •caused by the lack of good provisions and the faults of seamen, the unskilfulness of some and the neglect and drunkenness of others; and at
- the losses of men and treasure swallowed up in the deep, the tears and needs of widows and orphans made by the sea, the ruin of merchants, the continual anxieties that parents and wives are in for the safety of their children and husbands; and bear in mind
- the many pangs and heartaches that are felt throughout a trading nation by owners and insurers at every blast of wind;

and give these things the weight they deserve, would it not be amazing that a nation of thinking people should talk of their ships and navigation as a peculiar blessing to them, rejoicing at having countless vessels dispersed, going or coming, all over the world?

[He writes vividly about the harms that come to ships because of bad weather, incompetence or drunkenness of sailors, and shortage of crew because of deaths through illness.] These are all calamities inseparable from navigation, and seem to be great impediments that clog the wheels of foreign commerce. How happy a merchant would think himself if his ships always had fine weather and the wind he wished for, and every mariner he employed, from the highest to the lowest, was a knowledgeable and experienced sailor and a careful, sober, good man! If such a happiness could be had for prayers, what ship-owner or dealer in

Europe—indeed, in the whole world—would not be all day long pleading to heaven for such a blessing for himself, without regard what harm it would do to others? Such a petition would certainly be a very immoral one, yet where is the man who does not think he has a right to make it? Well, then, let us suppose that all their prayers were effective and their wishes answered, and then examine the result of such a happiness.

Ships would last at least as long as timber-houses, because they would be as strongly built and would not suffer from high winds and other storms as houses do; so that, before there was any real occasion for new ships, everyone now involved in the ship-building trade would die a natural death. All the ships, having prosperous winds and never having to wait for them, would make very quick voyages both out and home; and no merchandise would be damaged by the sea or by stress of weather thrown overboard, but the entire cargo would always come safely ashore; so that three quarters of the merchant ships already in existence would be superfluous for the present, and the world's present stock of ships would serve for vastly many years. Masts and yards would last as long as the vessels themselves, and we would not need to trouble Norway about them for a great while yet. The sails and rigging of ships would indeed wear out, but not a quarter as fast as now they do, for they often suffer more in one hour's storm than in ten days fair weather.

There would be seldom any occasion for anchors and cables, and one of each would last a ship almost for ever; this item alone would provide anchor-smiths and rope-yard workers with many tedious holidays! This general lack of consumption would have such an influence on the timber-merchants, and all who import iron, sail-cloth, hemp, pitch, tar etc., that four fifths of that branch of the traffic of Europe would be entirely lost.

So far I have touched only on the effects on shipping of this 'blessing', but it would be detrimental to all other branches of trade besides, and destructive to the poor of every country that exports anything of their own growth or manufacture. The goods and merchandise that every year

- go to the deep, •are spoiled at sea by salt water, heat, or vermin, •are destroyed by fire or lost to the merchant by other accidents—all because of storms or tedious voyages, or else the neglect or rapacity of sailors

are a considerable part of what is sent abroad annually, and must have employed great multitudes of poor people before they could come on board. A hundred bales of cloth that are burnt or sunk in the Mediterranean, are as beneficial to the poor in England as if they had safely arrived at Smyrna or Aleppo and every yard of them had been retailed in the Grand Signior's dominions.

The merchant may go bankrupt, and through him the clothier, the dyer, the packer, and other tradesmen—the middling people—may suffer; but the poor who worked on them can never lose. Day-labourers commonly receive their earnings once a week, and almost all the working people who were employed either in any the manufacture of the goods or in the various land and water transports needed to bring them from the sheep's back to the ship that was to take them, were paid before the parcel came on board. If any of my readers should draw endless conclusions from my assertions that goods sunk or burnt are as beneficial to the poor as if they had been well sold and put to their proper uses, I would count him a caviller [= 'nit-picker'] and not worth answering. If it always rained and the sun never shone, the fruits of the earth would soon be rotten and destroyed; but it is no paradox to affirm that to have grass or corn, rain is as necessary as sunshine.

Winding up

How this 'blessing' of fair winds and fine weather would affect the mariners themselves can easily be conjectured from what I have said already. With hardly one ship in four being used, and the vessels themselves always exempt from storms, fewer hands would be required to work them. This would spare us the need for five in six of the seamen we now have, which in this nation—where most employments of the poor are overstocked—would be a bad thing. As soon as those superfluous seamen were extinct [Mandeville's word], it would be impossible to man such large fleets as we can now; but I do not look upon this as a drawback or the least inconvenience, for the reduction in numbers of seamen throughout the world would have the result that in case of war the maritime powers would be obliged to fight with fewer ships, which would be a happiness instead of an evil. And if you want to carry this felicity to the highest pitch of perfection, you have only to add one desirable blessing more, which all good Christians are bound to pray for, namely

- that all princes and states would be true to their oaths and promises, and just to one another as well as their own subjects; that they might have a greater regard for the dictates of conscience and religion than for the dictates of state politics and worldly wisdom, and prefer •the spiritual welfare of others to their own carnal desires, and prefer •the honesty, safety, peace and tranquility of the nations they govern to their own love of glory, spirit of revenge, avarice, and ambition; and no nation will ever fight at all.

The preceding paragraph will strike many as a digression that serves little for my purpose; but what I mean by it is to demonstrate that goodness, integrity, and a peaceful disposition in rulers and governors of nations are not the

proper qualifications to aggrandise them and increase their numbers; any more than the uninterrupted series of successes that every private person would be blessed with if he could, and which I have shown would be injurious and destructive to a large society that •placed felicity in worldly greatness and being envied by their neighbours, and •prided themselves on their honour and their strength.

No man needs to guard himself against blessings, but calamities require hands to avert them. The amiable qualities of man don't require anyone else to *do* anything; his honesty, his love of company, his goodness, contentment and frugality are comforts to an indolent society, and the more real they are the more they keep everything at rest and peace, and the more they will prevent trouble and activity. The same almost may be said of •the gifts and generosity of heaven, and of •all the bounties and benefits of nature: the more extensive they are, and the greater abundance we have of them, the more we save our labour. But the needs, vices and imperfections of man, together with the various inclemencies of the air and other elements, contain in them the seeds of all arts, industry and labour. The extremities of heat and cold, the inconstancy and badness of seasons, the violence and uncertainty of winds, the vast power and treachery of water, the rage and untractableness of fire, and the stubbornness and sterility of the earth challenge us to work out ways of avoiding the harms they can produce or turning their various forces to our own advantage in a thousand different ways; while we are also employed in supplying the infinite variety of our wants, which will always be multiplied as our knowledge is enlarged and our desires increase. Hunger, thirst and nakedness are the first tyrants that force us to stir; then our pride, sloth, sensuality and fickleness are the great patrons that promote all the arts and sciences, trades, handicrafts and callings; while the great taskmasters—necessity, avarice,

envy, and ambition—each in the class that belongs to him, keep the members of the society to their labour, and make them all submit, most of them cheerfully, to the drudgery of their station; kings and princes not excepted.

The greater the variety of trades and manufactures, the more operose [see Glossary] they are; and the more they are divided into many branches, the greater the numbers of them that can be contained in a society without being in one another's way, and the more easily the society can be turned into a rich, potent and flourishing people. Few virtues employ any hands, so they may render a small nation *good* but they cannot make it *great*. To be strong and laborious, patient in difficulties, and assiduous in all business, are commendable qualities; but as they do their own work, so they are their own reward, and neither art nor industry has ever paid them any compliments; whereas the excellence of human thought and contrivance has never been more conspicuous than in the variety of tools and instruments of workmen and artificers, and the multiplicity of engines, that were all invented to assist man's weakness, to correct his many imperfections, to gratify his laziness, or obviate his impatience.

In morality as in nature, there is nothing so perfectly good in creatures that it cannot harm anyone in the society, nor anything so entirely evil that it cannot prove beneficial to some part of the creation; so that things are good or evil only in reference to something else, and according to the light and position they are placed in. . . . There never was a dry season, with public prayers being made for rain, when there wasn't somebody who wanted to go abroad and wished for fair weather for that one day. When the corn stands thick in the spring, and most of the country rejoice at the pleasing object, the rich farmer who kept his last year's crop for a better market pines at the sight, and inwardly

grieves at the prospect of a plentiful harvest. Indeed, we often hear idle people openly wish for the possessions of others, and—not wanting to seem injurious—add the wise proviso that it should be without detriment to the owners; but I'm afraid they often say this without any such restriction in their hearts.

It is fortunate that the prayers as well as the wishes of most people are insignificant and good for nothing; for otherwise the only thing that could keep mankind fit for society and keep the world from falling into confusion would be that all the petitions made to heaven were granted, which is impossible.

- A dutiful young gentleman newly returned from his travels waits impatiently on the Dutch coast for a wind to waft him over to England, where a dying father who wants to embrace and give him his blessing before breathing his last yearning after him, melted with grief and tenderness;
- a British minister who is to take care of the protestant interest in Germany is riding post to Harwich, in violent haste to be at Ratisbone before the parliament breaks up;
- a rich fleet lies ready for the Mediterranean; and
- a fine squadron is bound for the Baltic.

·These require, respectively, winds blowing to the east, the west, the south and the north.· There is no difficulty in supposing that these requirements should all happen at once. If these people are not atheists or very great reprobates,

they will all have some good thoughts before they go to sleep, and consequently about bed-time they must all pray for 'a fair wind and a prosperous voyage'. It may even be their *duty* to make this prayer, and it is possible they may all be *heard*; but I am sure they can't be all *served* at the same time.

After this I flatter myself that I have demonstrated that the foundation of society is not •the friendly qualities and kind affections that are **natural** to man, or •the real virtues he can **acquire** by reason and self-denial; but that what we call 'evil' in this world, moral as well as natural, is the great force that makes us sociable creatures, the solid basis, the life and support of all trades and employments without exception; that we must look *there* for the true origin of all arts and sciences, and that the moment evil ceases, the society must be spoiled, if not totally dissolved.

I could add a thousand things to enforce and further illustrate this truth with abundance of pleasure; but for fear of being troublesome I shall make an end, though I confess that I have been aiming to please myself in this amusement *much* more than to get the approval of others. But if I ever hear that by following this diversion of mine I have also diverted the intelligent reader, that will always add to the satisfaction I have received in doing this performance. My vanity leads me to hope for this; and in that hope I leave my reader with regret, and conclude by repeating the seeming paradox the substance of which is advanced on the title page; that by the dextrous management of a skilful politician [see Glossary] private vices may be turned into public benefits.

Vindication

For the reader to be fully instructed in the merits of the cause between my adversaries and myself, before seeing my defence he should know the whole charge and all the accusations against me. [For 'presentment', see the glossary.]

The Presentment of the Grand Jury

We the Grand Jury for the County of Middlesex have with the greatest sorrow and concern observed the many books and pamphlets that are almost every week published against the sacred articles of our holy religion, and all discipline and order in the church; and the manner in which this is carried on seems to us to have a direct tendency to propagate infidelity and consequently the corruption of all morals.

We are aware of the goodness of the Almighty that has preserved us from the plague that has afflicted our neighbouring nation, for which his majesty was pleased to command that thanks should be returned to heaven; but how provoking must it be to the Almighty that his mercies and deliverances to this nation and our thanksgiving that was publicly commanded for it should be accompanied by such flagrant impieties.

We know of nothing that can be of greater service to his majesty and the Protestant succession (which is happily established among us for the defence of the Christian religion) than the suppression of blasphemy and profaneness that has a direct tendency to subvert the very foundation of his majesty's government.

So restless have these zealots for infidelity been in their diabolical attempts against religion that

- (1) They have openly blasphemed and denied the doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity, trying by specious

pretences to revive the Arian heresy, which was never introduced into any nation without the vengeance of heaven pursuing it.

- (2) They affirm an absolute fate, and deny the providence and government of the Almighty in the world.
- (3) They have tried to subvert all order and discipline in the church, and by vile and unjust reflections on the clergy they strive to bring contempt on all religion; so that by the libertinism of their opinions they may encourage and draw others into the immoralities of their practice.
- (4) So that a general libertinism may more effectively be established, the universities are decried and all instructions of youth in the principles of the Christian religion are exploded with malice and falsity.
- (5) The more effectively to carry on these works of darkness, they have used elaborate tricks to run down religion and virtue as prejudicial to society and detrimental to the state; and to recommend luxury, avarice, pride, and all kinds of vices as being necessary to public welfare and not tending to the destruction of the constitution. Indeed, they have tried to debauch the nation by publishing far-fetched defences and forced praises of brothels.

These principles having a direct tendency to subvert all religion and civil government, our duty to the Almighty, our love to our country, and regard for our oaths, oblige us to present [see Glossary] E. Parker and T. Warner, publishers of the book entitled *The Fable of the Bees; or private vices public benefits*, second edition, 1723, and of *The British Journal*, nos. 26, 35, 36 and 39.

The letter complained of

Here is the letter I complain of.

My Lord,

It is welcome news to all the king's loyal subjects and true friends of the established government and succession in the illustrious house of Hanover that your Lordship is said to be contriving some effective means of securing us from the dangers that his majesty's government seems to be threatened with •by Catiline, •by the writer of a book entitled *The Fable of the Bees* etc., and •by others of that fraternity.¹ These people are undoubtedly useful friends to the Pretender,² and diligent for his sake in working to subvert and ruin our constitution under a specious pretence of defending it. Your Lordship's wise resolution to suppress such impious writings totally, and the direction already given for having them immediately presented by some of the grand juries, will convince the nation that no attempts against Christianity will be allowed here. And this conviction •will at once rid men's minds of the uneasiness that this wicked crew of writers has tried to raise in them; •will therefore be a firm bulwark for the Protestant religion; •will defeat the projects and hopes of the Pretender and best secure us against any change in the government. And no faithful Briton could be unconcerned if the people imagined *any* neglect by *any* person with a part in the government, or began to suspect that anything could be done that is not done in defending their religion from every appearance of danger. . . . The people of England will never give up their religion, or be very fond of any government that will not support it—as the wisdom of

this government has done—against such audacious attacks as are made upon it by the scribblers. As your Lordship knows, 'scribbler' is the right label for every author who, under whatever plausible appearance of good sense, tries to undermine his fellow-subjects' religion, and therefore their content and quiet, their peace and happiness, by subtle and artful and fallacious arguments and insinuations. May heaven avert those insufferable miseries that the church of Rome would bring upon us! Tyranny is the bane of human society; and there is no tyranny heavier than that of the triple crown worn by the popes. So this free and happy people has justly conceived an utter abhorrence and dread of popery, and of everything that looks like encouragement for it; but they also hate and fear the violence offered to Christianity itself by our British Catilines, who shelter their treacherous designs against it under the false colours of good will towards our blessed Protestant religion, while they all too plainly show that the title 'protestants' does not belong to them unless it can belong to those who are in effect protesters against all religion.

The people are naturally a little unwilling to part with their religion; for they tell you that there is a God, who governs the world, and that he is wont to bless or blast a kingdom in proportion to the degrees of religion or irreligion prevailing in it. . . . I wonder whether your Lordship can show, from any writer (even one as profane as the scribblers would like), that any one empire, kingdom, country or province did not dwindle and sink and fall into confusion when it once failed to provide intense support for religion.

¹ [In this letter, 'Catiline'—borrowed from a Roman Senator who in 63 BCE conspired to overthrow the Roman republic—refers to the author of letters in *The British Journal*, referred to in the scope of the Grand Jury's presentment, though they were signed 'Cato'. On page 128 Mandeville is referred to as an 'auxiliary' of Catiline = Cato.]

² [Meaning 'claimant to the throne'; this was James Francis Edward Stuart, who claimed to be the son of James II.]

The scribblers talk much of the Roman government, and liberty, and the spirit of the old Romans. But it is undeniable that their most plausible talk of these things is all pretence and face-pulling and an artifice to serve the purposes of irreligion and thus make the people uneasy and ruin the kingdom. If they really did esteem the main purposes and practices of the wise and prosperous Romans, and would faithfully recommend to their countrymen the Romans' sentiments and principles, they would remind us that old Rome was as remarkable for observing and promoting natural religion as new Rome has been for corrupting revealed religion. . . . Whenever the ancient Roman orators were doing their utmost to move and persuade the people, they reminded them of their religion, if that could be any way affected by the point in debate; not doubting that the people would decide in their favour if they could demonstrate that the safety of religion depended upon the success of their cause. And indeed neither the Romans nor any other nation ever allowed their established religion to be openly ridiculed, exploded or opposed; and I'm sure your Lordship would not want this thing that was never endured in the world before to be done with impunity among us. Did ever any man, since the blessed revelation of the Gospel, run riot upon Christianity as some men—and indeed a few women too—have recently done? Must the devil grow rampant at this rate, and get away with it? Why should he not content himself with carrying off people in the common way, the way of cursing and swearing, Sabbath-breaking and cheating, bribery and hypocrisy, drunkenness and whoring, and suchlike things, as he used to do? Never let him domineer in men's mouths and writings as he does now, with tremendous infidelity, blasphemy and profaneness, enough to frighten the King's subjects out of their wits. . . .

·ABOUT CHARITY SCHOOLS·

Arguments are strenuously urged against the education of poor children in the charity schools, though not one sound reason been offered against the provision made for that education. The things that have been objected against it are not in fact true. . . . How can Catiline look any man in the face after saying that this pretended charity has in effect destroyed all other charities that were previously given to the aged, sick and impotent—spending more confidence in this than most men's whole stock of confidence amounts to?

It seems pretty clear that if those who do not contribute to any charity school become more uncharitable to any other object than they were formerly, their lack of charity to the one is not due to their contribution to the other! As for those who *do* contribute to these schools: they are so far from becoming more sparing in their relief of other objects, that the poor widows, the aged and the impotent plainly receive more relief from them, in proportion to their numbers and abilities, than from any men under the same circumstances of fortune who concern themselves with charity schools only in condemning and decrying them. I will meet Catiline any day in the week and demonstrate the truth of what I say by an enumeration of particular persons, in as great a number as he pleases. But I do not expect him to meet me, because it is his business not to encourage demonstrations of the truth but to throw disguises on it; otherwise he could never have allowed himself, after representing the charity schools as intended to breed up children to reading and writing and sober behaviour, so as to be qualified to be servants, immediately to add the words 'a sort of idle and rioting vermin, by which the kingdom is already almost devoured, and are become everywhere a public nuisance' etc. *What?* Is it because of the charity schools that servants have become so idle, such rioting vermin, such a public

nuisance; that women servants become whores and men servants become robbers, house-breakers and sharpers? (as he says they commonly do.) Is this because of the charity schools? And if it is not, how can he allow himself the liberty of representing these schools as a means of increasing this load of mischief, which has indeed too plainly fallen upon the public? Imbibing principles of virtue has not usually been thought to be the chief cause of running into vice! If the early knowledge of truth and of our obligations to it were the surest means of departing from it, nobody would doubt that the knowledge of truth was instilled into Catiline very early and with great care. He insists that there is more collected at the church doors in a day to make these poor boys and girls appear in caps and livery-coats than is collected for all the poor in a year. O rare Catiline! You'll carry this point most swimmingly; for you have no witnesses against you except the collectors and overseers of the poor, and all other principal inhabitants of most of the parishes in England that have charity schools.

The jest of it is, my Lord, that these scribblers still want to be regarded as good moral men. But when men make it their business to deceive their neighbours in important matters by distorting and disguising the truth, by misrepresentations, and false insinuations—if *those* men are not guilty of usurpation when they take upon them the character of good moral men, then •it is not immoral for any man to be false and deceitful in cases where the law cannot touch him for being so, and •morality bears no relation to truth and fair dealing. . . . Your Lordship, who accurately judges men as well as books, will easily imagine that there must be something excellent in charity schools, given that men like these are so warm in opposing them.

They tell you that these schools are hindrances to husbandry and to manufacture. As for husbandry: the children

are kept in the schools only until they have grown strong enough to perform the principal parts of it; and even while they are still in the schools they will never be hindered, at any time of the year, from working in the fields or being employed in such labour as they are capable of for the support of their parents and themselves. In this matter the parents in the various regions are proper judges of their situations and circumstances. . . .; and they will find for their children other employment than going to school, whenever they can get a penny by doing so. Similarly with manufactures: the trustees of the charity schools and the parents of the children bred in them would be thankful to those gentlemen who make the objection if they would help to remove it by subscribing to a fund for joining the employment of manufacture to the business of learning to read and write in the charity schools. This would be a noble work. It is already carried out by the supporters of some charity schools, and is aimed at and earnestly desired by all the rest; but Rome was not built in a day. . . . It is easy for designing and perverted minds to invent plausible, fallacious arguments, and to offer invective disguised as reasoning against the best things in the world. But no impartial man with a serious sense of goodness and a real love for his country can think that this proper and just view of the charity schools is open to any fair and weighty objection, or refuse to contribute his endeavours to improve and raise them to the perfection that is aimed at for them. In the meantime, let no man be so weak or so wicked as to deny that when poor children cannot meet with employment in any other honest way, rather than letting their tender age be spent in idleness or in learning the arts of lying and swearing and stealing, it is true charity to them and good service done to our country to employ them in learning the principles of religion and virtue until their age and strength will enable them to become servants in families,

or to be engaged in husbandry, or manufacture, or any kind of physical work; for these are the kinds of employments that the charity children are generally turned as soon as they become capable of them. Catiline claims that employments by shopkeepers or retailers of commodities—which he says ought to fall to the share of children at that social level—are mostly taken by the managers of the charity schools, who get in first. This is simply *false*. So are many of his affirmations, notably one that which I now mention. He is not ashamed to say outright that the principles of our common people are debauched in our charity schools, who are taught as soon as they can speak to blabber out high church nonsense, and so are trained to be traitors before they know what treason is. . . .

·AIMING AT MANDEVILLE·

These and things like them are urged with as much bitterness and as little truth in the book I have mentioned, *The Fable of the Bees; or private vices, public benefits*. Catiline explodes the fundamental articles of faith, impiously comparing the doctrine of the blessed Trinity to fee-fa-fum; this profligate author of the Fable is not only an auxiliary to Catiline in opposition to faith but has taken upon him to tear up the very foundations of moral virtue and establish vice in its place. The best physician in the world never worked harder to purge the natural body of bad qualities than this bumblebee has done to purge the body politic of good ones. He himself bears testimony to the truth of this charge against him, for near the end of his book he says:

‘After this I flatter myself to have demonstrated that neither the friendly qualities and kind affections that are natural to man, nor the real virtues he is capable of acquiring by reason and self-denial, are the foundation of society; but that what we call evil in this

world, moral as well as natural, is the grand principle that makes us sociable creatures, the solid basis, the life and support of all trades and employments without exception; that we must look *there* for the true origin of all arts and sciences, and that the moment evil ceases the society must be spoiled if not totally dissolved.’

Now, my Lord, you see the grand design, the main drift of Catiline and his confederates; now the scene opens and the secret springs appear; now the fraternity venture to speak out, and surely no band of men ever dared to speak in this way before. Now you see the true cause of all their enmity towards the poor charity schools; it is levelled against religion—*religion*, my Lord—which the schools are instituted to promote and this confederacy is resolved to destroy; for the schools are certainly one of the greatest instruments of religion and virtue, one of the firmest bulwarks against Popery, one of the best recommendations of this people to the divine favour, and therefore one of the greatest blessings to our country of anything that has been started since our happy Reformation and deliverance from the idolatry and tyranny of Rome. . . .

Now your Lordship also sees the true cause of the satire that is continually launched against the clergy by Catiline and his confederates. Why should Mr. Hall’s conviction and execution be any more an objection against the clergy than Mr. Layer’s against the gentlemen of the legal profession? Because that profession does not immediately relate to religion; and therefore Catiline will allow that if any member of that profession should be a traitor or otherwise vicious, all the others may be as loyal and virtuous as any other subjects in the king’s dominions; but because matters of religion are the professed concern and the employment of the clergy, therefore (Catiline’s logic makes this out as clear as day)

if any of them are disaffected towards the government all the rest are so too; and if any of them are chargeable with vice, then clearly all or most of the rest are as vicious as the devil can make them. . . . Our clergy can vindicate themselves whenever such a vindication is called for, being as faithful and virtuous and learned a body of men as any in Europe; but they suspend the publication of arguments in defence of themselves because **(a)** they neither expect nor want the approval of impious and abandoned men, and **(b)** they are sure that all persons with common sense clearly see that the arrows shot against the clergy are intended to destroy the divine institution of the government offices and to extirpate the religion that the sacred offices were appointed to preserve and promote. This was always supposed and suspected by every honest and impartial man; but now those who previously gave occasion to such suspicions have demonstrated that the suspicions were right; for they have now openly declared that •faith in the principal articles of religion is not only needless but ridiculous, that •the welfare of human society must sink and perish under the encouragement of virtue, and that •immorality is the only firm foundation on which the happiness of mankind can be built and subsist. The publication of tenets such as these—an open proposal to extirpate the Christian faith and all virtue, and to fix moral evil for the basis of the government—is so stunning, so shocking, so frightful, so flagrant an enormity that if it were credited to us as a national guilt, the divine vengeance must inevitably come down on us. And how far this enormity *would* become a national guilt if it went unpunished can easily be guessed. No doubt your Lordship's good judgment in so plain and important a case has made you, like a wise and faithful patriot, resolve to use your utmost endeavours in your high station to defend religion from the bold attacks made upon it.

As soon as I have seen a copy of the bill for the better security of his Majesty and his happy government, through the better security of religion in Great Britain, your Lordship's just scheme of politics, your love of your country and your great services to it will again be acknowledged by
my Lord,
your most faithful humble servant,
Theophilus Philo-Britannus.

Mandeville's comments

These violent accusations and the great clamour everywhere raised against the book by governors, masters, and other champions of charity schools, together with the advice of friends and my reflection on what I owed to myself, drew from me the following answer. Forgive the repetition of some passages, one of which you may have met with twice already. To make my defence stand alone for the public, I was obliged to repeat what had been quoted in the letter, because my defence would unavoidably fall into the hands of many who had never seen either *The Fable of the Bees* or the defamatory letter written against it. My defence was published in the *London Journal* of August 10, 1723. Here it is.

Whereas in the evening post of Thursday, July 11 a presentment was inserted by the Grand Jury of Middlesex against the publisher of a book entitled *The Fable of the Bees; or private vices, public benefits*, and a passionate and abusive letter has been published against the same book and its author in the *London Journal* of Saturday, July 27, I think I am obliged to vindicate that book against the black aspersions that have been undeservedly cast upon it, being conscious that I have not had the least ill design in composing it. The accusations against it having been made openly in the public papers, it would not be fair for the

defence of it to appear in a more private manner. What I have to say on my behalf I shall address to all men of sense and sincerity, asking them for no favour except their patience and attention. Setting aside what in that letter relates to others, and everything that is extraneous and irrelevant, I shall begin with the passage that is quoted from the book: 'After this, I flatter myself to have demonstrated. . . .' etc. [see page 128]. These words I admit are in the book, and being both innocent and true they are likely to remain there in all future printings. But I also freely admit that if I had written aiming to be understood by the feeblest intellects, I would not have chosen the subject there treated of; or if I had, I would have amplified and explained every sentence, talked and distinguished magisterially, and never appeared without the reading-help pointer in my hand. For example: to make the quoted passage intelligible, I would have spent a page or two on the meaning of the word 'evil'; after that I would have taught them that every defect, every want, was an evil; that on the multiplicity of those wants depended all those mutual services that the individual members of a society pay to each other; and that consequently the greater variety of wants there was, the larger the number of individuals who might find their private interest in labouring for the good of others, and united together compose one body. Is there a trade or handicraft that doesn't provide us with something we wanted? Before this want was met, it was certainly an evil, which that trade or handicraft was to remedy and without which it could never have been thought of. Is there an art or science that was not invented to mend some defect? Had the defect not existed, there could have been no occasion for the art or science to remove it. At page 122 I say:

The excellence of human thought and contrivance has never been more conspicuous than in the variety of tools and instruments of workmen and artificers, and

the multiplicity of engines, that were all invented to assist man's weakness, to correct his many imperfections, to gratify his laziness, or obviate his impatience.'

Several other pages develop this theme; but what relation has all this to religion or infidelity, any more than it has to navigation or the peace in the north?

The many hands that are employed to meet our real natural wants, such as hunger, thirst and nakedness, are inconsiderable compared with the vast numbers who are innocently gratifying the depravity of our corrupt nature; I mean industrious folk who get a livelihood by their honest labour, to which vain and voluptuous people are indebted for all their tools and implements of ease and luxury. The short-sighted vulgar can seldom see further than one link in the chain of causes, but those who can enlarge their view, and will take the time to gaze at the view along the chain, may in a hundred places see good spring up from evil as naturally as chickens do from eggs.

Words are to be found at page 27 in Remark G on the seeming paradox that in the grumbling hive 'the worst of all the multitude / did something for the common good'. That Remark provides many examples of how unsearchable providence daily orders the comforts of the laborious, and even the deliverances of the oppressed, to come forth secretly not only from the vices of the luxurious but also from the crimes of the wicked and most abandoned.

Men of candour and capacity see at first sight that in the censured passage there is no meaning—hidden or openly expressed—that is not wholly contained in these words: **man is a needy creature in innumerable ways, yet all trades and employments arise from those very needs and from nothing else.**

It is ridiculous for men to try to read books above their sphere. *The Fable of the Bees* was aimed at people of

knowledge and education, to entertain them when they have an idle hour to spare for it. It is a book of severe and exalted morality that contains a strict test of virtue—an infallible touchstone to distinguish the real from the counterfeit—and shows many actions to be faulty that are palmed off on the world as good ones; it describes the nature and symptoms of human passions, detects their force and disguises; and it traces self-love into its darkest recesses. I might safely add that the whole thing is more disorderly and unmethodical than any other system of ethics; but it contains nothing sour or pedantic; the style is admittedly very uneven, sometimes very high and rhetorical, sometimes very low and even trivial; but such as it is, I am satisfied that it has diverted persons of great probity and virtue and unquestionable good sense; and I am in no fear that it will ever cease to do so while it is read by such people. Whoever has seen the violent charge against this book will pardon me for saying more in commendation of it than a man would say of his own work if he were not labouring under the same necessity.

The praises of brothels complained of in the presentment are nowhere in the book. This accusation must be based on a political dissertation concerning the best method to guard and preserve women of honour and virtue from the insults of dissolute men whose passions are often ungovernable. This problem creates a dilemma between two evils, which cannot both be avoided; so I have treated the topic with the utmost caution, beginning thus [page 31]:

‘I am far from encouraging vice, and would think it a wonderful thing for a state if the sin of uncleanness could be utterly banished from it. But I am afraid it is impossible.’

I give my reasons why I think it so; and speaking in passing of the music-houses in Amsterdam, I give a short account of them than which nothing can be more harmless. I appeal to

all impartial judges whether what I have said of them is not ten times more apt to give men—*any* men—a disgust and aversion against them than to raise any criminal desire.

I am sorry the Grand Jury should think that I published this with a design to debauch the nation, without considering **(i)** that there is not a sentence or syllable that can either offend the chastest ear or sully the imagination of the most vicious; or **(ii)** that the matter complained of is obviously addressed to magistrates and politicians, or at least the more serious and thinking part of mankind; whereas writing that was to produce a general corruption of sexual manners would have to consist in easily purchased obscenities that were in every way adapted to the tastes and capacities of •the heedless multitude and •inexperienced youth of both sexes. That the performance so outrageously exclaimed against was never calculated for either of •these classes of people is self-evident from every circumstance. The prose at the beginning is altogether philosophical, and hardly intelligible to anyone not used to matters of speculation; and the running title is so far from being attractive or inviting, that without having read the book itself nobody knows what to make of it. Also, the price is five shillings. This all makes it clear that if the book contains any dangerous tenets, I have not been very solicitous to scatter them among the people. I have not said a word to please or engage them, and the greatest compliment I have made them has been *Apage vulgus!* [= ‘Away with the vulgar!’]. On page 72 I say:

‘But as nothing would more clearly demonstrate the falsity of my notions than that the generality of the people should fall in with them, so I don’t expect the approval of the multitude. I do not write for the many, but for the few who can think abstractly and have their minds elevated above the vulgar.’

I have been careful about this, and have always preserved

such a tender regard for the public that when I have advanced any uncommon opinions I have used all imaginable precautions that they might not be hurtful to weak minds who might casually dip into the book. When on page 71 I said:

‘I confess to thinking that no society can become such a rich and mighty kingdom, or stay that way for long, without the vices of man,’

I had premised, what was true, that I had ‘never said or thought that man could not be virtuous in a rich and mighty kingdom as well as in the most pitiful commonwealth’; a caution that a man less scrupulous than myself might have thought superfluous, when he had already explained himself on that head in the very same paragraph, which begins thus:

‘I lay down as a first principle that in all societies, great or small, it is the duty of every member of it to be good; that virtue ought to be encouraged, vice discountenanced, the laws obeyed, and the transgressors punished.’

There is not a line in the book that contradicts this doctrine, and I defy my enemies to disprove what I have advanced on page 72 that ‘if I have shown the way to worldly greatness, I have always without hesitation preferred the road that leads to virtue.’ No man ever took more pains not to be misconstrued than I have. On that same page I say:

‘When I say that societies cannot be raised to wealth, power, and the top of earthly glory without vices, I don’t think that by so saying I am telling men to be vicious, any more than I am telling them to be quarrelsome or covetous when I say that the profession of the law could not be maintained in such numbers and splendor if there was not an abundance of too selfish and litigious people.’

I had already given a similar caution towards the end of

the Preface, because of the palpable evil inseparable from London’s felicity. Searching into the real causes of things does not show an ill design, and has no tendency to do harm. A man may write on poisons and be an excellent physician. On page 122 I say:

‘No man needs to guard himself against blessings, but calamities require hands to avert them. . . . The extremities of heat and cold, the inconstancy and badness of seasons, the violence and uncertainty of winds, the vast power and treachery of water, the rage and untractableness of fire, and the stubbornness and sterility of the earth challenge us to work out ways of avoiding the harms they can produce or turning their various forces to our own advantage in a thousand different ways.’

While a man is enquiring into the occupation of vast multitudes, I cannot see why he may not say all this and much more, without being accused of depreciating and speaking slightly of the gifts and generosity of heaven; when at the same time he demonstrates that without rain and sunshine this globe would not be habitable to creatures like ourselves. It is an out-of-the-way subject, and I would never quarrel with anyone who said that it might as well have been omitted; but I always thought it would please men of any tolerable taste, and not be easily lost.

I could never conquer my vanity as well as I could wish; and I am too proud to commit crimes; and as for the book’s main scope, its intent, the view it was written with, I call your attention to what I wrote on page 2 of the Preface:

‘If you ask me why I have done all this—*Cui bono?*—and what good these notions will produce, I answer “None at all, except the reader’s entertainment”. But if I was asked what naturally ought to be expected from them, I would answer that those who continually find

fault with others would, by reading them, be taught to look at home, examine their own consciences, and be ashamed of always railing at what they are more or less guilty of themselves; and that those who are so fond of the ease and comforts and benefits that are the consequence of a great and flourishing nation would learn to submit more patiently to the inconveniences, that no government on earth can remedy, when they see the impossibility of enjoying any great share of the first without partaking likewise of the latter.'

The first impression of the *Fable of the Bees*, which came out in 1714, was never carped at or publicly taken notice of; and the only reason I can think of why this second edition should be so unmercifully treated, though it has many precautions that the former lacked, is an essay on *Charity and charity schools*, which is added to what was printed before. I confess that it is my view that all hard and dirty work ought in a well-governed nation to be the lot and portion of the poor, and that to divert their children from useful labour until they are 14 or 15 years old is a wrong method to qualify them for it when they are grown up. I have given several reasons for my opinion in that essay, to which I refer all impartial men of understanding, assuring them that they will not find in it any such monstrous impiety as is reported. What an advocate I have been for libertinism and immorality, and what an enemy to all instructions of youth in the Christian faith, may be collected from the pains I have taken on education for several pages together: and afterwards again, page 100, where speaking of the instructions the children of the poor might receive at church (from which I say I would not have the meanest of a parish that is able to walk to it be absent on Sundays), I have these words:

'It is the Sabbath, the most useful day in seven, that is set apart for divine service and religious exercise

as well as for resting from bodily labour, and all magistrates have a duty to take particular care of that day. The poor more especially (and their children) should be made to go to church on that day, both in the morning and in the afternoon; because they have no time to go on any other day. By precept and example they ought to be encouraged and accustomed to it from their very infancy; the wilful neglect of it ought to be regarded as scandalous; and if outright compulsion to church attendance might seem too harsh and perhaps impracticable, at least all diversions ought strictly to be prohibited, and the poor hindered from every amusement abroad that might draw them away from it.'

If the arguments I have offered are not convincing, let them be refuted. I will acknowledge it as a favour in anyone who convinces me of my error, without ill language, by showing me where I have been mistaken; but it seems that when men are touched in a sensible part, their shortest way of confuting an adversary is calumny.

Vast sums are gathered for these charity schools, and I understand human nature too well to imagine that the sharers of the money would hear them spoken against with any patience. So I foresaw the usage I was to receive, and having repeated the common cant that is made on behalf of charity schools, I told my readers on page 86:

'This is the general cry, and he who speaks the least word against it is an uncharitable, hard-hearted and inhuman wretch, if not a wicked, profane, and atheistic one.'

So I was not greatly surprised when in that extraordinary letter to Lord C. I saw myself called a 'profligate author', the publication of my tenets described as an open and avowed proposal to extirpate the Christian faith and all virtue, and

my work declared to be so stunning, so shocking, so frightful, so flagrant an enormity that it cried for the vengeance of heaven. This is no more than what I have always expected from the enemies to truth and fair dealing, and I shall make no reply to the angry author of that letter, who tries to expose me to the public fury. I pity him, and have charity enough to believe that he has been imposed on by trusting to fame and the hearsay of others; for no man in his wits can imagine that he could write as he does if he had read a quarter of my book.

I am sorry if the words 'private vices, public benefits' have ever given offence to any well-meaning man. The mystery of them is soon unfolded when once they are rightly understood; but their innocence will not be questioned by any man of sincerity who has read the last paragraph of the book, where I take my leave of the reader and conclude by repeating the seeming paradox, the substance of which is advanced on

the title page, that by the dextrous management of a skilful politician private vices may be turned into public benefits. These are the last words of the book, printed in the same large type as the rest.

But I set aside all I have said in my vindication. If in the whole book called *The Fable of the Bees* and presented by the Grand Jury of Middlesex to the judges of the King's Bench there is to be found the least tittle of blasphemy or profaneness, or anything tending to immorality or the corruption of manners, I desire that it may be published; and if this is done without invective, personal reflections, or setting the mob on me, I will not only recant but likewise beg the offended public's pardon in the most solemn manner; and (if the hangman might be thought too good for the office) burn the book myself at any reasonable time and place my adversaries shall be pleased to appoint.

THE END