



The Gay Science

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

Plain English Translation

MOUSEIA



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Translated by Michael Berardi

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THIS EDITION

Mouseia's complete Plain English edition, made directly from the same 1887 German text, division by division and aphorism by aphorism. Same divisions and numbering; it explains what Nietzsche's compressed German leaves implicit instead of imitating its cadence.

TRANSLATOR

Michael Berardi

THE WORK

Written 1887 · Philosophy

SOURCE

Original text from archive.org.

GAPS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The text follows the 1887 printing as digitized by the Internet Archive from the New York Public Library copy (item [bub_gb_uIQNAAAAYAAJ](https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_uIQNAAAAYAAJ)), transcribed from the page images against the volume's own OCR, which is damaged and was not used as text. The three errata the volume prints are applied and recorded in [corpus/raw/gay-science/errata-review.json](#). Nietzsche's numbering is kept exactly, including Book Five's opening aphorism 343 and the appendix's unnumbered song titles; two page signatures at the foot of the appendix are printed as they stand.

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Edition dated 26 October 2026

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Title page



The
Gay Science.
("la gaya scienza")
By
Friedrich Nietzsche.
I live in my own house.
I have never copied anyone in anything,
And—I have laughed at every master
Who did not first laugh at himself.
Over My Front Door.
New Edition
with an Appendix:
Songs of Prince Free-as-a-Bird.
Leipzig.
Published by E. W. Fritsch.
1887.

Preface



to the Second Edition.

- ¹ This book may need more than one preface. And in the end a doubt would remain: can anyone who has not lived through something similar be brought closer to the *experience* behind this book by prefaces? It seems to be written in the language of a thawing wind. There is exuberance, restlessness, contradiction and April weather in it, so that you are constantly reminded of how close winter is, and also of the victory over winter, which is coming, must come, and perhaps has already come... Gratitude keeps pouring out of it, as if the most unexpected thing had just happened. It is the gratitude of someone who is recovering, because recovery was that most unexpected thing. “Gay Science” means the Saturnalia of a mind that has patiently withstood a terrible, long pressure—patiently, sternly, coldly, without giving in, but also without hope—and that is now suddenly attacked by hope, by the hope of health, by the *intoxication* of recovery. No wonder that so much that is unreasonable and foolish comes to light along with it, so much playful tenderness, even spent on problems that have a prickly hide and are not made to be petted and coaxed. This whole book is nothing but a celebration after a long time of going without and being powerless. It is the rejoicing of returning strength, of a newly awakened faith in a tomorrow and a day after tomorrow, of a sudden feeling and foretaste of the future, of adventures close at hand, of seas open again, of goals allowed

again and believed in again. And how much now lay behind me! There was this stretch of desert, exhaustion, unbelief and icy numbness in the middle of my youth. There was this old age inserted at the wrong place. There was this tyranny of pain, outdone by the tyranny of pride that refused the *conclusions* of pain—and conclusions are comforts. There was this radical loneliness as self-defense against a contempt for people that had become sickly clear-sighted. There was this strict limiting of myself to the bitter, harsh, painful side of knowledge, as the *disgust* ordered it, a disgust that had grown slowly out of an unwise mental diet and pampering—people call it Romanticism. Oh, if only someone could feel all this along with me! But anyone who could would surely forgive me for more than a little folly, high spirits and “gay science”—for example, the handful of songs added to the book this time, songs in which a poet makes fun of all poets in a way that is hard to forgive. —Ah, it is not only the poets and their beautiful “lyrical feelings” on whom this man who has risen again has to vent his malice. Who knows what victim he is looking for, what monster of parody material will soon tempt him? “The tragedy begins,” it says at the end of this book that is both troubling and carefree. Be on your guard! Something outrageously bad and malicious is announcing itself: the parody begins, there is no doubt...

- ² —But let us leave Mr. Nietzsche aside. Why should we care that Mr. Nietzsche got well again? ... A psychologist knows few questions as attractive as the one about how health and philosophy are related. If the psychologist falls ill, they bring all their scientific curiosity into the illness. After all, anyone who is a person necessarily has the philosophy of their person as well. But there is a considerable difference. In one person it is their shortcomings that do the philosophizing; in another it is their riches and strengths. The first *needs* a philosophy, whether as support, calming, medicine, salvation, uplift or self-estrangement. For the second it is only a beautiful luxury, at best the pleasure of a triumphant gratitude, which in the end has to write itself across the sky of concepts in cosmic capital letters. But in the other, more usual case, when need drives the philosophizing, as with all sick thinkers—and perhaps sick thinkers outnumber

the others in the history of philosophy—what will become of the thought itself when it is put under the pressure of illness? This is the question that concerns the psychologist, and here an experiment is possible. Think of a traveler who resolves to wake up at a certain hour and then calmly lets themselves fall asleep. In the same way, when we philosophers fall ill, we give ourselves up for a time, body and soul, to the illness. We close our eyes to ourselves, so to speak. And just as the traveler knows that something stays awake, something counts the hours and will wake them up, we also know that the decisive moment will find us awake. Then something will leap forward and catch the mind in the act. I mean in weakness, or reversal, or resignation, or hardening, or gloom—whatever all those sick states of the mind are called, which in healthy days have the pride of the mind against them. (For the old rhyme still holds: “The proud mind, the peacock and the horse are the three proudest animals on earth.”) After questioning and tempting yourself like this, you learn to look with a finer eye at everything that has been philosophized so far. You guess better than before the involuntary detours, side streets, resting places and sunny places of thought, to which suffering thinkers are led and misled precisely because they suffer. You now know where the sick body and its needs push, shove and lure the mind without its knowing—toward sun, quiet, mildness, patience, medicine, refreshment of some kind. Every philosophy that ranks peace higher than war, every ethics with a negative definition of the idea of happiness, every metaphysics and physics that knows a finale, a final state of some kind, every mainly aesthetic or religious longing for a place apart, a beyond, an outside, an above, allows us to ask whether illness was what inspired the philosopher. The unconscious disguising of physical needs under the cloaks of the objective, the ideal, the purely mental goes frighteningly far. And I have often asked myself whether, taken on the large scale, philosophy up to now has been nothing but an interpretation of the body and a *misunderstanding of the body*. Behind the highest value judgments that have guided the history of thought until now, there lie hidden misunderstandings of the body’s condition, whether of individuals, of social classes or of whole races. We may look at all those bold follies of metaphysics, especially their answers to the question of the *value* of exis-

tence, first of all as symptoms of particular bodies. Even if such affirmations or denials of the world, taken as a whole, do not contain a grain of significance when measured scientifically, they still give the historian and the psychologist all the more valuable hints. They are, as I said, symptoms of the body: of how it turned out, well or badly, of its fullness, power and self-rule in history, or else of its inhibitions, tiredness and impoverishment, its foreboding of the end, its will to the end. I am still waiting for a philosophical *physician*, in the exceptional sense of the word—one who has to investigate the problem of the overall health of a people, an age, a race, humanity—to have the courage, one day, to push my suspicion to its extreme and to risk the statement: in all philosophizing, up to now, it was not about “truth” at all, but about something else, let us say health, future, growth, power, life...

- 3 —You can guess that I do not want to take leave of that time of heavy sickness without gratitude. Its gain is not used up for me even today. I am also quite aware of what I have in my ever-changing health over all the thickset minds. A philosopher who has gone through many kinds of health, and keeps going through them, has also gone through as many philosophies. They simply *cannot* do otherwise than turn their condition, each time, into the most intellectual form and distance. This art of transfiguration is exactly what philosophy is. We philosophers are not free to separate soul from body, as ordinary people separate them. We are even less free to separate soul from mind. We are not thinking frogs, not devices for objectifying and recording with their insides kept cold. We must constantly give birth to our thoughts out of our pain, and like mothers give them everything we have in us of blood, heart, fire, pleasure, passion, torment, conscience, fate, doom. Life—for us that means constantly turning everything we are into light and flame, and everything that happens to us too. We simply *cannot* do otherwise. And as for illness: would we not almost be tempted to ask whether we can do without it at all? Only great pain is the final liberator of the mind, as the teacher of the *great suspicion*, which makes an X out of every U, a genuine, proper X, that is, the next-to-last letter before the last... Only great pain, that long, slow pain that takes its time, in which we are

burned, as it were, with green wood, forces us philosophers to go down into our last depth and to put away from us all trust, everything good-natured, veiling, mild, middling, in which we may have placed our humanity before. I doubt that such pain “improves” us—but I know that it makes us deeper. Whether we learn to set our pride, our scorn and our willpower against it, and do as the Native American does, who, however badly tormented, takes revenge on the tormentor with the malice of his tongue; or whether we withdraw from the pain into that Eastern nothingness—people call it Nirvana—into the mute, rigid, deaf giving-in, forgetting of oneself, extinguishing of oneself: one comes out of such long, dangerous exercises in mastery over oneself as a different person, with a few more question marks, above all with the will to ask from now on more, more deeply, more strictly, harder, more wickedly, more quietly than one had asked until then. Trust in life is gone: life itself has become a *problem*. —Let no one think that this necessarily makes a person gloomy! Even love of life is still possible—only one loves differently. It is like the love of a woman who makes us doubt... But the charm of everything problematic, the joy in the X, is too great in such more intellectual, more spiritualized people for this joy not to close over, again and again like a bright glow, all the distress of the problematic, all the danger of uncertainty, even the jealousy of the lover. We know a new happiness: ...

- ⁴ Finally, so that the most essential thing does not go unsaid: one comes back from such abysses, from such heavy sickness, even from the sickness of heavy suspicion, *newborn*, with a new skin, more ticklish, more mischievous, with a finer taste for joy, with a more tender tongue for all good things, with merrier senses, with a second, more dangerous innocence in joy, at once more childlike and a hundred times more refined than one had ever been before. Oh, how repulsive pleasure has become now, the coarse, dull, brown pleasure as pleasure-seekers usually understand it, our “educated people,” our rich and our rulers! How maliciously we now listen to the great fairground boom-boom with which “educated people” and big-city dwellers today let themselves be raped into “spiritual pleasures” by art, books and music, with the help of spirits! How

the theatrical scream of passion now hurts our ears! How foreign our taste has become to the whole Romantic uproar and confusion of the senses that the educated rabble loves, along with its aspirations toward the sublime, the lofty, the warped! No: if we who are recovering need any art at all, it is a *different* art—a mocking, light, fleeting art, divinely untroubled, divinely artificial, that blazes like a bright flame into a cloudless sky! Above all: an art for artists, only for artists! Afterward we understand better what is needed *for that* first: cheerfulness, every kind of cheerfulness, my friends! Also as artists—I would like to prove it. We now know some things too well, we who know. Oh, how we now learn to forget well, to not-know well, as artists! And as for our future: you will hardly find us again on the paths of those Egyptian youths who make temples unsafe at night, embrace statues, and want at all costs to unveil, uncover and put into bright light everything that is kept covered for good reasons. No: this bad taste, this will to truth, to “truth at any price,” this youthful madness in the love of truth, has been spoiled for us. We are too experienced for it, too serious, too merry, too scorched, too deep... We no longer believe that truth stays truth when its veils are pulled off. We have lived long enough to hold this belief. Today we count it a matter of decency that one should not want to see everything naked, to be present at everything, to understand and “know” everything. “Is it true that dear God is present everywhere?” a little girl asked her mother. “But I find that indecent”—a hint for philosophers! We should honor more highly the *modesty* with which nature has hidden itself behind riddles and colorful uncertainties. Perhaps truth is a woman who has reasons for not letting her reasons be seen? Perhaps her name, to speak Greek, is Baubo?... Oh, those Greeks! They knew how to live. For that it is necessary to stop bravely at the surface, the fold, the skin; to worship appearance; to believe in forms, in tones, in words, in the whole Olympus of appearance! Those Greeks were superficial—*out of depth*! And are we not coming back to exactly that, we daredevils of the mind, who have climbed the highest and most dangerous peak of present-day thought and looked around from there, who have looked down from there? Are we not, in just this, Greeks? Worshipers of forms, of tones, of words? For exactly that reason, artists?

Ruta, near Genoa,
in the fall of 1886.

Jest, Cunning and Revenge



Prelude in German Rhymes.

¹ Invitation.

Try my cooking, you eaters!
Tomorrow it will already taste better to you,
And the day after tomorrow, good!
If you want more then, well—my old
Seven things give me the courage
For seven new ones.

² My Happiness.

Since I grew tired of searching,
I have learned to find.
Since one wind stood against me,
I sail with all the winds.

³ Undaunted.

Where you stand, dig deep!
Down below is the spring!
Let the gloomy men shout:
“Down below is always—hell!”

⁴ Dialogue.

A. Was I sick? Am I cured?

And who was my doctor?

How I have forgotten all that!

B. Only now do I believe you are cured:

For whoever has forgotten is healthy.

⁵ To the Virtuous.

Our virtues, too, should lift their feet lightly:

Like the verses of Homer, they should come and go!

⁶ Worldly Wisdom.

Don't stay on level ground!

Don't climb too high!

The world looks most beautiful

From halfway up.

⁷ Go With Me—Go With Yourself.

My way and my speech attract you,

You follow me, you go after me?

Just follow yourself faithfully—

Then you follow me—easy now, easy!

⁸ At the Third Shedding of the Skin.

Already my skin curls and cracks,

Already, with a new urge, the snake in me,

However much earth it has already digested,

Craves earth.

Already I crawl between stone and grass,

Hungry, along a crooked trail,

To eat what I have always eaten:

You, snake food, you, earth!

⁹ My Roses.

Yes! My happiness wants to make others happy—
All happiness wants to make others happy!
Do you want to pick my roses?
You will have to stoop and hide
Between rocks and thorn hedges,
And often lick your little fingers!
For my happiness loves to tease!
For my happiness loves wicked tricks!—
Do you want to pick my roses?

10 The Scorners.

I let many things fall and roll,
And that is why you call me a scorner.
Whoever drinks from cups that are
Too full lets much fall and roll—
Don't think any worse of the wine for that.

11 The Proverb Speaks.

Sharp and mild, coarse and fine,
Familiar and strange, dirty and pure,
The meeting place of fools and wise men:
All this I am, all this I want to be,
Dove, snake and pig at once!

12 To a Friend of Light.

If you don't want your eyes and mind to grow tired,
Chase the sun in the shade, too!

13 For Dancers.

Smooth ice
Is a paradise
For anyone who knows how to dance well.

14 The Decent Man.

I would rather have an enmity made of solid wood
Than a friendship held together with glue!

15 Rust.

Rust is needed too: being sharp is not enough!
Otherwise people will always say of you: “He is too young!”

16 Upward.

“What is the best way to climb the mountain?”
Just climb up, and don’t think about it!

17 Saying of the Man of Force.

Never beg! Stop this whimpering!
Take, I beg you, always take!

18 Narrow Souls.

Narrow souls are hateful to me;
They hold nothing good, and hardly anything bad.

19 The Unintentional Seducer.

He shot an empty word, to pass the time,
Into the blue—and yet a woman fell because of it.

20 For Consideration.

Double pain is easier to bear
Than one pain: do you want to take the chance?

21 Against Haughtiness.

Don’t puff yourself up: otherwise
One small prick is enough to make you burst.

22 Man and Woman.

“Seize the woman your heart feels for!”—
So thinks the man; the woman does not seize, she steals.

23 Interpretation.

If I explain myself, I read myself into it:
I cannot be my own interpreter.
But whoever simply climbs on their own path
Also carries my picture up into a brighter light.

24 Medicine for Pessimists.

You complain that nothing tastes good to you?
Still the same old whims, my friend?
I hear you cursing, making noise, spitting—
My patience and my heart break at it.
Follow me, my friend! Make up your mind freely
To swallow a fat little toad,
Quickly and without looking at it!—
That will cure you of your indigestion!

25 A Request.

I know the minds of many people
And do not know who I myself am!
My eye is much too close to me—
I am not what I see and saw.
I would already make better use of myself
If I could sit farther away from myself.
Not as far away as my enemy, though!
Even the nearest friend sits too far away—
But the middle between him and me!
Do you guess what I am asking for?

26 My Hardness.

I have to go on over a hundred steps,
I have to climb up and I hear you calling:
“You are hard! Are we made of stone, then?”—
I have to go on over a hundred steps,
And nobody wants to be a step.

27 The Wanderer.

“No path anymore! Abyss all around and deathly silence!”—
That is what you wanted! Your will left the path!
Now, wanderer, it counts! Now look coldly and clearly!
You are lost, if you believe—in danger.

28 Comfort for Beginners.

Look at the child, with pigs grunting around it,
Helpless, with twisted toes!
It can cry, nothing but cry—
Will it ever learn to stand and walk?
Don’t lose heart! Soon, I think,
You will see the child dance!
Once it stands on both legs,
It will also stand on its head.

29 The Egoism of the Stars.

If I were not a round rolling barrel,
Turning around myself without a pause,
How could I stand it, without burning up,
To run after the hot sun?

30 The Neighbor.

I do not like having my neighbor near:
Away with him, up high and far off!
How else would he become my star?—

31 The Saint in Disguise.

So that your happiness does not weigh on us,
You wrap yourself in devil’s tricks,
Devil’s wit and devil’s clothes.
But in vain! From your glance
Holiness looks out!

32 The Unfree Man.

A. He stands and listens: what could have disturbed him?

What does he hear buzzing in front of his ears?

What was it that knocked him down?

B. Like everyone who once wore chains,

He hears everywhere—chains clanking.

33 The Solitary.

I hate following and I hate leading.

Obeys? No! And no again—rule!

Whoever is not terrible to themselves frightens no one:

And only someone who frightens can lead others.

I already hate leading even myself!

I like, as the animals of forest and sea do,

To lose myself for a good while,

To squat brooding in a sweet confusion,

And at last to lure myself home from far away,

To seduce myself—to myself.

34 Seneca and All His Kind.

That one writes and writes his unbearably wise twaddle,

As if the rule were: to write first,

And then to philosophize.

35 Ice.

Yes! Now and then I make ice:

Ice is useful for digestion!

If you had a lot to digest,

Oh, how you would love my ice!

36 Writings of My Youth.

The A and O of my wisdom
Sounded to me here: what I heard!
Now it no longer sounds that way to me;
I hear only the everlasting Ah! and Oh!
Of my youth, even now.

37 Caution.

In that region one does not travel well now;
And if you have intelligence, be doubly on your guard!
They lure you and love you until they tear you apart:
They are fanatics—and fanatics always lack intelligence!

38 The Pious Man Speaks.

God loves us, because he created us!—
“Man created God!” you refined people say in reply.
And should he not love what he created?
Should he even deny it, because he created it?
That is lame, that shows the devil’s hoof.

39 In Summer.

In the sweat of our faces
Must we eat our bread?
In the sweat one prefers to eat nothing,
By the judgment of wise doctors.
The Dog Star beckons: what are we missing?
What does its fiery beckoning want?
In the sweat of our faces
We should drink our wine!

40 Without Envy.

Yes, he looks without envy: and you honor him for it?
He does not look around for your honors;
He has the eagle’s eye for the distance,
He does not see you! He sees only stars, stars.

41 Heraclitism.

All happiness on earth,
Friends, comes from struggle!
Yes, to become friends
Takes gunpowder smoke!
Friends are one in three:
Brothers in need,
Equals before the enemy,
Free—before death!

42 Principle of the Overly Refined.

Better still on tiptoe
Than on all fours!
Better through a keyhole
Than through open doors!

43 Advice.

Have you set your heart on fame?
Then heed this lesson:
In good time freely give up
Honor!

44 The Thorough One.

A researcher, me? Oh, spare this word!—
I am only heavy—so many pounds!
I fall, fall without end
And finally to the bottom!

45 Forever.

“Today I come, because today suits me”—
Thinks everyone who comes forever.
What does he care about the talk of the world:
“You come too early! You come too late!”

46 Judgments of the Tired.

All the weary curse the sun;
The worth of trees to them is—shade!

47 Descent.

“He is sinking, he is falling now”—you mock, again and again;
The truth is: he is coming down to you!
His too great happiness became a hardship for him,
His too great light goes after your darkness.

48 Against the Laws.

From today on, on a cord of hair
Around my neck hangs the hour clock:
From today on the course of the stars,
The sun, the rooster’s crow and shadows stop,
And whatever ever told me the time
Is now mute and deaf and blind:—
All of nature falls silent for me
At the tick-tock of law and clock.

49 The Wise Man Speaks.

Foreign to the people and yet useful to the people,
I go on my way, now sun, now cloud—
And always above these people!

50 Losing One’s Head.

She has wit now—how did she come to find it?
A man recently lost his mind because of her,
His head was rich before this pastime:
His head went to the devil—no! no! to the woman!

51 Pious Wishes.

“May all the keys
Get lost right away,
And in every keyhole
May the picklock turn!”
So thinks at every moment
Everyone who is—a picklock.

52 Writing With the Foot.

I do not write with my hand alone:
The foot always wants to be a writer too.
Firm, free and brave, it runs for me
Now across the field, now across the paper.

53 “Human, All Too Human.” A Book.

Sadly shy as long as you look backward,
Trusting the future where you trust yourself:
Oh bird, shall I count you among the eagles?
Are you Minerva’s favorite, Hoo-hoo-hoo?

54 To My Reader.

A good set of teeth and a good stomach—
That is what I wish for you!
And once you have stomached my book,
You will surely get along with me!

55 The Realistic Painter.

“Nature, true and whole!” How does he go about it:
When was nature ever finished in a picture?
The smallest piece of the world is infinite!—
In the end he paints of it whatever pleases him.
And what pleases him? What he can paint!

56 Poets’ Vanity.

Just give me glue: for the wood
To go with the glue I will find myself!
To put sense into four senseless rhymes
Is no small thing to be proud of!

57 Choosy Taste.

If they let me choose freely,
I would gladly pick a little spot
Right in the middle of Paradise:
Even more gladly—in front of its door!

58 The Crooked Nose.

The nose looks out defiantly
Into the land, the nostril flares—
So you fall, rhinoceros without a horn,
My proud little man, always forward!
And these two are always found together:
Straight pride, crooked nose.

59 The Pen Scratches.

The pen scratches: this is hell!
Am I damned to have to scratch?—
So I boldly reach for the inkwell
And write with thick streams of ink.
How it flows along, so full, so broad!
How everything succeeds, the way I go at it!
True, the writing lacks clarity—
What of it? Who reads what I write anyway?

60 Higher People.

One climbs up—him we should praise!
But that one always comes from above!
He lives lifted beyond praise itself,
He is from on high!

61 The Skeptic Speaks.

Half your life is over,
The clock hand moves, your soul shudders!
Long has it wandered about
And searched and not found—and it hesitates here?
Half your life is over:
It was pain and error, hour after hour here!
What are you still searching for? Why?——
This is just what I am searching for—reason after reason for it!

62 Here Is the Man.

Yes! I know where I come from!
Insatiable like the flame
I glow and consume myself.
Light becomes everything I grasp,
Coal everything I leave:
Flame I surely am.

63 Morality of the Stars.

Destined in advance for the path of the stars,
What does the darkness matter to you, star?
Roll blissfully on through this age!
Let its misery be foreign and far from you!
Your light belongs to the farthest world:
Pity shall be a sin for you!
Only one commandment applies to you: be pure!

Book I



¹ *The Teachers of the Purpose of Existence.*—Whether I look at people with a kind eye or a hostile one, I always find them busy with one task, all of them and each individual in particular: doing what is good for the survival of the human species. And truly not out of a feeling of love for this species, but simply because nothing in them is older, stronger, more relentless or harder to overcome than that instinct—because this instinct is the very nature of our kind and our herd. People are quick enough, with their usual shortsightedness that sees only five steps ahead, to sort their neighbors neatly into useful and harmful, good and evil. But when you add things up on a large scale, when you think longer about the whole, you become suspicious of this sorting and dividing, and in the end you give it up. Even the most harmful person may still be the most useful of all when it comes to preserving the species. For such a person keeps alive in themselves, or through their effect on others, drives without which humanity would long ago have gone limp or rotten. Hatred, gloating over other people's misfortune, the lust to plunder and to rule, and everything else that is called evil: all of it belongs to the astonishing economy of preserving the species. It is a costly, wasteful economy, and on the whole a highly foolish one—but one that has, as is proven, kept our kind alive so far.

I no longer know whether you, my dear fellow human and neighbor, *can* live at all to the harm of the species, that is, “unreasonably” and “badly.” Whatever could have harmed the species has perhaps died out many thousands of years ago, and now belongs to the things that are no longer possible even for God. Follow your best desires or your worst, and above all: go to ruin! In both you are probably still somehow a promoter and benefactor of humanity, and on that basis you may keep your praisers—and also your mockers! But you will never find the one who knew how to mock you, the individual, completely, even at your best; who could bring home to you your boundless fly-and-frog wretchedness as fully as the truth would allow. To laugh at oneself in the way one would have to laugh in order to laugh *out of the whole truth*—for that the best until now did not have enough sense of truth, and the most gifted had far too little genius! Perhaps there is a future even for laughter! That will be when the sentence “the species is everything, one person is always no one” has become part of humanity, and when everyone at every moment has access to this last liberation and freedom from responsibility. Perhaps by then laughter will have formed an alliance with wisdom; perhaps then there will be only “gay science.” For now it is still quite different. For now the comedy of existence has not yet “become aware of itself.” For now it is still the time of tragedy, the time of moralities and religions. What does the constant new appearance of those founders of moralities and religions mean, those instigators of the struggle over moral valuations, those teachers of pangs of conscience and wars of religion? What do these heroes on this stage mean? For up to now they have been its heroes, and everything else, which at times was the only thing visible and was all too close, has always served only to prepare these heroes, whether as machinery and backdrop or in the role of confidants and valets. (The poets, for example, were always the valets of some morality.)—It goes without saying that these tragedians, too, are working in the interest of the *species*, even if they may believe they are working in God’s interest and as God’s envoys. They, too, promote the life of the species by promoting belief in life. “It is worth living,” each of them cries, “there is something to this life, life has something behind it, beneath it, so take care!” That drive which rules equally in the highest and the

commonest people, the drive to preserve the species, breaks out from time to time as reason and as passion of the mind. It then has a brilliant retinue of reasons around it, and with all its force wants to make us forget that at bottom it is drive, instinct, folly, groundlessness. Life *should* be loved, *because*! People *should* promote themselves and their neighbors, *because*! And whatever else all these shoulds and because are called, or may be called in the future! So that what happens necessarily and always, of itself and without any purpose, may from now on appear to be done for a purpose, and may seem clear to people as reason and as the final commandment—for this the ethical teacher steps forward, as the teacher of the purpose of existence. For this the teacher invents a second and different existence, and with a new mechanism lifts this old common existence off its old common hinges. Yes! Such a teacher does not at all want us to *laugh* at existence, or at ourselves—or at the teacher. For the teacher, one person is always one person, something first and last and enormous; for the teacher there are no species, no sums, no zeros. However foolish and fanatical these inventions and valuations may be, however much the teacher misjudges the course of nature and denies its conditions—and all ethics up to now have been so foolish and so against nature that humanity would have perished from any one of them, if it had gained power over humanity—still! every time “the hero” stepped onto the stage, something new was achieved, the dreadful counterpart of laughter: that deep shock in many individuals at the thought: “Yes, it is worth living! Yes, I am worth living!” Life and I and you and all of us became *interesting* to one another once again, for some time.—It cannot be denied that *in the long run* laughter and reason and nature have so far become master over each of these great teachers of purposes. The short tragedy always passed in the end into the eternal comedy of existence, and back again, and the “waves of countless laughter”—to speak with Aeschylus—must in the end wash over even the greatest of these tragedians. But with all this correcting laughter, human nature has still been changed, on the whole, by the constant new appearance of these teachers of the purpose of existence. It now has one need more, namely the need for the constant new appearance of such teachers and teachings of a “purpose.” Human beings have gradually become a fantastic ani-

mal that has to meet one more condition of existence than any other animal: human beings *must* believe from time to time that they know *why* they exist; their species cannot flourish without a periodic trust in life! Without belief in the *reason in life*! And again and again, from time to time, the human race will decree: "There is something that absolutely may no longer be laughed at!" And the most cautious friend of humanity will add: "Not only laughter and cheerful wisdom, but also the tragic, with all its sublime unreason, belongs among the means and necessities of preserving the species!"—And therefore! Therefore! Therefore! Oh, do you understand me, my brothers? Do you understand this new law of ebb and flow? We too have our time!

- ² *The Intellectual Conscience.*—I keep having the same experience, and I keep resisting it anew; I do not want to believe it, even though I can grasp it with my hands: most people lack an intellectual conscience. Indeed it has often seemed to me that anyone who demands one is as lonely as in a desert, even in the most crowded cities. Everyone looks at you with strange eyes and goes on handling their scales, calling this good and that evil. Nobody blushes when you let them see that these weights are not full weight, and nobody is outraged at you either; perhaps they laugh at your doubt. I mean to say: the *great majority* do not find it contemptible to believe this or that and live by it *without* first having become aware of the final and surest reasons for and against, and without even taking the trouble afterward to look for such reasons. The most gifted men and the noblest women still belong to this "great majority." But what are kindheartedness, refinement and genius to me, if the person who has these virtues tolerates slack feelings in believing and judging, if *the desire for certainty* does not count for them as the innermost craving and deepest need—as that which separates the higher people from the lower! I found among certain pious people a hatred of reason, and I was fond of them for it: at least this still betrayed a bad intellectual conscience! But to stand in the midst of this *discordant harmony of things* and the whole wonderful uncertainty and ambiguity of existence and *not ask*, not tremble with craving and delight in asking, not even hate the one who asks, perhaps even find a feeble amusement in that person—that is what I feel to be

contemptible, and this feeling is what I look for first in everyone. Some folly keeps persuading me that every human being has this feeling, as a human being. It is my kind of injustice.

- 3 *Noble and Common*.—To common natures, all noble, generous feelings seem impractical, and so, first of all, unbelievable. They wink when they hear of such things, and seem to want to say, “There must be some good advantage in it somewhere; you can’t see through all walls.” They are suspicious of the noble person, as if that person were looking for an advantage by sneaky routes. If they become too clearly convinced that selfish aims and profits are absent, the noble person counts to them as a kind of fool: they look down on the noble person’s joy and laugh at the shine in those eyes. “How can anyone be glad to be at a disadvantage? How can anyone want to land in a disadvantage with open eyes! There must be a disease of reason joined to the noble feeling,” they think, and look down on it as they look down on the joy that an insane person gets from a fixed idea. The common nature is marked by keeping its advantage steadily in view, and by the fact that this thinking about purpose and advantage is itself stronger in it than the strongest drives. Not letting those drives lead it into impractical actions—that is its wisdom and its self-regard. Compared with it, the higher nature is the *less reasonable* one: for the noble, generous, self-sacrificing person in fact gives way to their drives, and in their best moments their reason *pauses*. An animal that protects its young at risk of its life, or in the mating season follows the female even into death, does not think of danger and death. Its reason also pauses, because the pleasure in its brood or in the female, and the fear of being robbed of this pleasure, completely rule it; it becomes stupider than it otherwise is, just like the noble and generous person. Such a person has some feelings of pleasure and displeasure in such strength that the intellect must fall silent against them or put itself in their service. Then the heart moves into the head, and people speak of “passion.” (Here and there the opposite also occurs, and as it were the “reversal of passion,” for example with Fontenelle, on whose heart someone once laid a hand, with the words: “What you have there, my dearest sir, is brain too.”) The unreason, or contrary reason, of passion is

what the common person despises in the noble, especially when passion turns to objects whose value seems to the common person entirely fantastic and arbitrary. The common person is annoyed at someone who gives in to the passion of the belly, but still understands the charm that makes a tyrant of it here; what the common person does not understand is how anyone could, for example, risk health and honor out of love for a passion for knowledge. The taste of the higher nature is directed at exceptions, at things that usually leave people cold and seem to have no sweetness; the higher nature has a singular standard of value. Moreover, it mostly believes that it does *not* have a singular standard of value in its idiosyncrasy of taste; it rather sets up its values and disvalues as the generally valid values and disvalues, and so falls into the unintelligible and impractical. It is very rare that a higher nature keeps enough reason left over to understand and treat everyday people as such; for the most part it believes in its passion as the secretly held passion of everyone, and it is precisely in this belief that it is full of glow and eloquence. Now if such exceptional people do not feel themselves to be exceptions, how could they ever understand the common natures and judge the rule fairly! And so they too speak of the folly, pointlessness and fantasy of humanity, full of wonder at how madly the world runs and why it will not admit what it “needs.”—This is the eternal injustice of the noble.

⁴ *What Preserves the Species.*—The strongest and most evil minds have so far moved humanity forward the most. Again and again they kindled the dozing passions—all ordered society puts the passions to sleep—and again and again they woke the sense of comparison, of contradiction, of delight in the new, the daring, the untried; they forced people to set opinions against opinions, models against models. They did it with weapons, by overturning boundary stones, mostly by violating what people held sacred, but also by new religions and moralities! The same “wickedness” is in every teacher and preacher of the new—the wickedness that gives a conqueror a bad name, even if it shows itself more finely, does not immediately set the muscles moving, and for exactly that reason does not give such a bad name! But the new is in all circumstances the

evil, as that which wants to conquer and to overturn the old boundary stones and the old sacred things; and only the old is the good! The good people of every age are those who dig the old thoughts deep and bear fruit with them, the farmers of the mind. But every piece of land is finally used up, and the plow-share of evil must come again and again.—There is now a thoroughgoing false doctrine of morality, especially celebrated in England: according to it, the judgments “good” and “evil” are the collected experiences of what is “useful” and “not useful”; according to it, what is called good is what preserves the species, and what is called evil is what harms the species. In truth, though, the evil drives are just as useful, species-preserving and indispensable as the good ones—only their function is different.

- ⁵ *Unconditional Duties.*—All the people who feel that they need the strongest words and tones, the most eloquent gestures and poses, in order to have any effect at all—revolutionary politicians, socialists, preachers of repentance with or without Christianity, for all of whom there must be no half successes—all of these talk about “duties,” and always about duties of the unconditional kind. Without that they would have no right to their great pathos: they know this quite well! So they reach for philosophies of morality that preach some categorical imperative, or they take a good piece of religion into themselves, as Mazzini, for example, did. Because they want to be trusted unconditionally, they first need to trust themselves unconditionally, on the basis of some final, undiscussable commandment, sublime in itself, whose servants and instruments they would like to feel and present themselves as. Here we have the most natural and often very influential opponents of moral enlightenment and skepticism: but they are rare. Alongside them there is a very large class of such opponents everywhere that self-interest teaches submission while reputation and honor seem to forbid submission. Anyone who feels degraded at the thought of being the tool of a prince, of a party and sect, or even of a money power—for example as the descendant of an old, proud family—but who nonetheless wants or has to be this tool, in their own eyes and before the public, needs pathetic principles that can be taken into the mouth at any time: principles of an unconditional ought,

to which one may submit and show oneself submitted without shame. All finer servility holds fast to the categorical imperative and is the deadly enemy of those who want to take the unconditional character away from duty: decency demands this of them, and not decency alone.

⁶ *Loss of Dignity.*—Thinking has lost all its dignity of form. The ceremony and solemn gesture of thinking have been made a laughingstock, and people would no longer put up with a wise man of the old style. We think too fast, and on the way, in the middle of walking, in the middle of business of all kinds, even when we are thinking about the most serious things. We need little preparation, even little quiet—it is as if we carried around in our heads a relentlessly rolling machine that keeps working even under the most unfavorable conditions. In the past you could see in everyone that they wanted to think for once—it was probably the exception!—that they now wanted to become wiser and were getting ready for a thought. People put on a face for it, as for a prayer, and stopped walking. Yes, they stood still on the street for hours when the thought “came”—on one leg or on two. That was how it was “worthy of the subject”!

⁷ *Something for the Industrious.*—Whoever now wants to make a study of moral things opens up an enormous field of work for themselves. All kinds of passions must be thought through one by one, and followed one by one through times, peoples, and great and small individuals; all their reasoning and all their ways of valuing things and putting them in a particular light must be brought out into the open! So far, everything that has given color to existence has no history yet: or where is there a history of love, of greed, of envy, of conscience, of piety, of cruelty? Even a comparative history of law, or just of punishment, is so far completely missing. Has anyone yet made the different divisions of the day, or the results of a regular arrangement of work, festival and rest, a subject of research? Do we know the moral effects of foods? Is there a philosophy of nutrition? (The noise for and against vegetarianism that keeps breaking out again already proves that there is no such philosophy yet!) Have the experiences of living together, for example the experiences of monasteries, been collected yet? Has the dialectic of marriage and friendship been set out yet? The customs

of scholars, merchants, artists, craftsmen—have they found their thinkers yet? There is so much to think about in this! Everything that people have so far regarded as their “conditions of existence,” and all the reason, passion and superstition in this way of regarding them—has that been researched to the end yet? Merely observing the different growth that human drives have had, and could still have, in different moral climates already gives too much work for the most industrious person; whole generations, and generations of scholars working together according to a plan, are needed to exhaust the viewpoints and the material here. The same holds for tracing the reasons for the differences in moral climate (“why does this sun of a basic moral judgment and chief measure of value shine here—and that one there?”). And again it is a new piece of work to establish that all these reasons are mistaken, and to establish the whole nature of previous moral judgment. Suppose all this work were done; then the most delicate of all questions would step into the foreground: whether science is able to give goals for action, after it has proved that it can take such goals away and destroy them—and then experimenting would be in order, experimenting in which every kind of heroism could find satisfaction, experimenting lasting for centuries, which could put all the great labors and sacrifices of history so far in the shade. So far science has not yet built its Cyclopean structures; the time for that will come too.

- ⁸ *Unconscious Virtues*.—All the qualities of a person of which they are conscious—and especially if they assume that these qualities are also visible and obvious to those around them—are subject to quite different laws of development than those qualities that are unknown or poorly known to the person, and that, through their subtlety, hide even from the eye of a finer observer and know how to conceal themselves as if behind nothing. It is like the fine sculptures on the scales of reptiles: it would be a mistake to suppose that they are an ornament or a weapon—for you see them only with the microscope, that is, with an eye so artificially sharpened as similar animals, for which they might mean ornament or weapon, do not possess! Our visible moral qualities, and especially those we believe to be visible, go their way—and the invisible ones of exactly

the same name, which are neither ornament nor weapon for us with regard to others, also go their way: quite a different one, probably, and with lines and subtleties and sculptures that might perhaps give pleasure to a god with a divine microscope. We have, for example, our diligence, our ambition, our sharp wits: everyone knows about them—and besides, we probably have our diligence, our ambition, our sharp wits a second time; but the microscope for these reptile scales of ours has not yet been invented!—And here the friends of instinctive morality will say: “Bravo! At least he considers unconscious virtues possible—that is enough for us!”—Oh, you who are so easily satisfied!

⁹ *Our Eruptions.*—Countless things that humanity acquired at earlier stages, but so weakly and in such an embryonic form that no one could perceive them as acquired, suddenly push into the light long afterward, perhaps after centuries: in the meantime they have become strong and mature. To some ages this or that talent, this or that virtue seems to be entirely lacking, as it does to some people: but just wait for the grandchildren and great-grandchildren, if you have time to wait—they bring the inner life of their grandfathers into the sun, that inner life of which the grandfathers themselves still knew nothing. Often the son is already the betrayer of his father: the father understands himself better since he has his son. We all have hidden gardens and plantations in us; and, to use another comparison, we are all growing volcanoes that will have their hour of eruption—but how near or how far that is, nobody knows, of course, not even dear God.

¹⁰ *A Kind of Atavism.*—The rare people of an age I like best to understand as suddenly appearing offshoots of past cultures and their powers: as it were, the atavism of a people and its civilization—in that way there is really something about them that can be understood! Now they appear strange, rare, extraordinary; and whoever feels these powers in themselves has to nurture them, defend them, honor them and raise them up against an opposing other world: and so such a person becomes either a great person or a crazy and peculiar one, unless they perish early. Formerly these same qualities were common and so counted as ordinary: they did not set anyone apart. Perhaps they were

demanded and taken for granted; it was impossible to become great with them, and for that reason alone, because the danger was missing of becoming mad and lonely with them as well.—It is chiefly in the *preserving* families and castes of a people that such throwbacks of old drives occur, while there is no probability of such atavism where races, habits and valuations change too fast. For tempo means as much among the forces of development in peoples as it does in music; for our case an andante of development is absolutely necessary, as the tempo of a passionate and slow spirit—and that, indeed, is the spirit of conservative families.

- ¹¹ *Consciousness.*—Consciousness is the last and latest development of the organic and consequently also the most unfinished and least powerful part of it. Countless blunders come from consciousness, which make an animal or a human being perish earlier than necessary, “beyond fate,” as Homer says. If the preserving bond of the instincts were not so overwhelmingly much more powerful, if it did not serve on the whole as a regulator, humanity would have to perish of its wrong judgments and its fantasizing with open eyes, of its shallowness and credulity, in short precisely of its consciousness: or rather, without that bond there would long since have been no humanity! Before a function is developed and mature, it is a danger to the organism: good, if it is thoroughly tyrannized in the meantime! So consciousness is thoroughly tyrannized—and not least by the pride people take in it! People think that here is the *core* of the human being, the lasting, eternal, final, most original part! They take consciousness to be a fixed, given quantity! They deny its growth, its intermit- tences! They take it as the “unity of the organism”—This ridiculous overesti- mation and misjudging of consciousness has the great usefulness that it has *pre- vented* too fast a development of it. Because people believed they already had consciousness, they took little trouble to acquire it—and it is no different even now! It is still a quite new task, just dawning on the human eye and barely rec- ognizable even now, *to take knowledge into ourselves* and make it instinctive—a task seen only by those who have understood that so far only our *errors* have been taken into us, and that all our consciousness relates to errors!

¹² *On the Aim of Science.*—What? The final aim of science is supposed to be to create as much pleasure and as little displeasure as possible for human beings? What if pleasure and displeasure were so tied together with one rope that whoever wants as much as possible of the one must also have as much as possible of the other—that whoever wants to learn to be “jubilant up to heaven” must also keep ready to be “sad to the point of death”? And perhaps that is how it is! The Stoics at least believed that it was so, and were consistent when they desired as little pleasure as possible, in order to have as little displeasure as possible from life. (When people used the saying “The virtuous person is the happiest,” they had in it both a shop sign of the school for the great masses and a piece of hair-splitting cleverness for the refined.) Even today you have the choice: either *as little displeasure as possible*, in short painlessness—and basically socialists and politicians of all parties could honestly promise their people no more—or *as much displeasure as possible* as the price for the growth of a wealth of subtle pleasures and joys that have rarely been tasted so far! If you decide for the former, that is, if you want to push down and reduce people’s capacity for pain, well, then you must also push down and reduce their *capacity for joy*. In fact one can promote the one aim as well as the other *with science*! Perhaps it is, for now, better known for its power to rob human beings of their joys and to make them colder, more statue-like, more Stoic. But it could also yet be discovered as the great *bringer of pain*!—And then perhaps its counter-power would be discovered at the same time, its enormous ability to make new starry worlds of joy light up!

¹³ *On the Doctrine of the Feeling of Power.*—By doing good and by hurting, one exercises one’s power on others—one wants nothing more by it! By *hurting* those on whom we first have to make our power felt; for pain is a much more sensitive means for this than pleasure: pain always asks for the cause, while pleasure tends to stay with itself and not look backward. By *doing good* and showing goodwill to those who already depend on us in some way (that is, who are used to thinking of us as their causes); we want to increase their power, because in this way we increase our own, or we want to show them the advantage of

being in our power—so they will be more satisfied with their situation and more hostile and ready to fight against the enemies of *our* power. Whether we make sacrifices in doing good or in hurting does not change the final value of our actions; even if we stake our life on it, like the martyr for the sake of his church, it is a sacrifice made to our craving for power, or for the purpose of preserving our feeling of power. Whoever feels “I am in possession of the truth”—how many possessions does that person let go in order to save this feeling! What does that person not throw overboard in order to keep themselves “on top”—that is, over the others who lack “the truth”? Certainly the state in which we hurt is seldom so pleasant, so unmixedly pleasant, as the one in which we do good—it is a sign that we still lack power, or it betrays vexation at this poverty; it brings new dangers and uncertainties for the power we already possess and clouds our horizon with the prospect of revenge, scorn, punishment, failure. Only for the most irritable and greediest people in the feeling of power may it be more pleasurable to press the seal of power on the one who resists; for those to whom the sight of the already subjugated (which is the object of goodwill) is a burden and a bore. It depends on how one is used to *spicing* one’s life; it is a matter of taste whether one prefers a slow or a sudden gain in power, a safe one or a dangerous and daring one—one always looks for this or that spice according to one’s temperament. An easy prey is something contemptible to proud natures; they feel pleasure only at the sight of unbroken people who might become their enemies, and likewise at the sight of all possessions that are hard to get at; toward the sufferer they are often hard, for the sufferer is not worthy of their striving and pride—but all the more obliging they show themselves toward their *equals*, with whom a fight and struggle would in any case be honorable, if an occasion for it should ever come. Under the pleasure of *this* prospect, the people of the knightly caste have grown accustomed to a choice politeness toward one another.—Pity is the most pleasant feeling for those who are not very proud and have no prospect of great conquests: for them the easy prey—and that is every sufferer—is something delightful. People praise pity as the virtue of prostitutes.

¹⁴ *Everything That Is Called Love.*—Greed and love: how differently we feel at each of these words!—and yet it could be the same drive, named twice, once slandered from the standpoint of those who already have, in whom the drive has come somewhat to rest and who now fear for their “possessions”; the other time from the standpoint of the unsatisfied, the thirsty, and therefore glorified as “good.” Our love of neighbor—is it not an urge for new property? And likewise our love of knowledge, of truth, and in general all that urge for novelties? We gradually grow weary of the old, securely possessed, and reach out our hands again; even the most beautiful landscape in which we have lived for three months is no longer sure of our love, and some farther coast attracts our greed: possession mostly becomes less through possessing. Our pleasure in ourselves wants to maintain itself in such a way that it keeps transforming something new *in ourselves*—that is just what possessing means. To grow tired of a possession is to grow tired of ourselves. (One can also suffer from too much—the desire to throw away, to hand out, can also give itself the honorable name of “love.”) When we see someone suffer, we gladly use the opportunity now offered to take possession of that person; this is what the benefactor and the pitying person do, for example; they too call the desire for new possession awakened in them “love,” and have their pleasure in it as in a new conquest beckoning to them. But the love between the sexes betrays itself most clearly as an urge for property: the lover wants unconditional sole possession of the person longed for, wants just as unconditional power over that person’s soul as over their body, wants to be loved alone and to dwell and rule in the other soul as the highest and most desirable thing. If one considers that this means nothing other than *excluding* the whole world from a precious good, happiness and enjoyment; if one considers that the lover is out to impoverish and deprive all other competitors and would like to become the dragon guarding a golden hoard, as the most ruthless and selfish of all “conquerors” and exploiters; if one considers, finally, that to the lover the whole rest of the world seems indifferent, pale, worthless, and the lover is ready to make any sacrifice, disturb any order, put any interest behind: then one is indeed amazed that this wild greed and injustice of sexual love has been glorified and deified to such an extent as has

happened at all times—indeed, that from this love the concept of love as the opposite of egoism has been taken, whereas it is perhaps precisely the most unguarded expression of egoism. Here, evidently, those who do not possess and who desire have made the usage of language—there were probably always too many of them. Those who were granted much possession and satiety in this area have probably let fall here and there a word about the “raging demon,” like that most lovable and most beloved of all Athenians, Sophocles; but Eros always laughed at such blasphemers—they were always precisely his greatest favorites.—There is probably here and there on earth a kind of continuation of love, in which that greedy longing of two persons for each other has given way to a new desire and greed, a *shared* higher thirst for an ideal standing above them: but who knows this love? Who has experienced it? Its right name is *friendship*.

- 15 *From a Distance*.—This mountain makes the whole region that it dominates charming and meaningful in every way. After we have told ourselves this for the hundredth time, we are so unreasonably and so gratefully disposed toward it that we believe it, the giver of this charm, must itself be the most charming thing in the region—and so we climb it and are disappointed. Suddenly the mountain itself, and the whole landscape around us and below us, seems disenchanting. We had forgotten that some greatness, like some goodness, wants to be seen only from a certain distance, and strictly from below, not from above—only in this way does it *work*. Perhaps you know people near you who may look at themselves only from a certain distance in order to find themselves bearable at all, or attractive and strength-giving; they should be advised against self-knowledge.
- 16 *On the Footbridge*. — When you deal with people who are shy about their feelings, you have to be able to pretend. They feel a sudden hatred for anyone who catches them in a tender or excited moment, as if that person had seen their secrets. If you want to do them good at such a moment, make them laugh, or say something cold, joking, and a little nasty. Their feeling freezes, and they are back in control of themselves. But I will put the lesson before the story. —

Once in our lives we were so close that nothing seemed to stand in the way of our friendship and brotherhood; there was only a small footbridge between us. Just as you were about to step onto it, I asked you: "Do you want to come across the footbridge to me?" But you did not want to anymore, and when I asked again, you kept silent. Since then mountains and rushing rivers, and everything that divides people and makes them strangers, have been thrown between us, and even if we both wanted to reach each other, we could not! But if you now think back to that little footbridge, you no longer have words — only sobbing and wonder.

¹⁷ *Giving His Poverty a Reason.* — We cannot, by any trick, turn a poor virtue into a rich, overflowing one. But we can reinterpret its poverty as something necessary and make it look beautiful, so that seeing it no longer hurts us, and we stop making accusing faces at fate on its account. That is what the wise gardener does when he puts the poor little trickle of water in his garden into the arms of a river nymph, and so gives its poverty a reason. And who would not need the nymphs as much as he does!

¹⁸ *Ancient Pride.* — We lack the ancient coloring of nobility because we lack the ancient slave in our feelings. A Greek of noble birth found such enormous steps and such a distance between his own height and that last lowliness that he could hardly see the slave clearly. Even Plato no longer saw him fully. We are different. We are used to the *doctrine* that all people are equal, even if we are not used to the equality itself. A being who cannot dispose of itself, and who has no leisure — our eye does not yet regard that as something contemptible. Each of us perhaps has too much of this slave-like quality in him, given the conditions of our social order and our work, which are completely different from those of the ancients. The Greek philosopher went through life with a secret feeling that there were more slaves than people thought: that everyone who was not a philosopher was a slave. His pride swelled when he considered that even the most powerful people on earth were among his slaves. This pride is also foreign and impossible for us. We no longer even feel the full force of the word "slave," not even as a comparison.

- 19 *Evil.* — Examine the lives of the best and most fruitful people and peoples, and ask yourselves whether a tree that is meant to grow proudly upward can do without bad weather and storms. Are hostility and resistance from outside, or hatred, jealousy, stubbornness, distrust, hardness, greed and violence of every kind, not among the *helpful* conditions without which great growth is hardly possible, even in virtue? The poison that destroys a weaker nature is a strengthening for the strong, and he does not even call it poison.
- 20 *The Dignity of Folly.* — A few thousand years further along the road of the last century! — and in everything people do, the highest wisdom will be visible. But for that very reason wisdom will have lost all its dignity. Then it will be necessary to be wise, yet so ordinary and so common that a more refined taste will feel this necessity as a *vulgarity*. Just as a tyranny of truth and science could make lying very valuable, so a tyranny of wisdom could bring forth a new kind of nobility of spirit. To be noble might then mean something like having follies in one's head.
- 21 *To the Teachers of Selflessness.* — We call a person's virtues good not because of the effects they have on that person, but because of the effects we expect them to have on us and on society. People have always been very far from "selfless" and "unselfish" when they praise virtues! Otherwise they would have seen that the virtues (such as diligence, obedience, chastity, piety, justice) are mostly *harmful* to those who have them. They are drives that rage too fiercely and greedily inside a person, and reason can never get them to stay in balance with the other drives. If you have a virtue, a real and whole virtue (and not just a little urge toward one!), then you are its *victim*! But your neighbor praises your virtue for exactly that reason! People praise the diligent man, even though he damages the sight of his eyes or the freshness and originality of his mind with all his industry. People honor and pity the young man who has "worked himself to death," because they judge: "For the great whole of society, even the loss of the best individual is only a small sacrifice. It is unfortunate that a sacrifice is needed. It would be much worse if the individual thought differently and considered his preservation and development more important than his work in the

service of society!” So people pity this young man, not for his own sake, but because a devoted tool that had no regard for itself — a so-called “good man” — has been lost to society through this death. Perhaps people also consider whether it would have been more useful to society if he had worked less recklessly and lived longer. They may admit that there was some advantage in that, but they rate the other advantage higher and more lasting: that a *sacrifice* was made, and that the attitude of the sacrificial animal was once again *clearly* confirmed. So it is the nature of a tool in the virtues that is actually praised when virtues are praised, and then the blind drive that works in every virtue, which the individual’s overall advantage cannot keep within limits. In short, it is the unreason in virtue that allows the single being to be turned into a function of the whole. The praise of virtues is praise of something that harms the person privately. It is praise of drives that take away from a person his noblest self-interest and his power to take the highest care of himself. Of course, when people educate others and build virtuous habits, they point to a series of effects of virtue that make virtue and private advantage look like siblings. And there really is such a kinship! Blind, furious diligence, for example, the typical virtue of a tool, is presented as the way to wealth and honor, and as the most healthful poison against boredom and the passions. But its danger is hidden, its greatest danger. Education always works this way. It tries to steer the individual, through a series of attractions and advantages, toward a way of thinking and acting which, once it has become habit, drive and passion, rules within him and over him *against his final advantage*, but “for the common good.” How often I see that blind, furious diligence does create wealth and honor, but at the same time takes away the fineness of the senses that would make it possible to enjoy wealth and honor. In the same way, that main remedy against boredom and the passions also dulls the senses and makes the mind stubborn toward new stimuli. (The most diligent of all ages, our age, knows nothing to do with all its diligence and money except to make more money and work harder again. It takes more talent to spend than to earn! Well, we will have our “grandchildren”!) If education succeeds, then every virtue of the individual is a public benefit and a private loss, measured by the highest private goal. This loss is probably some

kind of mental and sensual stunting, or even early ruin. Think through, one after another, the virtues of obedience, chastity, piety and justice from this point of view. The praise of the selfless, self-sacrificing, virtuous person — that is, of someone who does not spend all his strength and reason on *his own* preservation, development, elevation, advancement and expansion of power, but who lives modestly and thoughtlessly with regard to himself, perhaps even indifferently or ironically — this praise has certainly not grown out of the spirit of selflessness! The “neighbor” praises selflessness *because he gets advantages from it!* If the neighbor thought of himself as “selfless,” he would refuse the loss of strength and the harm to himself that such tendencies bring, he would work against the rise of such inclinations, and above all he would show his selflessness by refusing to call it *good!* Here is the basic contradiction of the morality that is especially honored today: the *motives* for this morality stand against its *principle!* What this morality tries to prove is refuted by its own standard of what is moral! The sentence “you must give up yourself and offer yourself as a sacrifice” could only be decreed, without contradicting its own morality, by a being that had itself given up its advantage, and perhaps brought about its own ruin by demanding the sacrifice of individuals. But as soon as the neighbor (or society) recommends altruism *for the sake of usefulness*, the exact opposite sentence is put to use: “you must seek your advantage even at the cost of everyone else.” So in one breath, “you should” and “you should not” are preached together!

- ²² *Order of the Day for the King.* — The day begins. Let us now start arranging the business and the festivities of our most gracious lord, who is still resting for the moment. His Majesty has bad weather today. We will take care not to call it bad. No one will talk about the weather. But we will treat the business a little more solemnly today, and the festivities a little more festively, than would otherwise be needed. His Majesty may even be ill. Then at breakfast we will present the latest good news from the evening, the arrival of Monsieur de Montaigne, who knows how to joke so pleasantly about his illness: he suffers from stones in the bladder. We will receive some people. (People! What would that old, puffed-

up frog who will be among them say if he heard the word! "I am not a person," he would say, "I am always the thing itself.") The reception will last longer than anyone enjoys: reason enough to tell the story of the poet who wrote on his door: "Whoever comes in does me an honor; whoever does not — a pleasure." That is truly a rudeness said in a polite manner! And perhaps this poet is entirely right to be rude:

they say his verses are better than the versifier. Well, then, let him write many more, and withdraw from the world as much as he can. That is the meaning of his well-mannered rudeness! On the other hand, a prince is always worth more than his "verse," even when — but what are we doing? We are chatting, and the whole court thinks we are already working and racking our brains. People see no light earlier than the one burning in our window. Listen! Was that not the bell? Damn it! The day and the dance are beginning, and we do not know the steps! So we must improvise. Everyone improvises their day. Let us, just once, do what everyone else does! — And with that my strange morning dream vanished, probably under the hard strokes of the tower clock, which announced the fifth hour with all the importance that belongs to it. It seems to me that this time the god of dreams wanted to make fun of my habits. It is my habit to begin the day by arranging it for myself and making it bearable, and perhaps I have done this too formally and too much like a prince.

- ²³ *The Signs of Corruption.*—There are conditions of society that come around from time to time, and people call them "corruption." Watch for the following signs in them. As soon as corruption sets in anywhere, a motley *superstition* takes over, and the faith a whole people has shared until then turns pale and powerless beside it. For superstition is free-thinking of the second rank. Whoever gives in to it picks out certain forms and formulas that suit him and allows himself a right to choose. Compared with the religious person, the superstitious person is always much more of a "person," and a superstitious society will be one that already has many individuals and a taste for individuality. Seen from this point of view, superstition always appears as *progress* over faith, and as a sign that the intellect is becoming more independent and wants

its rights. The admirers of the old religion and religiousness then complain about corruption. They have also shaped how we use words until now, and have given superstition a bad name even among the freest minds. Let us learn that it is a symptom of *enlightenment*.—Second, a society in which corruption spreads is accused of *slackness*. And it is plain that in such a society the value placed on war and the taste for war fade, and the comforts of life are now pursued as hotly as military and athletic honors once were. But people tend to overlook that the old energy and passion of the people, which became magnificently visible through war and the contests, has now turned into countless private passions and has only become less visible. In fact, in states of “corruption” the power and force of the energy a people now spends is probably greater than ever, and the individual spends it as lavishly as he could not before—he was not yet rich enough for it then! And so it is precisely the times of “slackness” when tragedy runs through the houses and streets, when great love and great hatred are born, and the flame of knowledge shoots blazing up to the sky.—Third, as if to make up for the blame about superstition and slackness, people tend to say of such times of corruption that they are milder, and that cruelty is now sharply on the decline compared with the older age, which believed more and was stronger. But I cannot agree with this praise any more than with that blame. I will only grant this much: cruelty is now becoming more refined, and its older forms offend people’s taste from now on. But wounding and torturing by word and look reach their highest development in times of corruption—only now is *malice* created, and the pleasure in malice. The people of corruption are witty and slanderous. They know there are other ways of murder than by dagger and ambush—they also know that everything *said well* is believed.—Fourth: when “morals decay,” the beings we call tyrants appear first. They are the forerunners and, so to speak, the early-ripening *first fruits of individuals*. A little while longer, and this fruit of fruits hangs ripe and yellow on the tree of a people—and it was only for the sake of this fruit that the tree existed! When decay has reached its height, and the struggle among tyrants of every kind has too, then Caesar always comes, the final tyrant, who ends the weary scramble for sole rule by making the weariness work for him. In his time the individual is

usually at his ripest, and so “culture” is at its highest and most fruitful. But that is not for his sake and not through him, although the highest men of culture like to flatter their Caesar by presenting themselves as *his* work. The truth is that they need quiet from outside because they carry their unrest and their work inside themselves. In these times bribery and betrayal are at their worst. For the love of the newly discovered ego is now much stronger than the love of the old, worn-out “fatherland” that has been talked to death. And the need to protect oneself somehow against the terrible swings of fortune opens even nobler hands, as soon as someone powerful and rich shows he is ready to pour gold into them. There is so little secure future now, so people live for today. In that state of soul every seducer has an easy game—for people let themselves be seduced and bribed only “for today,” and keep the future and virtue in reserve! Individuals, these people who are truly “in and for themselves,” care more for the moment than their opposites, the herd-men, as everyone knows, because they consider themselves just as unpredictable as the future. Likewise they gladly attach themselves to men of force, because they believe themselves capable of actions and expedients that can count on neither understanding nor mercy from the crowd. But the tyrant or Caesar understands the right of the individual even in its excess, and has an interest in speaking up for a bolder private morality and even lending it a hand. For he thinks about himself, and wants others to think about him, as Napoleon once put it in his classic way: “I have the right to answer everything people complain of in me with an eternal ‘That is who I am.’ I stand apart from the whole world; I accept conditions from no one. I want people to submit even to my fancies, and to find it perfectly natural when I give myself over to this or that amusement.” Napoleon once said this to his wife, when she had reason to question her husband’s marital faithfulness.—The times of corruption are those in which the apples fall from the tree. I mean the individuals, the seed-bearers of the future, the authors of spiritual colonization and of the new formation of states and social bonds. Corruption is only a term of abuse for the *autumn seasons* of a people.

²⁴ *Different Kinds of Discontent.*—The weak, and so to speak feminine, discontented people are the inventive ones when it comes to making life more beautiful and deeper. The strong discontented people—the males among them, to stay with the image—are inventive when it comes to improving and securing life. The first group show their weakness and womanishness in that they like to let themselves be deceived for a while, and are ready enough to make do with a little intoxication and enthusiasm, but on the whole can never be satisfied and suffer from the incurability of their discontent. Besides, they are the supporters of everyone who knows how to produce opiate and narcotic comforts, and for that very reason they resent those who value the doctor above the priest—and so they keep real hardships going! If there had not been a surplus of discontented people of this kind in Europe since the Middle Ages, the famous European capacity for constant *transformation* might never have arisen at all. For the demands of the strong discontented are too crude and at bottom too modest not to be brought to rest at last. China is the example of a country where large-scale discontent and the capacity for transformation died out many centuries ago. And the socialists and worshippers of the state in Europe, with their measures to improve and secure life, could easily bring Europe too to Chinese conditions and a Chinese “happiness”—provided that they first managed to root out here that sicklier, more delicate, more feminine discontent and romanticism, of which there is still more than enough for now. Europe is a sick man who owes the greatest thanks to his incurability and to the endless transformation of his suffering. These constantly new situations, these equally constant new dangers, pains and expedients have finally produced an intellectual sensitivity that amounts almost to genius, and is in any case the mother of all genius.

²⁵ *Not Predestined for Knowledge.*—There is a stupid humility, not at all rare, and anyone afflicted with it is unfit once and for all to be a disciple of knowledge. That is: the moment a person of this kind notices something striking, he turns around on his heel, so to speak, and tells himself: “You have deceived yourself! Where were your senses? This cannot be the truth!” And then, instead of look-

ing and listening once more, more sharply, he runs away from the striking thing as if intimidated and tries to knock it out of his head as fast as he can. His inner rule, you see, reads: "I do not want to see anything that contradicts the usual opinion about things! Am I made to discover new truths? There are too many old ones already."

²⁶ *What Does It Mean to Live?*—Living means: continually pushing away from oneself something that wants to die. Living means: being cruel and merciless toward everything in us that grows weak and old, and not only in us. Does living mean, then, having no piety toward the dying, the wretched and the aged? Always being a murderer?—And yet old Moses said: "You shall not kill!"

²⁷ *The Renouncer.*—What does the renouncer do? He strives for a higher world. He wants to fly farther and further and higher than all the people who say Yes to life—he *throws a lot away* that would weigh down his flight, and some of it is not worthless or unlovable to him. He sacrifices it to his longing for the heights. This sacrificing, this throwing away, is now exactly what alone becomes visible in him. That is why we give him the name of the renouncer, and as such he stands before us, wrapped in his hood and like the soul of a hair shirt. But he is quite pleased with the effect he has on us. He wants to keep hidden from us his longing, his pride, his intention to fly *over* us.—Yes! He is cleverer than we thought, and so polite to us—this man who says Yes! For that is what he is, like us, even in renouncing.

²⁸ *Harming with One's Best.*—Our strengths sometimes drive us so far forward that we can no longer bear our weaknesses and are ruined by them. We may even foresee this outcome and still not want it any other way. Then we become hard toward whatever in us wants to be spared, and our greatness is also our ruthlessness.—An experience like this, which in the end we must pay for with our lives, is a parable for the whole effect great people have on others and on their age. Precisely with their best, with what only they can do, they ruin many who are weak, unsure, still becoming, still wishing, and so they do harm. Indeed, it can happen that, all in all, they only do harm, because their best is

taken in and, so to speak, drunk down only by people who lose their reason and their self-interest on it, as on a drink that is too strong. These people become so intoxicated that they must break their limbs on all the wrong paths where the intoxication drives them.

²⁹ *The Add-On Liars.*—When people in France began to attack the unities of Aristotle, and therefore also to defend them, it was once again to be seen—what is so often seen, but so unwillingly seen—that *people lied to themselves with reasons* why those rules should exist. They did it merely to avoid admitting that they had *become used* to the rule of these laws and no longer wanted it otherwise. And this is how people act within every ruling morality and religion, and have always acted: the reasons and purposes behind the habit are always lied onto it afterward, when some start to dispute the habit and to ask for reasons and purposes. Here lies the great dishonesty of conservatives of all times. —They are the add-on liars.

³⁰ *The Comedy of the Famous.*—Famous men who *need* their fame, like all politicians for example, never choose their allies and friends any more without ulterior motives. From one they want a piece of the glow and reflected glow of his virtue. From another they want the frightening quality of certain questionable traits that everyone knows in him. From a third they steal the reputation of his idleness, of his lying in the sun, because it serves their own purposes to be thought careless and lazy for a while.—It hides that they are lying in wait. Now they need the dreamer near them, now the expert, now the brooder, now the pedant, as their present self, so to speak. But just as soon they no longer need them! And so their surroundings and outer layers are continually dying off, while everything seems to crowd into this surrounding and wants to become their “character.” In this they are like great cities. Their reputation is always changing, like their character, for their changing means demand this change, and push now this, now that real or invented quality forward and out onto the stage. Their friends and allies belong, as I said, among these stage qualities. By contrast, what they *want* must stand all the more firm, as hard as bronze, and shining far and wide—and even this at times needs its comedy and its stage play.

- ³¹ *Trade and Nobility*.—Buying and selling is now considered common, like the art of reading and writing. Everyone is practiced in it now, even if he is not a merchant, and practices this technique every day—just as in the past, in the age of wilder humanity, everyone was a hunter and practiced the technique of hunting day after day. Back then hunting was common. But hunting finally became a privilege of the powerful and noble, and so lost its character of everydayness and commonness, because it stopped being necessary and became a matter of whim and luxury. Buying and selling could go the same way someday. One can imagine states of society where nothing is sold or bought and where the necessity of this technique is gradually lost altogether. Perhaps then certain individuals, who are less bound by the law of the general condition, will allow themselves buying and selling as a *luxury of feeling*. Only then would trade acquire nobility, and the nobles would perhaps be as glad to occupy themselves with trade as they have been so far with war and politics. Conversely, the value placed on politics might by then have changed completely. Already now it is ceasing to be the trade of the nobleman. And it is possible that one day people would find it so common that they would put it, like all party and daily-news writing, under the heading “prostitution of the spirit.”
- ³² *Unwelcome Disciples*.—“What am I supposed to do with these two young men!” cried a philosopher with annoyance. He “corrupted” the young, as Socrates once corrupted them. “They are students I do not want. This one cannot say No, and that one says to everything: ‘Half and half.’ Suppose they took up my teaching. The first would suffer too much, for my way of thinking requires a warlike soul, a wish to do hurt, a pleasure in saying No, a tough skin—he would waste away from open and inner wounds. And the other will make a mediocrity out of every cause he stands for, and so turn it into a mediocrity—a disciple like that I wish upon my enemy.”
- ³³ *Outside the Lecture Hall*.—“To prove to you that man at bottom belongs among the good-natured animals, I would remind you how gullible he has been for so long. Only now, very late and after enormous self-conquest, has he

become a *distrustful* animal—yes! man is now more wicked than ever.”—I do not understand this: why should man now be more distrustful and more wicked?—“Because he now has a science—needs one!”—

- ³⁴ *Hidden History*.—Every great person has a power that works backward. All of history is put on the scales again for his sake, and a thousand secrets of the past creep out of their hiding places—into *his* sun. There is no telling at all what will yet turn out to be history. Perhaps the past is still essentially undiscovered! So many backward-working forces are still needed!
- ³⁵ *Heresy and Witchcraft*.—Thinking differently from what custom prescribes is by no means so much the effect of a better intellect as the effect of strong, wicked inclinations—inclinations that detach, isolate, defy, gloat, and sneer. Heresy is the counterpart of witchcraft, and surely just as little as witchcraft is it something harmless or even worthy of respect in itself. Heretics and witches are two kinds of wicked people. What they have in common is that they also feel themselves to be wicked. But their irresistible desire is to vent harm on whatever rules (people or opinions). The Reformation, a kind of doubling of the medieval spirit at a time when it no longer had a good conscience, brought forth both in the greatest abundance.
- ³⁶ *Last Words*. — You will remember that the Emperor Augustus, a fearsome man who controlled himself completely and could keep quiet as well as any wise Socrates, gave himself away with his final words. For the first time he dropped his mask, when he let it be understood that he had been wearing a mask and playing a part. He had acted the father of the country and wisdom on the throne, and acted it so well that it looked real! “Applaud, friends, the play is over!” The thought of the dying Nero, “What an artist dies in me!”, was also the thought of the dying Augustus: the vanity of an actor, the chatter of an actor. It is the exact opposite of the death of Socrates. Tiberius, though, died silently, the most tormented of all self-tormentors. He was genuine and no actor. What may have gone through his mind at the end? Perhaps this: “Life is a long death. What a fool I have been, shortening the lives of so many people!

Was I ever made to be a benefactor? I should have given them eternal life. Then I could have watched them dying forever. I had such good eyes for that: what a spectator I am dying as!” When, after a long struggle with death, he seemed to be getting his strength back, people thought it wise to smother him with bed pillows. He died a double death.

³⁷ *Three Mistakes.* — In recent centuries, science has been promoted for three reasons. Some people hoped that through science they could understand God’s goodness and wisdom best. This was the main motive in the minds of the great English thinkers, such as Newton. Others believed that knowledge is absolutely useful, and especially that morality, learning and happiness are tied together at the core. This was the main motive in the minds of the great French thinkers, such as Voltaire. And others thought that science was something selfless, harmless, self-sufficient and truly innocent, something they could have and love, in which the bad drives of human beings had no part at all. This was the main motive in the mind of Spinoza, who felt divine as a knower. So: three mistakes.

³⁸ *The Powder Kegs.* — If you think about how badly the strength of young men needs an outlet, you will not be surprised to see them choose this or that cause so carelessly and so little selectively. What excites them is the sight of the enthusiasm around a cause, like the sight of a burning fuse, not the cause itself. That is why the cleverer seducers know how to promise them an explosion and say nothing about the reasons for their cause. You cannot win these powder kegs with arguments.

³⁹ *Changed Taste.* — A change in general taste is stronger than a change in opinions. Opinions, with all their proofs, rebuttals and intellectual costume, are only symptoms of a changed taste. They are certainly *not* the cause, which is what people so often take them to be. How does general taste change? When a few powerful and influential people, without any embarrassment, declare their *hoc est ridiculum, hoc est absurdum*, which means their verdict of taste and disgust, and push it through by force. In this way they put pressure on many people. Over time the pressure becomes a habit for even more people, and at last a

need for everyone. But when these few people feel and “taste” differently, the reason is usually something unusual in the way they live, eat, or digest. Perhaps it is a matter of more or fewer mineral salts in their blood and brain. In short, it is their physical makeup. They have the courage to admit their physical makeup and to listen to its demands even in its finest tones. Their aesthetic and moral judgments are exactly these “finest tones” of the body.

40 *On the Lack of Noble Form.* — Soldiers and their commanders still relate to each other in a much higher way than workers and their employers do. For now at least, every culture built on the military stands far above what is called industrial culture. Industrial culture, in its present form, is the most common way of life that has ever existed. Here the law of necessity simply applies: a person wants to live and has to sell himself. But people look down on the one who takes advantage of that need and buys the worker. It is strange that submitting to powerful, frightening, even terrible people, to tyrants and generals, is not felt nearly as humiliating as submitting to unknown and uninteresting people, like all the big names in industry. A worker usually sees in his employer only a sly, bloodsucking man who profits from every hardship, and whose name, looks, manners and reputation mean nothing to him. Manufacturers and big traders have probably lacked the forms and marks of the *higher race* that make people interesting. If they had the bearing and gestures of old noble birth, there might be no socialism of the masses. Deep down, the masses are ready for slavery of every kind, as long as the person above them keeps proving that he is higher, that he was born to command, through noble manners. The most ordinary man feels that nobility cannot be made up on the spot, and that it is the fruit of long periods of history that he must respect. But the lack of higher manners, and the notorious vulgarity of factory owners with red, fat hands, make him think that only chance and luck have raised one man above another. Very well, he says to himself, let us try chance and luck. Let us roll the dice! And socialism begins.

- ⁴¹ *Against Regret.* — A thinker treats his own actions as experiments and questions meant to find out something. Success and failure are, first of all, *answers* to him. Being annoyed that something went wrong, or even feeling regret, he leaves to those who act because they are ordered to, and who expect a beating if the master is not pleased with the result.
- ⁴² *Work and Boredom.* — Looking for work for the sake of the pay: in the civilized countries nearly everyone is alike in this now. For all of them, work is a means and not the goal itself. So they are not picky about what kind of work they do, as long as it brings in a good profit. There are, however, rarer people who would rather be ruined than work without enjoying it. They are the choosy ones who are hard to satisfy, and who are not helped by a large profit if the work is not itself the greatest reward. Artists and thinkers of every kind belong to this rare group, and so do those idlers who spend their lives hunting, traveling, or in love affairs and adventures. All of them want work and hardship, as long as these come with pleasure, and even the hardest, heaviest work if it has to be done. Otherwise they are determined to do nothing, even if poverty, disgrace, or danger to health and life come with that idleness. They fear boredom less than work without pleasure. In fact they need a lot of boredom if their work is to succeed. For the thinker and for every inventive mind, boredom is that unpleasant calm of the soul which comes before a good voyage and the favorable winds. He has to put up with it and wait inside himself for its effect. That is exactly what the lesser kinds of people cannot bring themselves to do! Driving boredom away by any means is common, just as working without pleasure is common. Perhaps what sets Asians apart from Europeans is that they can rest longer and more deeply than Europeans do. Even their narcotics work slowly and require patience, unlike the nasty suddenness of the European poison, alcohol.
- ⁴³ *What the Laws Reveal.* — It is a serious mistake to study a people's criminal laws as if they showed its character. The laws do not reveal what a people is. They reveal what seems strange, odd, monstrous and foreign to it. The laws deal with the exceptions to morality as custom. The harshest punishments fall

on whatever goes against the customs of a neighboring people. Among the Wahhabis, for example, there are only two deadly sins: having a god other than the Wahhabi god, and smoking, which they call “the shameful way of drinking.” “And what about murder and adultery?” asked an Englishman in surprise when he heard about this. “Well, God is kind and merciful!” said the old chief. Likewise, the ancient Romans believed that a woman could commit a mortal sin in only two ways: by adultery, and by drinking wine. The old Cato thought that kissing relatives had become a custom only so that women could be kept under watch in this matter. A kiss meant asking, does she smell of wine? Women caught drinking wine were in fact put to death, and certainly not only because wine sometimes makes women forget how to say no. The Romans feared above all the wild, Dionysian character that the women of southern Europe were prone to now and then, back when wine was still new in Europe. It was a monstrous foreignness that overturned the basis of Roman feeling. To the Romans it felt like a betrayal of Rome, like taking in something from outside.

⁴⁴ *The Motives People Believe In.* — However important it is to know the motives by which humanity has actually acted, perhaps the *belief* in these or those motives matters even more to the person who wants to understand. That belief is what humanity has so far invented and passed off to itself as the real levers of its actions. People’s inner happiness and misery have come to them according to what they believed their motives were, and *not* according to what the motives actually were! Everything in the second category is of secondary importance.

⁴⁵ *Epicurus.* — Yes, I am proud to feel Epicurus’s character differently from perhaps anyone else. With everything I hear and read about him, I enjoy the happiness of the afternoon of antiquity. I see his eye looking out over a wide, whitish sea, past the rocks of the shore where the sun lies, while large and small creatures play in its light, as steady and calm as that light and that eye. Only someone who was in constant pain could have invented such happiness: the happi-

ness of an eye before which the sea of existence has gone still, and which can never get enough of looking at its surface, at this colorful, fine, trembling skin of the sea. Never before was pleasure so modest.

⁴⁶ *Our Astonishment.* — There is a deep and solid happiness in the fact that science establishes things which *stand firm*, and which again and again give the ground for new discoveries. It could just as well have been otherwise! We are so convinced of how uncertain and fanciful our judgments are, and of the constant change in all human laws and ideas, that we are actually astonished *how well* the results of science hold up! Earlier people knew nothing about this changeability of everything human. The custom of morality kept alive the belief that the whole inner life of a person was fixed by iron chains to unbreakable necessity. People may then have felt a similar pleasure of astonishment when they listened to fairy tales and stories of magic. The marvelous did such good to people who were sometimes tired of rules and of eternity. To lose the ground for once! To float! To go astray! To be mad! That belonged to the paradise and the indulgence of earlier times. Our happiness, by contrast, is like that of a shipwrecked sailor who has reached land and stands on the old firm earth with both feet, amazed that it does not sway.

⁴⁷ *On Suppressing the Passions.* — If you keep forbidding the expression of the passions, treating them as something left to the “common,” coarser, middle-class and peasant natures, then you are not really trying to suppress the passions themselves. You are only trying to suppress their language and gestures. Even so, you end up with exactly what you did not want: the suppression of the passions themselves, or at least their weakening and change. The court of Louis XIV and everything that depended on it is the most instructive example of this. The age that came after, raised on the suppression of expression, no longer had the passions themselves. In their place it had a graceful, shallow, playful character, an age that could not be rude. Even an insult was taken and answered only with polite words. Perhaps our own time offers the most remarkable counterpart. Everywhere I look, in life and on the stage, and not least in everything that is written, I see pleasure in the *coarser* outbursts and gestures of passion. A cer-

tain convention of passionateness is now demanded, but not passion itself! Still, in the end people will reach *it* this way, and our descendants will have a *real wildness*, not just a wildness and unruliness of forms.

⁴⁸ *Knowing Need.* — Perhaps nothing separates people and ages as much as the different degree to which they know need: need of the soul as well as need of the body. As for the body, we who live now are probably all bunglers and dreamers at once, despite our weaknesses and frailties, because we lack rich experience of ourselves. Compare us with an age of fear, the longest of all ages, when each person had to protect himself against violence, and for that purpose had to become a violent man himself. In those days a man went through a rich school of physical pain and deprivation. He understood even a certain cruelty toward himself, a voluntary practice of pain, as a means of staying alive that he needed. In those days people trained those around them to endure pain. They gladly inflicted pain, and watched the most terrible forms of it fall on others, feeling nothing but relief at their own safety. As for the need of the soul, I now look at each person to see whether he knows it from experience or only from description. Does he still think it necessary to pretend to know it, perhaps as a mark of finer education? Or does he, deep down, not believe in great suffering of the soul at all? When it is mentioned, he responds as he does when great physical suffering is mentioned: he thinks of his toothache and his stomachache. That, however, seems to be how most people stand now. From the general lack of practice in pain, of both kinds, and from the rarity of seeing someone suffer, an important result follows. People now hate pain much more than earlier people did, and speak of it more badly than ever. They even find the mere presence of pain *as a thought* hardly bearable, and they make the whole of existence into a question of conscience and a reproach. The appearance of pessimistic philosophies is by no means a sign of great, terrible distress. These question marks about the value of all life are made in times when refinement and comfort already consider the unavoidable mosquito bites of the soul and body far too bloody and malicious. Lacking real experience of pain, such times would most like to make painful *general ideas* seem the highest kind of

suffering. There would already be a cure for pessimistic philosophy and for the excessive sensitivity that seems to me the real “distress of the present.” But perhaps this cure already sounds too cruel, and would itself be counted among the signs people now use to judge: “Existence is something evil.” Well! The cure for “distress” is: distress.

⁴⁹ *Magnanimity and Its Relatives.* — Those puzzling phenomena, such as the sudden coldness of a warm-hearted person, the humor of the melancholic, and above all magnanimity, which is a sudden giving up of revenge or of the satisfaction of envy, appear in people who have a powerful inner force that throws them from one extreme to the other. They are people of sudden satisfaction and sudden disgust. Their pleasures come so fast and so strong that excess and distaste follow right behind, and then a flight into the opposite taste. In this opposition the tension of their feeling is released. In one person it comes out as sudden coldness, in another as laughter, in a third as tears and self-sacrifice. To me the magnanimous person, at least the kind of magnanimity that has always made the greatest impression, looks like someone with an extreme thirst for revenge. A chance for satisfaction shows itself close by, and he drinks it up so fully, down to the last drop, *already in his imagination*, that a huge, quick disgust follows that quick excess. Now he rises “above himself,” as people say, and forgives his enemy, even blesses and honors him. But by this violence against himself, this mockery of the revenge drive that was so powerful a moment ago, he only gives in to a new drive that has become powerful in him, namely disgust. He does it as impatiently and excessively as he had earlier anticipated the joy of revenge in his imagination and, so to speak, drained it dry. Magnanimity has the same degree of egoism as revenge does, but a different quality of egoism.

⁵⁰ *The Argument of Being Alone.* — Even the most conscientious person is moved less by the reproach of his conscience than by a feeling that says: “This or that goes against the good customs of your group.” Even the strongest person fears a cold look or a sour mouth from the people among whom he was raised and for

whom he was raised. What is really being feared here? Being alone! It is the argument that beats even the best arguments for a person or a cause. This is the herd instinct speaking inside us.

- 51 *Sense of Truth.* — I appreciate any kind of doubt that lets me answer, “Let’s try it!” But about all things and questions that cannot be tested by experiment, I do not want to hear anything more. This is the limit of my “sense of truth,” because there courage has lost its claim.
- 52 *What Others Know About Us.* — What we know about ourselves and keep in memory matters less to the happiness of our lives than we think. One day what *others* know about us, or think they know, comes crashing down on us, and then we see that it is the more powerful force. People cope with a bad conscience more easily than with a bad reputation.
- 53 *Where Goodness Begins.* — Where the eye’s poor sight can no longer see the bad drive as such, because the drive has become refined, people mark the beginning of the realm of the good. Having now crossed into the realm of the good, they feel all the drives that the bad drives had threatened and limited stirring with them: a feeling of safety, comfort and goodwill. So the duller the eye, the farther goodness reaches! That is why ordinary people and children are always cheerful! And that is why the great thinkers are gloomy, with a sadness that is related to a bad conscience.
- 54 *Awareness of Appearance.* — How wonderful and new, and at the same time how dreadful and ironic, I feel my knowledge puts me in relation to all of existence! I have discovered that the old human and animal nature, indeed the whole prehistory and past of all feeling beings, keeps writing poems, loving, hating and drawing conclusions inside me. I have suddenly woken in the middle of this dream, but only to become aware that I am dreaming, and that I *have to* keep on dreaming in order not to be destroyed, the way a sleepwalker has to keep dreaming so that he does not fall. What does “appearance” mean to me now? It is certainly not the opposite of some true being. What can I say about any being except the properties of its appearance? It is certainly not a

dead mask that you could put on some unknown X and take off again. For me, appearance is the active and living thing itself. It goes so far in mocking itself that it makes me feel that here there is only appearance, a will-o'-the-wisp, a ghostly dance, and nothing more. Among all these dreamers, I too, the "knower," dance my dance. The knower is a tool for stretching out the earthly dance, and in that way belongs to the people who arrange the festival of existence. The strict logic and connectedness of all knowledge may be, and will be, the greatest tool for keeping the common dream going; for keeping all these dreamers able to understand one another, and so for *keeping the dream alive*.

55 *The Last Nobility*. — What makes someone "noble"? Certainly not making sacrifices, since the wildly lustful person makes sacrifices too. Certainly not following a passion, since there are contemptible passions. Certainly not doing something for others without selfishness, since perhaps the logic of selfishness is strongest in the most noble people. What makes someone noble is that the passion which seizes him is a peculiarity, and he does not know that it is one. He uses a rare and unusual measure, almost a kind of madness. He feels heat in things that feel cold to everyone else. He guesses at values for which no scale has been invented yet. He makes sacrifices on altars dedicated to an unknown god. He has a courage without the wish to be honored. He has a self-sufficiency that overflows and gives to people and things. Until now, then, it was the rare, and not knowing how rare it is, that made someone noble. But consider that by this standard everything familiar, close and indispensable, in short what does most to preserve the species, and in general the *rule* in human history so far, has been judged unfairly and slandered on the whole, in favor of the exceptions. Becoming the defender of the rule: that might be the last form and refinement in which nobility shows itself on earth.

56 *The Desire to Suffer*. — When I think of the urge to do something, which constantly tickles and spurs on millions of young Europeans who cannot stand boredom or themselves, I understand that there must also be in them a desire to suffer, so that they can take their suffering as a plausible reason to act. They need distress! That is why politicians keep shouting, and why there are so many

false, invented and exaggerated “states of emergency” in every class, and why people are so willing to believe them. This young generation wants misfortune, not happiness, to come or to become visible *from outside*. Their imagination is already busy shaping a monster out of it, so that afterward they can fight a monster. If these people who crave distress felt the strength in themselves to do good for themselves from within, to do something to themselves, then they would also understand how to create their own distress from within, a distress that belongs to them. Their inventions could then be subtler, and their satisfactions could sound like good music. As it is, they fill the world with their cries of need, and so, too often, they first fill it with the *feeling* of need! They do not know what to do with themselves, so they paint other people’s misfortune on the wall. They always need others, and ever more others! — Forgive me, my friends. I have dared to paint my own happiness on the wall.

Book II



57 *To the Realists.* — You sober people, who feel protected against passion and fantasy and would like to make a pride and an ornament out of your emptiness, you call yourselves realists. You suggest that the world is exactly as it appears to you, that reality stands before you alone, uncovered, and that you yourselves may be its best part. Oh, you beloved pictures of Sais! But even in your most uncovered state, are you not still highly emotional and murky beings, compared with fish, and still far too much like a man in love? And what is “reality” for a man in love! You still carry around the valuations of things that come from the passions and infatuations of earlier centuries. Your sobriety still has a hidden and unbreakable drunkenness built into it. Your love of “reality,” for example, oh, that is an old, very old “love”! In every feeling and every sense impression there is a piece of this old love. Some fantasy, some prejudice, some unreason, some ignorance, some fear, and whatever else, has worked on it and woven it. There is that mountain! There is that cloud! What is actually “real” about them? Try taking away the illusion and all the human additions, you sober people! Yes, if you could do that! If you could forget where you came from, your past, your early training, your whole humanity and animality! There is no “reality” for us, and none for you either, you sober people. We are not nearly as

strange to each other as you think. Perhaps our good will to get past intoxication deserves just as much respect as your belief that you are *incapable* of intoxication at all.

58 *Only as Creators!* — This has been the hardest thing for me, and it is still the hardest thing: seeing that what things are called matters infinitely more than what they are. The reputation, name and appearance of a thing, its standing, its usual measure and weight, were at the beginning almost always a mistake and an arbitrary act. They were thrown over the thing like a coat, completely foreign to its nature and even to its skin. But through belief in them, and through their passing down from generation to generation, they have gradually grown onto and into the thing, so to speak, and become its body itself. The appearance at the start almost always becomes the essence in the end, and it *works* as the essence! What a fool would he be who thought it was enough to point out this origin and this fog of illusion in order to destroy the world that counts as real, the so-called “*reality*”? Only as creators can we destroy! — But let us not forget this either: it is enough to create new names, new valuations and new probabilities to create new “things” in the long run.

59 *We Artists!* — When we love a woman, it is easy to hate nature, remembering all the disgusting natural facts that every woman is subject to. We usually think around them. But when our soul touches on these things, it jerks away impatiently and looks at nature with contempt, as I said. We feel insulted. Nature seems to reach into what belongs to us, with the most unholy hands. So we close our ears to all physiology and quietly decide: “I do not want to hear that a human being is also something other than *soul and form!*” “The human being under the skin” is a horror and an unthinkable idea to all lovers, a blasphemy against God and love. Now, the way a lover feels about nature and the natural today, that is how every worshiper of God and his “holy almighty power” once felt. Whatever astronomers, geologists, physiologists and doctors said about nature, he saw as an intrusion into his most precious possession, and therefore as an attack, and even as shameless behavior on the part of the attacker. The “law of nature” already sounded like a slander against God to him. At bottom

he would have been very glad to see all mechanics traced back to moral acts of will and whim. But since nobody could do him that favor, he *hid* nature and mechanics from himself as well as he could, and lived in a dream. Oh, the people of earlier times knew how to *dream*, and did not need to fall asleep first! And we people of today still understand it far too well, in spite of all our good will for being awake and for daylight! It is enough to love, hate, desire, in short to feel, and *immediately* the spirit and power of the dream come over us. With open eyes and a cold nerve against all danger, we climb the most dangerous paths, up onto the roofs and towers of fantasy, with no dizziness at all, as if born for climbing. We are sleepwalkers of the day! We artists! We hiders of the natural! We who hunger for the moon and for God! We tireless wanderers, dead silent, on heights that we do not see as heights, but as our plains, as our safe ground!

- 60 *Women and Their Effect at a Distance.* — Do I still have ears? Am I still nothing but ears? Here I stand in the blaze of the surf, whose white flames lick up to my feet. From every side it howls, threatens, shouts and shrieks at me, while in the deepest depth the old earth-shaker sings his aria, dull as a bellowing bull. For this he stamps out such an earth-shaking beat that even these weathered giants of rock feel their hearts tremble in their bodies. Then suddenly, as if born from nothing, there appears in front of the gate of this hellish labyrinth, only a few fathoms away, a great sailing ship, gliding past as silently as a ghost. Oh, this ghostly beauty! With what magic it takes hold of me! How? Has all the calm and silence of the world boarded here? Does my happiness itself sit in this still place, my happier self, my second, eternal self? Not dead, and yet not alive anymore? As a ghostly, quiet, watching, gliding, floating in-between being? Like the ship that runs over the dark sea with its white sails, like an enormous butterfly! Yes! To run *over* existence! That is it! That would be it! — — It seems the noise here has made me a dreamer? All great noise makes us put happiness in silence and distance. When a man stands in the middle of *his* noise, in the middle of his surf of throws and plans, then he may also see quiet, magical beings gliding past him, whose happiness and seclusion he longs for. They are *the*

women. He almost believes that his better self lives there with the women. In those quiet places even the loudest surf turns into dead silence, and life itself turns into a dream about life. But! But! My noble dreamer, even on the finest sailing ship there is so much noise and racket, and unfortunately so much small and miserable racket! The charm and the strongest effect of women is, to use the language of the philosophers, an effect at a distance, an *actio in distans*. But that requires, first of all and above all, *distance*!

⁶¹ *In Honor of Friendship.* — That the feeling of friendship was regarded as the highest feeling in ancient times, higher even than the most famous pride of the self-sufficient and wise, and almost as its only and still more sacred kinship, is shown well by the story of the Macedonian king who gave a talent to a philosopher of Athens who despised the world, and got it back from him. “What?” said the king. Does he have no friend?” By this he meant: “I respect this pride of the wise and independent man. But I would respect his humanity even more if the friend in him had won the victory over his pride. Before me the philosopher has made himself smaller, by showing that he does not know one of the two highest feelings, and not even the higher one!”

⁶² *Love.* — Love even forgives the beloved for desiring.

⁶³ *Women in Music.* — Why do warm, rainy winds also bring with them the musical mood and the creative pleasure of melody? Are they not the same winds that fill the churches and give women loving thoughts?

⁶⁴ *Skeptics.* — I fear that women who have grown old are, in the most secret corner of their hearts, more skeptical than any man. They believe that the shallowness of existence is its true nature. For them all virtue and depth is only a cover for this “truth,” a very welcome cover for a *pudendum*. So it is a matter of good manners and shame, and nothing more!

⁶⁵ *Devotion.* — There are noble women with a certain poverty of spirit who, to express their deepest devotion, do not know any other way than to offer their virtue and modesty. It is their highest possession. And often this gift is accepted

without binding the receiver as deeply as the giver assumes. A very sad story!

- ⁶⁶ *The Strength of the Weak.* — All women are clever at exaggerating their weakness. They are inventive in weaknesses, so that they appear completely like fragile ornaments that even a speck of dust can hurt. Their existence is meant to make a man feel his clumsiness and to put it on his conscience. This is how they protect themselves against the strong, and against all “right of the fist.”
- ⁶⁷ *Pretending to Oneself.* — Now she loves him, and since then she has looked ahead with such calm trust, like a cow! But woe! It was exactly his fascination that she seemed completely changeable and impossible to pin down! He already had too much steady weather in himself! Should she not do well to pretend her old character? To pretend to be indifferent? Does love not advise her to do exactly that? Long live the play!
- ⁶⁸ *Will and Willingness.* — A young man was brought to a wise man, and they said: “Look, this is one who is being ruined by women!”
- The wise man shook his head and smiled. “It is men who ruin women,” he said. “Whatever women lack has to be paid for and repaired in men, because the man makes an image of woman for himself, and the woman shapes herself according to that image.” “You are too gentle with women,” said one of the bystanders. “You do not know them!” The wise man answered: “A man’s nature is will; a woman’s nature is willingness. That is the law of the sexes, truly! A hard law for women! All people are innocent for their existence, but women are innocent in the second degree. Who could have enough oil and mildness for them?” “What oil! What mildness!” cried someone else from the crowd. “Women must be raised better!” “Men must be raised better,” said the wise man, and signaled to the young man to follow him. But the young man did not follow him.
- ⁶⁹ *The Capacity for Revenge.* — That someone cannot defend himself, and therefore does not want to, does not yet bring him shame in our eyes. But we think little of the one who has neither the power nor the will for revenge, whether man or woman. Could a woman hold us (or, as people say, “bind” us) if we did

not trust her to use a dagger (any kind of dagger) well against us? Or against herself, which in a particular case would be the more painful revenge (the Chinese revenge).

70 *The Mistresses of Masters.* — A deep, powerful contralto, of the kind one sometimes hears in the theater, suddenly pulls back the curtain on possibilities we normally do not believe in. At once we believe that somewhere in the world there could be women with high, heroic, royal souls, able and ready for grand answers, decisions and sacrifices, able and ready to rule over men, because in them the best part of a man, beyond the difference of sex, has become a living ideal. True, the theater does not intend such voices to give this idea of woman. Usually they are meant to portray the ideal male lover, a Romeo for example. But from my experience, the theater, and the musician who expects these effects from such a voice, always miscalculate. People do not believe in these lovers. These voices still always carry a tone of the motherly and the housewifely, and most of all when love is in their sound.

71 *On Feminine Chastity.* — Something quite astonishing and monstrous exists in how refined women are raised. Perhaps nothing is more paradoxical. Everyone agrees to raise them as ignorant as possible about sex, and to give them a deep shame about such things, and the greatest impatience and the urge to flee when these matters are even hinted at. All of a woman's "honor" basically depends on this alone. Otherwise people would forgive them almost anything! But in this one matter they are supposed to stay ignorant down to the heart. They are to have no eyes, ears, words or thoughts for this, their "evil." In fact, knowledge is already the evil here. And then! They are thrown with a terrible lightning strike into reality and knowledge, through marriage, and indeed by the very man they love and respect most. They find love and shame in conflict. They even have to feel delight, surrender, duty, pity and fear all at once, at the unexpected closeness of God and animal and everything else! They have truly tied a knot in the soul that has no equal! Even the sympathetic curiosity of the wisest judge of people is not enough to guess how this or that woman manages to find her way into this solution of the riddle, and into this riddle of a solution. What terrible,

far-reaching suspicions must stir in the poor, shaken soul, and how the last philosophy and skepticism of woman drops its anchor at this point! Afterward there is the same deep silence as before, often a silence even toward herself, a closing of her eyes to herself. Young women work hard to look shallow and thoughtless, and the most refined among them pretend to be a little bold. Women easily see their husbands as a question mark over their honor, and their children as an apology or a penance. They need children and want them, but in a very different sense from the way a man wants children.

In short, you cannot be gentle enough with women!

72 *The Mothers.* — Animals think about women differently from people. To them the female is the productive being. Among animals there is no fatherly love, but something like love for the children of a mate, and a habit of living with them. For females, their children are a satisfaction of their urge to rule, a possession, an occupation, something they fully understand, something they can chatter about. All of this together is motherly love, which can be compared to an artist's love for his work. Pregnancy has made women gentler, more patient, more timid, and more willing to submit. In the same way, spiritual pregnancy produces the character of the contemplatives, which is related to the female character. They are the male mothers. Among animals, the male sex is considered the beautiful one.

73 *Holy Cruelty.* — A man came to a holy man carrying a child that had just been born. "What should I do with the child?" he asked. "It is weak, misshapen, and does not have enough life to die." "Kill it," cried the holy man in a terrible voice, "kill it, and then hold it in your arms for three days and three nights, so that you have something to remember. Then you will never father another child, unless the time is right for you to do so." When the man heard this, he went away disappointed. Many people blamed the holy man for giving such cruel advice, since he had advised killing the child. "But isn't it crueler to let it live?" said the holy man.

- ⁷⁴ *The Unsuccessful.* — Those poor women always fail who become restless and uncertain in the presence of the man they love, and talk too much. Men are most surely won over by a certain secret, calm tenderness.
- ⁷⁵ *The Third Sex.* — “A small man is a paradox, but still a man. But small women seem to me, compared with tall women, to belong to a different sex,” said an old dance teacher. “A small woman is never beautiful,” said the old Aristotle.
- ⁷⁶ *The Greatest Danger.* — If there had not always been a majority of people who felt the discipline of their minds, their “reasonableness,” as their pride, their duty and their virtue, and who were offended or embarrassed by all the fantasizing and wild wandering of thought, the friends of “common sense,” humanity would have died out long ago! Hanging over humanity, as its greatest danger, is the outbreak of madness. This means the breaking loose of whim in feeling, seeing and hearing, the enjoyment of a mind without discipline, the delight in human unreason. What is the opposite of the world of the insane is not truth and certainty, but the general acceptance and binding force of a belief. In short, it is the lack of arbitrariness in judgment. The greatest work people have done so far has been to agree with one another about a great many things, and to put on themselves a rule of agreement, whether those things are true or false. This is the discipline of the mind that humanity has kept. But the opposing drives are still so strong that one can speak about humanity’s future only with little confidence. The picture of things keeps shifting, and perhaps from now on it will shift more and faster than ever. The most refined minds keep resisting that binding agreement, the researchers of truth first of all. That belief, as a belief for everyone, keeps producing disgust and a new appetite in sharper heads. Even the slow pace it demands for all mental activity, the tortoise-like crawl that is accepted here as the standard, turns artists and poets into deserters. It is these impatient minds that burst out with a real craving for madness, because madness has such a lively pace! So there is a need for virtuous intellects, and, to say it plainly: there is a need for virtuous stupidity, for unshakable timekeepers of the

slow mind, so that the believers in the great common belief stay together and keep on dancing their dance. This is a need of the first rank, and it commands and demands here.

We others are the exception and the danger. We always need defending! Still, something can really be said in favor of the exception, as long as it never wants to become the rule.

⁷⁷ *The Animal with a Clear Conscience.* — I am not blind to the crudeness in everything that is popular in southern Europe, whether Italian opera (Rossini and Bellini, for example) or the Spanish adventure novel, which reaches us most easily in the French disguise of *Gil Blas*. But it does not offend me, any more than the crudeness you meet on a walk through Pompeii, or even while reading any ancient book. Where does this come from? Is it that shame is missing here, and that everything crude appears as sure of itself as anything noble, lovely or passionate does in the same kind of music or novel? “The animal has its rights like a human being. So let it run around freely. And you, my dear fellow human, are still this animal too, in spite of everything!” That seems to me to be the moral of the matter, and the peculiar feature of southern humanity. Bad taste has its rights just as good taste does, and even a privilege over it, if it provides a great need, a certain satisfaction, and, so to speak, a common language, a completely understandable mask and gesture. Good, selective taste, on the other hand, always has something searching and tentative about it, something not entirely certain that it will be understood. It is not and never has been popular! The mask is and remains popular! So let all this masklike quality run along in the melodies and cadences, in the jumps and jolliness of the rhythm of these operas! And as for ancient life: what does anyone understand about it if they do not understand the pleasure in the mask, the clear conscience of everything masklike? Here is the bath and recreation of the ancient mind. Perhaps this bath was even more necessary to the rare and noble natures of the old world than to the ordinary ones. On the other hand, a crude turn in northern works, for example in German music, offends me terribly. Here shame is involved. The artist has come down to a lower level in front of himself and could not even

keep himself from blushing. We feel ashamed along with him, and we are offended, because we sense that he thought he had to come down on our account.

78 *What We Should Be Grateful For.* — It was artists, and above all the artists of the theater, who first gave people eyes and ears to enjoy watching and hearing what each of us is, what each of us lives through, what each of us wants. They first taught us to value the hero hidden in every one of these ordinary people. They taught us the art of seeing ourselves as heroes, from a distance and in a simplified, glorified way, the art of “staging” ourselves before ourselves. Only in this way do we get past some of the petty details of our own lives! Without that art we would be nothing but surface, living entirely under the spell of the kind of vision that makes the nearest and most common things look enormous and like reality itself.

Perhaps religion deserves a similar credit. It taught people to look at the sinfulness of each individual through a magnifying glass, and turned the sinner into a great, immortal criminal. By describing eternal perspectives around him, it taught people to see themselves from a distance, as something past and whole.

79 *The Appeal of Imperfection.* — Here I see a poet who, like many people, has a greater appeal because of his imperfections than because of everything that comes out round and perfect under his hand. In fact, he gets more of his advantage and fame from his final inability than from his rich strength. His work never fully says what he really meant to say, what he wanted to *see*. It seems he had a taste of a vision but never the vision itself. Still, a huge longing for that vision has stayed in his soul, and from it he draws his equally huge eloquence of desire and hunger. With it he lifts the listener above his work and above all “works,” and gives him wings to climb as high as listeners ever climb. And so, having become poets and seers themselves, they admire the creator of their happiness as if he had led them straight to the sight of his holiest and final thing, as if he had reached his goal and really *seen* his vision and passed it on. His reputation benefits from not having actually reached the goal.

80 *Art and Nature.* — The Greeks, or at least the Athenians, liked to hear good speech. They had an eager appetite for it, which sets them apart from non-Greeks more than anything else. So they demanded that passion on the stage speak well too, and they put up with the unnaturalness of dramatic verse with pleasure. In nature, passion says so little! It is so silent and awkward! And when it does find words, they are confused and unreasonable and embarrassing even to itself! Now, thanks to the Greeks, we have all grown used to this unnaturalness on the stage, just as, thanks to the Italians, we put up with the other unnaturalness, the *singing* passion, and gladly so. We have come to need something that we cannot get from real life: to hear people in the hardest situations speak well and at length. It delights us now when the tragic hero still finds words, reasons, eloquent gestures, and on the whole a clear intelligence, at the very point where life comes close to the abyss and the real person usually loses his head and certainly his fine speech. This kind of *departure from nature* is perhaps the most pleasant meal for human pride. For this reason people love art, as the expression of a high, heroic unnaturalness and convention. It is fair to criticize a dramatic poet if he does not turn everything into reason and words, but keeps some portion of *silence* in his hand. In the same way people are unhappy with an opera composer who, for the strongest emotion, can find not a melody but only an emotional, “natural” stammering and shouting. Here nature is *supposed* to be contradicted! Here the common charm of illusion is *supposed* to give way to a higher charm! The Greeks went a very long way down this road, a frighteningly long way! They made the stage as narrow as possible and forbade any effect from deep backgrounds. They made it impossible for the actor to use his facial expressions and move freely, and turned him into a solemn, stiff, masklike figure. They also took away from passion its deep background and dictated a law of beautiful speech for it. In fact, they did everything they could to work against the raw effect of images that stir fear and pity. They simply *did not want* fear and pity. Honor to Aristotle, and the highest honor! But he certainly did not hit the nail, let alone the head of the nail, when he spoke about the final purpose of Greek tragedy! Just look at the Greek tragic poets and see what most stirred their effort, their inventiveness and their com-

petition. It was certainly not the goal of overwhelming the audience with emotions! The Athenian went to the theater to *hear beautiful speeches*! And it was beautiful speeches that Sophocles cared about! Forgive me this heresy! It is quite different with *serious opera*. All its masters take care to keep people from understanding their characters. A word picked up now and then may help the distracted listener. On the whole, the situation has to explain itself. The speeches do not matter! That is how they all think, and so they have all played their tricks with words. Perhaps they only lacked the nerve to say completely how little they think of the word. A little more boldness in Rossini and he would have had everything sung as la-la-la-la, and there would still have been sense in it! The characters in an opera are precisely not to be believed “on their word,” but on their tone! That is the difference, that is the beautiful *unnaturalness* for which people go to the opera! Even the *recitativo secco* does not really want to be heard as words and text. This kind of half-music is meant to give the musical ear a little rest, a rest from *melody*, which is the most sublime and therefore also the most tiring pleasure of this art. But very soon it does something else: it makes impatience grow, reluctance grow, and a new desire for *whole* music, for melody. Seen from this point of view, how does the art of Richard Wagner stand? Perhaps differently? It often seemed to me that you would have to memorize the words and music of his works before the performance, because without that, so it seemed to me, you hear neither the words nor the music itself.

- ⁸¹ *Greek Taste*. — “What is beautiful about it?” said that land surveyor after a performance of *Iphigenia*. “Nothing is proved in it!” Could the Greeks have been so far from that taste? In Sophocles, at least, “everything is proved.”
- ⁸² *The Un-Greek Esprit*. — In all their thinking the Greeks are indescribably logical and plain. For their long good period, at least, they did not get tired of it, as the French so often do. The French are very eager to make a little jump into the opposite, and they tolerate the spirit of logic only when, through a series of such little jumps into the opposite, it shows its *social* politeness and its social self-denial. Logic seems necessary to them, like bread and water, but also like

these, a kind of prisoner's food, as soon as it is to be enjoyed pure and by itself. In good company you must never want to be completely and entirely right, as pure logic always wants. That is why there is a small dose of unreason in all French *esprit*. The social sense of the Greeks was far less developed than that of the French, and was. That is why their most witty men had so little *esprit*, and why even their jokers had so little wit. Ah! People will not believe these sentences of mine, and how many more of this kind I have on my conscience! *Est res magna tacere*, says Martial, speaking to all the talkative people.

- 83 *Translations.* — You can judge how much historical sense a period has by the way it makes *translations* and tries to take in past periods and books. The French of Corneille's time, and even the French of the Revolution, took hold of Roman antiquity in a way that we would no longer have the courage for, thanks to our higher historical sense. And Roman antiquity itself: how forcefully and naively at once it laid its hand on everything good and high in the older Greek antiquity! How they translated it into the Roman present! How they deliberately and carelessly rubbed the wing dust off the butterfly of the moment! Horace translated Alcaeus or Archilochus here and there, and Propertius translated Callimachus and Philetas, poets of the same rank as Theocritus, if we are *allowed* to judge. What did it matter to them that the original creator had lived through this or that and written the traces of it into his poem? As poets, they had no liking for the antiquarian nose that runs ahead of historical sense. As poets, they did not respect these purely personal things, the names and everything that belonged to a city, a coast or a century as its costume and mask. They quickly put the present and the Roman in their place. They seem to ask us: "Should we not make the old new for ourselves, and lay ourselves out in it? Should we not be allowed to breathe our soul into this dead body? It is dead, after all, and how ugly everything dead is!" They did not know the pleasure of historical sense. The past and the foreign embarrassed them, and as Romans they saw it as a reason for a Roman conquest. In fact, when they translated, they were conquering. It was not only that they left out the histori-

cal parts. They added a hint at the present, and above all they struck out the poet's name and put their own in its place. They did not feel they were stealing. They had the very best conscience of the *imperium Romanum*.

84 *Where Poetry Came From.* — People who love the imaginative side of human beings, and who also defend the view that morality is instinctive, argue like this: “Suppose people had always worshiped usefulness as the highest god. Then where did poetry come from, all over the world? This rhythm in speech works against clear communication rather than helping it, and yet it has grown up everywhere on earth as a mockery of all practical purpose, and it keeps growing! The wild, beautiful unreason of poetry proves you wrong, you utilitarians! Wanting to break free of usefulness is what raised human beings up, what inspired them to morality and art!” Well, for once I will speak in the utilitarians’ favor. They are so rarely right that it is pitiful! In those ancient times when poetry first came into being, people did keep usefulness in view, and a very great usefulness at that, when they let rhythm into speech. This force rearranges all the parts of a sentence, it means choosing words, it colors a thought anew and makes it darker, stranger and more distant. Of course it was a *superstitious* usefulness! Through rhythm, a human request was supposed to be engraved more deeply on the gods. People had noticed that someone remembers a verse better than plain speech. They also thought that the rhythmic beat made them heard over greater distances. A prayer set to rhythm seemed to reach the gods’ ears more closely. But above all, people wanted to use the overwhelming effect that a person feels inside when he hears music. Rhythm is a kind of compulsion. It produces an irresistible pleasure in giving in and joining along. Not only the feet keep step, but the soul itself follows the beat. Probably, people concluded, the souls of the gods do too! So they tried to *force* the gods through rhythm and to gain power over them. They threw poetry over them like a magic noose. There was an even odder belief, and perhaps it was the one that most powerfully helped poetry come into being. Among the Pythagoreans it shows up as a philosophical idea and a method of education. But long before there were philosophers, people believed that music could release the passions, purify the

soul and soften the *ferocia animi*, and they believed this precisely because of the rhythm in music. When a person had lost the right tension and balance in his soul, he had to *dance* to the singer's beat. That was the remedy of this healing art. With it Terpander put down a riot, Empedocles calmed a madman, and Damon cured a young man sick with love. With it people also brought angry, vengeful gods back to their senses. First they drove the frenzy and wildness of the god's passions to the highest pitch, so that a raging god became even madder and a vengeful one drunk with revenge. All the orgiastic cults want to let out a deity's fury all at once and turn it into an orgy, so that afterward it feels freer and calmer and leaves people alone. The root of the Greek word *melos* means something that soothes, not because the thing itself is gentle, but because its after-effect makes people gentle. And not only in cult songs, but also in the everyday songs of the oldest times, people assumed that rhythm had magic power. When drawing water or rowing, for example, the song was an enchantment of the spirits believed to be working there. It made them obedient, unfree, and a tool for human use. Whenever people act, they have a reason to sing, and *every* action depends on the help of spirits. The charm-song and the incantation seem to be the original form of poetry. Even though verse was also used in oracles (the Greeks said the hexameter was invented at Delphi), rhythm was supposed to compel here too. To be told your fortune originally meant, as far as I can tell from the likely origin of the Greek word, to have something decided for you. People believed they could force the future by winning Apollo over to their side. In the oldest view he is far more than a god who simply foresees. Once the formula is spoken, word for word and exactly in rhythm, it binds the future. The formula is Apollo's invention, and as god of rhythms he can also bind the goddesses of fate. Looking at the whole picture: was there anything *more useful* for the old superstitious human being than rhythm? With it you could do almost anything. You could speed up a job by magic. You could force a god to appear, to come near, to listen. You could shape the future to your will. You could discharge your own soul from some excess (fear, mania, pity, revenge), and not only your own soul but the soul of the most evil demon. Without verse you were nothing; through verse you

became almost a god. A feeling like this cannot be completely rooted out. Even now, after thousands of years of fighting this superstition, even the wisest of us sometimes becomes a fool for rhythm, if only in the sense that he feels a thought to be *truer* when it has a metrical form and comes along with a divine *hopsasa*. Isn't it very funny that even the most serious philosophers, however strictly they otherwise insist on certainty, still quote *lines from poets* to give their thoughts strength and believability? And yet a truth is more dangerous when the poet agrees with it than when he contradicts it! As Homer says: "Singers tell many lies!"

85 *The Good and the Beautiful*. — Artists are always *praising*. They do nothing else. They praise all the states and things that have the reputation of letting a person feel good, great, drunk, cheerful, or wise and well. These chosen things and states, whose value for human happiness is considered certain and measured, are the subjects of artists. They are always on the lookout for such things and for dragging them into the territory of art. I mean that they are not themselves the judges of happiness and the happy. But they always crowd close to these judges, with the greatest curiosity and pleasure, so they can make immediate use of their judgments. So, since they have impatience and also the big lungs of heralds and the feet of runners, they are always among the first to praise a *new* good, and they often look like the ones who first call something good and rate it so. But as I said, this is a mistake. They are just quicker and louder than the real judges. And who are the real judges? The rich and the idle.

86 *On the Theater*. — This day again gave me strong and high feelings. If I could have music and art on its evening, I know well which kind I would *not* want: all those that try to intoxicate their audience and push them up to a moment of strong and high feeling. Those are people of the soul's everyday life, who in the evening look less like victors on triumphal chariots than like tired mules that life has whipped a little too often. What would such people know about "higher moods" at all, if there were no intoxicants and idealized whip-strokes! So they have their stimulants, just as they have their wines. But what do I care for their drink and their drunkenness! What does an inspired person need wine

for? He looks instead with a kind of disgust at the means and go-betweens that are meant to produce an effect here without good reason, an imitation of the high tide of the soul. What? You give the mole wings and proud fancies before bedtime, before he crawls into his hole? You send him to the theater and set huge glasses in front of his blind, tired eyes? People whose life is not an "action" but a business sit in front of the stage and watch strange beings for whom life is more than business? "That is proper," you say. "That is entertaining. That is what culture demands!" Well then, I often lack culture, because this sight often makes me sick. Someone who already has enough tragedy and comedy in himself usually prefers to stay away from the theater. Or, by way of exception, the whole event, including the theater, the audience and the poet, becomes for him the real tragic and comic play, so that the piece being performed means little to him. For someone who is a Faust or a Manfred himself, what do the Fausts and Manfreds of the theater matter? And yet it certainly gives him something to think about that such figures are put on stage at all. The *strongest* thoughts and passions are shown to people who are not capable of thinking or feeling them, but only of *intoxication*! And those thoughts and passions are used as a means to it! Theater and music are the Europeans' hashish-smoking and betel-chewing! Oh, who will tell us the whole history of narcotics? It is almost the history of "culture," so-called higher culture!

- ⁸⁷ *On the Vanity of Artists.* — I think artists often do not know what they do best, because they are too vain and have set their sights on something prouder than the small plants that can grow new, strange and beautiful in true perfection on their own ground. They undervalue the best that is in their own garden and vineyard, and their love and insight are not of equal rank. Here is a musician who has more mastery than any other musician in finding the sounds of the realm of suffering, oppressed and tortured souls, and in giving speech even to dumb animals. No one matches him in the colors of late autumn, in the indescribably moving happiness of a last, very last, very brief enjoyment. He knows a sound for the secret, eerie midnights of the soul, when cause and effect seem to have fallen out of step, and something can arise "out of nothing" at any

moment. He draws most happily from the lower depths of human happiness, and from its emptied cup, so to speak, where the bitterest and most disagreeable drops have finally run together with the sweetest, for better and for worse. He knows that tired shuffling of the soul that can no longer leap or fly or even walk. He has the shy look of hidden pain, of understanding without comfort, of saying goodbye without confession. Indeed, as the Orpheus of all secret misery, he is greater than anyone. Through him much has been added to art that until then seemed unspeakable, even unworthy of art, and that could only be chased away with words, never caught by them: many small and microscopic things of the soul. Yes, he is the master of the very small. But he does not want to be! His *character* loves rather the big walls and the bold mural painting! He does not notice that his *spirit* has a different taste and leaning, and most likely prefers to sit quietly in the corners of collapsed houses. There, hidden, even hidden from himself, he paints his true masterpieces, which are all very short, often only one beat long. Only there, and perhaps only there, does he become truly good, great and perfect. But he does not know it! He is too vain to know it.

⁸⁸ *Seriousness About Truth.* — Seriousness about truth! People understand these words in very different ways! The very views, and the same kinds of proof and testing, which a thinker feels in himself as a frivolity, something he has given in to in shame during this or that hour, can give an artist who comes across them and lives with them for a while the feeling that he has now been seized by the deepest seriousness about truth. He may feel it admirable that, though an artist, he shows the most serious desire for the opposite of what seems true. So it is possible that someone, through exactly his display of seriousness, reveals how shallow and contented his mind has been in the realm of knowledge. And is not everything we take seriously our betrayer? It shows where our weights are, and what we have no weights for.

⁸⁹ *Then and Now.* — What good is all our art of artworks if we lose that higher art, the art of festivals! In earlier times all artworks were placed along the great festival road of humanity, as reminders and monuments of high and blessed

moments. Now people want to use artworks to lure the poor, exhausted and sick away from the great road of human suffering, for a single lustful moment. They offer them a little intoxication and madness.

⁹⁰ *Lights and Shadows.* — Books and written notes mean different things to different thinkers. One has gathered into his book the lights that he knew how to steal quickly from the rays of a knowledge that shone on him, and carry home. Another gives only the shadows, the gray and black afterimages of what built itself up in his soul the day before.

⁹¹ *A Warning.* — As is well known, Alfieri lied a great deal when he told his life story to his astonished contemporaries. He lied out of the tyranny he practiced against himself. He showed it, for example, in the way he built his own language and forced himself into being a poet. In the end he had found a strict form of grandeur, into which he pressed his life and his memory. There must have been much torment in that. I would not believe a biography of Plato either, if he had written it himself, any more than Rousseau's, or Dante's *Vita nuova*.

⁹² *Prose and Poetry.* — Note that the great masters of prose have almost always been poets as well, either openly or only in secret, in the "little room." And indeed, you write good prose only in the presence of poetry! Prose is an uninterrupted, polite war with poetry. All its charm consists in constantly dodging poetry and contradicting it. Every abstract idea has to be presented as a prank against poetry, in a mocking voice. Every dryness and coolness should drive the lovely goddess into a lovely despair. There are often approaches and reconciliations for a moment, and then a sudden jump back and a laugh. Often the curtain is pulled up and harsh light let in, just when the goddess is enjoying her twilight and muted colors. Often the word is taken out of her mouth and sung to a tune, while she holds her delicate hands over her delicate little ears. So there are a thousand pleasures in this war, with the defeats counted in too, and the unpoetic people, the so-called prose people, know nothing about them. That is why they write and speak only bad prose! War is the father of all good things,

and war is the father of good prose too! In this century there were four very strange and truly poetic people who reached the mastery of prose, which the century is otherwise not made for, for lack of poetry, as I have hinted. Leaving aside Goethe, whom the century that produced him fairly claims, I consider only Giacomo Leopardi, Prosper Mérimée, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Walter Savage Landor, the author of the *Imaginary Conversations*, worthy of being called masters of prose.

⁹³ *But Why Do You Write?* — A.: I do not belong to those who think with a wet pen in hand, and still less to those who give themselves over to their passions in front of an open inkwell, sitting in their chair and staring at the paper. I am annoyed by all writing, or ashamed of it. Writing is a necessity for me. Even to speak of it in a figure of speech disgusts me. B.: Then why do you write? A.: Yes, my friend, between us: so far I have found no other way to get rid of my thoughts. B.: And why do you want to get rid of them? A.: Why do I want to? Do I want to? I have to. — B.: Enough! Enough!

⁹⁴ *Growth After Death.* — The small daring remarks about moral matters that Fontenelle tossed out in his immortal *Dialogues of the Dead* were taken in his day as paradoxes, and as the games of a rather risky wit. Even the highest judges of taste and intellect saw nothing more in them, and perhaps Fontenelle himself did not either. Now something unbelievable happens: these thoughts become truths! Science proves them! The game turns into seriousness! And we read those dialogues with a different feeling from the one Voltaire and Helvétius had, and we lift their author, without meaning to, into a different and much higher rank of minds than they did. Rightly? Wrongly?

⁹⁵ *Chamfort.* — I can only explain it this way: that such an expert on people and on the crowd as Chamfort sided with the crowd, instead of standing aside in philosophical renunciation and resistance. In him an instinct was stronger than his wisdom, and it had never been satisfied. It was hatred of all noble birth. Perhaps it was the old and quite understandable hatred of his mother, which his love for his mother made sacred in him. It was an instinct for revenge from

his boyhood, waiting for the hour to avenge his mother. Then life and his talent, and, ah! perhaps most of all the father's blood in his veins, led him to join this nobility and stand on equal footing with it, for many, many years. In the end, however, he could no longer bear the sight of himself, the sight of the "old man" under the old regime. He fell into a violent passion for penance, and in it he put on the clothes of the common people, as his kind of hair shirt. His bad conscience was his failure to take revenge. Suppose Chamfort had stayed one degree more a philosopher back then. The Revolution would not have gotten its tragic wit and its sharpest sting. It would be remembered as a much stupider event, and it would not have seduced so many minds. But Chamfort's hatred and revenge educated a whole generation, and the most distinguished people went through this school. Consider that Mirabeau looked up to Chamfort as to his higher and older self, from whom he expected and accepted impulses, warnings and verdicts. Mirabeau, as a person, belongs to a completely different rank of greatness than even the leading statesmen of yesterday and today. It is strange that, in spite of such a friend and advocate (we have Mirabeau's letters to Chamfort), this wittiest of all moralists stayed foreign to the French, just as Stendhal did, who perhaps had the most thoughtful eyes and ears of all the French of his century. Was it that Stendhal had too much of the German and the Englishman in him to be bearable to Parisians? Chamfort, on the other hand, was a man rich in the depths and background of the soul: gloomy, suffering, glowing. He was a thinker who found laughter necessary as a cure for life, and who nearly gave himself up for lost on every day he had not laughed. He looks more like an Italian, a blood relative of Dante and Leopardi, than like a Frenchman. We know Chamfort's last words: "Ah! My friend," he said to Sieyès, "I am finally leaving this world, where the heart must either break or harden —" Those are certainly not the words of a dying Frenchman.

- 96 *Two Speakers.* — Of these two speakers, one reaches the full reason of his cause only when he gives himself up to passion. Only passion pumps enough blood and heat into his brain to force his high intellect out into the open. The other may try the same thing here and there: with the help of passion he presents his

cause in full, forceful, sweeping tones. But usually with poor results. Soon he is speaking in the dark and in confusion. He exaggerates, leaves things out, and makes the listener distrust the reason behind his cause. He feels this distrust himself, and from it come sudden jumps into the coldest and most off-putting tones, which make the listener doubt whether his passion was genuine at all. In him passion always floods the mind, perhaps because it is stronger than in the first. But he is at the height of his power when he resists the storm of feeling rushing at him, and, so to speak, mocks it. Only then does his mind fully step out of its hiding place: a logical, mocking, playful, and yet terrible mind.

⁹⁷ *On the Talkativeness of Writers.*

There is a talkativeness of anger, frequent in Luther and also in Schopenhauer. There is talkativeness that comes from having too large a supply of conceptual formulas, as in Kant. There is talkativeness from enjoying endless new turns of the same matter, which you find in Montaigne. There is the talkativeness of spiteful natures: anyone who reads writings from this period will remember two writers here. There is talkativeness from delight in fine words and linguistic forms, not rare in Goethe's prose. And there is talkativeness from an inner pleasure in the noise and confusion of feelings, for example in Carlyle.

⁹⁸ *In Praise of Shakespeare.* — The best thing I can say in praise of Shakespeare the man is this: he believed in Brutus, and he did not throw a speck of doubt on that kind of virtue! He dedicated his best tragedy to Brutus, though it still goes by a false name. He dedicated it to Brutus and to the most terrible sum of high morality. What matters here is the independence of the soul! No sacrifice can be too big for it. You must be able to sacrifice even your dearest friend to it, even if he is the most splendid person, the pride of the world, a genius without equal, provided that you love freedom as the freedom of great souls, and that freedom is put at risk by him. This is how Shakespeare must have felt. The height to which he raises Caesar is the highest honor he could give Brutus. Only that way does he make Brutus's inner problem enormous, and the

strength of soul that could cut through this knot too! And was it really political freedom that made this poet sympathize with Brutus, and made him, in a way, Brutus's accomplice?

Or was political freedom only a symbol for something that cannot be put into words? Are we perhaps facing some dark event and adventure from the poet's own soul, which stayed unknown, and about which he would speak only in signs? What is all of Hamlet's melancholy next to the melancholy of Brutus! Perhaps Shakespeare knew this too, the way he knew the other one, from experience! Perhaps he too had his dark hour and his evil angel, like Brutus! But whatever resemblances and hidden connections there were of this kind, Shakespeare threw himself to the ground before the whole figure and virtue of Brutus, and felt unworthy and far away. He wrote the proof of this into his tragedy. Twice in it he brings on a poet, and twice he pours such impatient, final contempt on him that it sounds like a cry, the cry of self-contempt. Brutus himself loses patience when the poet appears: conceited, pompous, pushy, the way poets tend to be, a being who seems to be bursting with possibilities of greatness, including moral greatness, and yet who in the philosophy of deeds and life rarely gets as far as ordinary decency. "If he knows the time, I know his whims. Away with the bell-ringing clown!" cries Brutus. Translate this back into the soul of the poet who wrote it.

⁹⁹ *The Followers of Schopenhauer.* — When cultured peoples meet barbarians, one can see the same pattern every time. The lower culture first takes on the vices, weaknesses and excesses of the higher culture. It feels drawn to them, and finally, through the vices and weaknesses it has picked up, lets some of the valuable strength of the higher culture flow into itself. You can see this close at hand too, without traveling to barbarian peoples, though it is a little more refined and spiritual, and harder to grasp. What, then, do Schopenhauer's followers in Germany first take from their master? Compared with his superior culture, they must feel barbaric enough to be first fascinated and seduced by him in a barbaric way. Is it his hard sense of facts and his good will toward clarity and reason, which so often makes him seem so English and so little German? Or the

strength of his intellectual conscience, which bore a lifelong contradiction between being and willing, and forced him to contradict himself constantly, almost at every point, in his writings? Or his cleanliness in matters of the church and the Christian God? In this he was cleaner than any German philosopher before him, so that he lived and died “as a Voltairean.” Or his immortal teachings about the intellectual nature of perception, the a priori character of the law of causality, the tool-like nature of the intellect and the unfreedom of the will? No, none of this enchants people, and it is not felt as enchanting. What people feel as enchanting are Schopenhauer’s mystical embarrassments and evasions, in the places where the fact-based thinker let himself be led astray and ruined by the vain urge to be the solver of the world’s riddle. There is the unprovable doctrine of *one will* (“all causes are only occasional causes of the appearance of the will at this time and in this place,” “the will to live is present in every being, even the smallest, wholly and undivided, as completely as in all who have ever been, are, or will be, taken together”). There is the *denial of the individual* (“all lions are at bottom only one lion,” “the multitude of individuals is an illusion,” and development too is only an appearance; he calls Lamarck’s idea “a brilliant, absurd error”). There is the raptures about *genius* (“in aesthetic contemplation the individual is no longer an individual, but a pure, willless, painless, timeless subject of knowledge,” “the subject, by completely dissolving into the object it contemplates, has itself become that object”). There is the nonsense about *pity*, and the breaking-through of the *principium individuationis* that pity supposedly makes possible, as the source of all morality. Add assertions such as “dying is really the purpose of existence,” and “one cannot flatly deny, a priori, that a magical effect might also come from someone who has already died.” These and similar *excesses* and *vices* of the philosopher are always the first to be taken up and turned into matters of faith. Vices and excesses are always the easiest to copy, and they do not require long practice. But let us speak of the most famous of the living Schopenhauerians, Richard Wagner. He has had the same experience as many artists: he misread the meaning of the figures he created, and failed to recognize the unspoken philosophy of his own most personal art. Richard Wagner let

himself be misled by Hegel until the middle of his life. He did the same thing again when he later read Schopenhauer's doctrine out of his figures, and began to describe himself with "will," "genius," and "pity." Still, it will remain true that nothing goes so directly against the spirit of Schopenhauer as what is truly Wagnerian in Wagner's heroes: I mean the innocence of the highest self-interest, the faith in great passion as good in itself, in a word, the Siegfried-like quality in the faces of his heroes. "All this smells more of Spinoza than of me," Schopenhauer might say. So Wagner had good reasons to look for other philosophers than Schopenhauer! But the enchantment he fell under with this thinker has made him blind not only to all other philosophers, but even to science itself. More and more his whole art wants to present itself as a companion piece and supplement to Schopenhauer's philosophy, and more and more openly it gives up the higher ambition of becoming a companion piece and supplement to human knowledge and science. And it is not only the mysterious display of this philosophy that tempts him. It would have tempted a Cagliostro too! The individual gestures and feelings of philosophers were always seducers as well! Schopenhauerian, for example, is Wagner's zeal against the corruption of the German language. And if one were to approve of him imitating this, it must still not be kept quiet that Wagner's own style suffers not a little from all the sores and swellings whose sight made Schopenhauer so furious. And that, as regards German-writing Wagnerians, Wagnerism is beginning to prove as dangerous as any Hegelianism ever did. Schopenhauerian is Wagner's hatred of the Jews, whom he cannot even do justice to in their greatest achievement: after all, the Jews invented Christianity! Schopenhauerian is Wagner's attempt to understand Christianity as a grain of Buddhism blown in on the wind, and, for Europe, to prepare a Buddhist age, with temporary moves toward Catholic-Christian formulas and feelings. Schopenhauerian is Wagner's sermon in favor of mercy toward animals. Schopenhauer's predecessor in this was, as is well known, Voltaire, who perhaps already knew, like his successors, how to dress up his hatred of certain things and people as mercy toward animals. At any rate, Wagner's hatred of science, which speaks from his sermon, is certainly not inspired by a spirit of gentleness and goodness, nor, as

goes without saying, by the spirit in general. — In the end, little depends on an artist's philosophy, as long as it is only an afterthought and does no harm to his art itself. One cannot be careful enough not to become angry at an artist over some occasional masquerade, perhaps very unhappy and presumptuous. Let us not forget that our dear artists, all of them, are and must be a little like actors, and that without acting they would hardly last long. Let us stay faithful to Wagner in what is *true* and original in him, and above all by being faithful, we his followers, to what is true and original in ourselves. Let us allow him his intellectual whims and cramps. Rather, let us consider fairly what strange nourishment and needs an art like his *must* have in order to live and grow! It does not matter that he is so often wrong as a thinker. Justice and patience are not *his* business. It is enough that his life is right in its own eyes and stays right: this life that calls to each of us, "Be a man, and do not follow me, but yourself! Yourself!" Our life, too, should be right in our own eyes! We too should grow and bloom out of ourselves, free and fearless, in innocent selfhood! And so when I think about such a man, these sentences still ring in my ears today as they did before: that passion is better than stoicism and hypocrisy; that honesty, even in evil, is better than losing oneself to the morality of custom; that a free person can be both good and evil, but an unfree person is a disgrace to nature and has no share in any heavenly or earthly comfort; and finally that *everyone who wants to become free must become free through himself*, and that freedom does not fall into anyone's lap as a miraculous gift. (Richard Wagner in Bayreuth, p. 94.)

- ¹⁰⁰ *Learning to Pay Homage.* — People have to learn to pay homage just as they learn to despise. Anyone who walks new paths and has led many others onto them discovers, with astonishment, how clumsy and poor these many are in showing their gratitude, and how rarely gratitude can express itself at all. It is as if something always gets stuck in their throat when they want to speak, so that they only clear their throat, and in clearing it fall silent again. The way a thinker learns about the effect of his thoughts, and their power to reshape and shake people, is almost comic. Sometimes it looks as if the people affected feel

insulted at bottom, and know only how to show their independence, which they fear is threatened, through all kinds of bad manners. Whole generations are needed just to invent a polite convention of thanks. And only very late does the moment come when some spirit and genius has entered gratitude itself. Then there is usually someone who is the great recipient of thanks, not only for what he himself has done that is good, but mostly for what his predecessors gradually piled up as a treasure of the highest and best.

101 *Voltaire.* — Wherever there was a court, he set the rule for speaking well, and with it the rule of style for everyone who wrote. But court language is the language of the courtier, *who has no profession*, and who forbids himself, even in conversation about scientific matters, every convenient technical term, because it smells of a trade. So in countries with a court culture, technical language and everything that betrays the specialist counts as a *flaw in style*. Now that all courts have become caricatures of what they once were, people are surprised to find that even Voltaire was unbearably prim and fussy on this point, for example in his judgments of stylists such as Fontenelle and Montesquieu. We have all been freed from courtly taste, while Voltaire was its *finisher*!

102 *A Word for the Philologists.* — There are books so valuable and royal that whole generations of scholars are well spent if their work keeps these books pure and understandable. Philology exists to keep this belief alive. It assumes that there is no shortage of those rare people (though you do not see them) who really know how to use such valuable books. They will probably be the ones who write such books themselves, or could. I mean that philology assumes a noble faith: that for the sake of a few, who will always “come” and are never here, a very large amount of tedious, even unclean work must first be done. It is all work *in usum Delphinorum*.

103 *On German Music.* — German music is more European than any other kind of music, for a simple reason: only in German music has the change Europe went through in the Revolution found expression. Only German musicians know how to express moving masses of people, that huge, artificial noise that does

not even have to be very loud. Italian opera, for example, knows choruses of servants or soldiers, but no “people.” There is more to it. You can hear in all German music a deep middle-class jealousy of the nobility, especially of *esprit* and *élégance*, the marks of a courtly, chivalric, old society that is sure of itself. This is not music like that of Goethe’s singer at the gate, which pleases “in the hall” too, and in fact pleases the king. There one does not hear, “The knights looked bravely on, and the lovely ladies sat in their laps.” Even grace appears in German music only with a twinge of guilt. Only with charm, the country sister of grace, does the German begin to feel fully moral. From there he rises more and more, up to his enthusiastic, learned, often grumpy “sublimity,” the sublimity of Beethoven. If you want to imagine the person who belongs to *this* music, picture Beethoven standing next to Goethe, as perhaps at that meeting in Teplitz. He looks like half-barbarism beside culture, the common people beside the nobility, the good-natured man beside the good and even more than “good” man, the fantast beside the artist, the one who needs comfort beside the one who has been comforted, the exaggerator and suspicious man beside the reasonable one, the hunter of whims and the self-tormentor, the wildly ecstatic, the blessedly unhappy, the candidly immoderate, the presumptuous and clumsy. All in all, he is the “untamed man.” That is how Goethe himself felt and described him. Goethe was the exceptional German, and a music worthy of him has not yet been found! Finally, consider whether the growing contempt for melody among Germans, and the stunting of their sense for it, should not be understood as a democratic bad manner, an aftereffect of the Revolution. Melody takes such open pleasure in lawfulness and such dislike of anything still forming, unshaped or arbitrary that it sounds like a voice from the *old* order of European things, and like a lure that pulls people back toward it.

¹⁰⁴ *On the Sound of the German Language.* — We know where the German that has been the standard written language for a few centuries comes from. The Germans, with their reverence for everything that came from the *court*, deliberately took the government offices as their model for everything they had to *write*: especially letters, documents, wills and so on. To write in office style was

to write like the court and the government. That was something refined, set against the German of whatever town you happened to live in. Gradually people drew the conclusion that they should also speak the way they wrote. So they became even more refined, in word forms, in the choice of words and phrases, and finally in sound. When people spoke, they affected a courtly sound, and the affectation eventually became natural. Perhaps something very similar has happened nowhere else: the written style came to dominate speech, and the pretension and showing-off of a whole people became the basis of a common language that was no longer dialect. I believe the sound of German in the Middle Ages, and especially after them, was deeply rural and common. In the last few centuries it has become somewhat more polished, mainly because people found they had to copy so many French, Italian and Spanish sounds. This came especially from the German and Austrian nobility, who could not be satisfied with their mother tongue. But for Montaigne, or even Racine, German must have sounded unbearably vulgar despite all this practice. Even now, in the mouths of travelers in the middle of an Italian crowd, it still sounds very raw, backwoodsy and hoarse, as if it came from smoky rooms and rude regions. Now I notice that among the former admirers of the office style, a similar drive for a noble sound is spreading again. Germans are beginning to submit to a very odd "magic of sound," which could in the long run become a real danger to the German language. You will not find more hideous sounds anywhere in Europe. Something mocking, cold, indifferent and careless in the voice: this now sounds "refined" to Germans. I hear the good will toward this refinement in the voices of young civil servants, teachers, women and merchants. Even little girls are already copying this officer's German. The officer, and specifically the Prussian officer, is the inventor of these sounds. He is the same officer who, as a soldier and a professional, has that admirable tact of modesty from which all Germans should learn, the German professors and musicians included! But as soon as he speaks and moves, he is the most immodest and tasteless figure in old Europe, unaware of it, without any doubt! And the good Germans are unaware of it too. They marvel at him as a man of the first and most distinguished society, and gladly let him set the tone for them. And he does set it! The first to copy

and coarsen his tone are the sergeants and corporals. Pay attention to the shouted commands that now fill the German towns, since they drill outside all the gates. What arrogance, what raging sense of authority, what scornful coldness rings out of that bellowing! Are Germans really a musical people? What is certain is that Germans are now becoming militarized in the sound of their language. It is likely that once they are trained to speak like soldiers, they will in the end write like soldiers too. The habit of certain sounds reaches deep into character. Soon you have the words and phrases, and finally the thoughts, that fit exactly this sound! Perhaps people already write in the officer's manner. Perhaps I read too little of what is being written in Germany now. But one thing I know all the more surely: the public German statements that reach even foreign countries are not inspired by German music. They are inspired by that new sound of a tasteless presumption. Almost every speech by the first German statesman, even when he speaks through his imperial mouthpiece, has an accent that a foreigner's ear rejects with disgust. But the Germans put up with it. They put up with themselves.

- 105 *The Germans as Artists.* — When a German really gets into a passion (and not just, as usual, into the good will to feel passion!), he behaves as he has to within it, and does not think any more about how he is behaving. The truth, however, is that in passion he behaves very awkwardly and ugly, as if he had no tact or melody. So the onlookers have their pain or their emotion from it, and nothing more. The exception is when he lifts himself into the sublime and the rapturous, which some passions are capable of. Then even the German becomes *beautiful*! The sense of the height at which beauty first pours its spell even over Germans drives German artists upward, into excess and overreach of passion. So there is a real, deep longing to get past ugliness and clumsiness, or at least to look beyond them toward a better, lighter, more southern, sunny world. Their spasms are often just signs that they would like to *dance*. These poor bears, in whom hidden nymphs and forest gods carry on, and sometimes even higher deities!

106 *Music as Advocate.* — “I thirst for a master of the art of sound,” an innovator said to his disciple. “He should learn my thoughts from me and speak them in his language. Then I would reach people’s ears and hearts better. With tones you can lead people into any error and any truth. Who could *refute* a tone?” “So you would like to be considered irrefutable?” said his disciple. The innovator answered: “I want the seed to become a tree. For a teaching to become a tree, it must be believed for a good while. For it to be believed, it must be considered irrefutable. The tree needs storms, doubts, worms and malice, so that it reveals the kind and strength of its seed. Let it break if it is not strong enough! But a seed is only ever destroyed, never refuted!” When he had said this, his disciple cried out eagerly: “But I believe in your cause, and I think it is so strong that I will say everything, absolutely everything, that I still have on my heart against it.” The innovator laughed to himself and wagged a finger at him. “This kind of discipleship is the best,” he said, “but it is dangerous, and not every kind of teaching can bear it.”

107 *Our Last Thanks to Art.* — If we had not approved of the arts, and invented this kind of cult of the untrue, then the insight into universal untruth and deceit that science now gives us, the insight that delusion and error are a condition of life that knows and feels, would be unbearable. *Honesty* would bring disgust and suicide in its wake. As it is, our honesty has a counterforce that helps us avoid such consequences: art, as the *good will toward appearance*. We do not always keep our eyes from rounding things off, from finishing the poem. Then it is no longer the endless imperfection we carry across the river of becoming. Then we think we are carrying a *goddess*, and we are proud and childlike in this service. As an aesthetic phenomenon, existence is still *bearable* to us. Through art we have been given eyes, hands and above all a good conscience, to be able to make such a phenomenon out of ourselves. At times we have to rest from ourselves, by looking at ourselves from above and below and, from an artistic distance, laughing or weeping at ourselves. We must discover the *hero* and also the *fool* hidden in our passion for knowledge. We must now and then be glad of our folly, so that we can remain glad of our wisdom! And

precisely because at bottom we are heavy, serious people, more weights than people, nothing does us as much good as the *jester's cap*. We need it in front of ourselves. We need all high-spirited, floating, dancing, mocking, childlike and blessed art, so as not to lose that *freedom above things* which our ideal demands of us. It would be a *relapse* for us to fall completely into morality with our touchy honesty, and, because of the overly strict demands we make on ourselves here, to turn into moral monsters and scarecrows. We should be able to stand above morality too: not just stand there, with the anxious stiffness of someone who is afraid of slipping and falling every moment, but float above it and play! How could we manage that without art, and without the fool? And as long as you are still ashamed of yourselves in any way, you do not yet belong to us!

Book III



108 *New Struggles.* — For centuries after Buddha died, people still pointed to his shadow in a cave, a huge and frightening shadow. God is dead. But the way people are, there may be caves for thousands of years yet in which his shadow is shown. And we, we must still defeat his shadow too!

109 *Let Us Be Careful!* — Let us be careful not to think that the world is a living being. Where would it spread to? What would it feed on? How could it grow and multiply? We have a rough idea of what the organic is. Should we take the extremely derived, late, rare and accidental things we see only on the surface of the earth, and make them into the essential, general and eternal, as those do who call the whole universe an organism? That disgusts me. Let us also be careful about believing that the universe is a machine. It is certainly not built for one goal. Calling it a “machine” honors it far too much. Let us be careful about assuming that something as full of form as the circular motions of our neighboring stars happens everywhere and always. Even a glance at the Milky Way raises doubts about whether there are not much rougher and more contradictory motions there, stars with endless straight-line paths and the like. The star order we live in is an exception. This order, and the fairly long life it makes possible, in turn made possible the exception of exceptions: the formation of living things. The overall character of the world, on the other hand, is chaos for all eternity. I do not mean chaos in the sense of a lack of necessity, but a lack of

order, structure, form, beauty, wisdom, and whatever else our human words for these things are. Judged by our reason, the failed throws are by far the rule, and the exceptions are not some secret goal. The whole game keeps repeating its one manner forever, a manner that must never be called a melody. Finally, even the phrase “failed throw” is already a human way of seeing things, and it carries a reproach. But how could we blame or praise the whole! Let us be careful about saying that it has heartlessness or unreason, or their opposites. It is not perfect, beautiful or noble, and it does not want to become any of these. It does not strive at all to imitate human beings! None of our aesthetic or moral judgments touches it! It also has no instinct for self-preservation, and no drives at all. It knows no laws either. Let us be careful about saying that there are laws in nature. There are only necessities. There is no one who commands, no one who obeys, no one who breaks the rule. If you know there are no purposes, then you also know there is no chance, because the word “chance” only means something beside a world of purposes. Let us be careful about saying that death is the opposite of life. What is alive is only a kind of what is dead, and a very rare kind. Let us be careful about thinking that the world creates something new forever. There are no substances that last forever. Matter is just as much a mistake as the god of the Eleatics. But when will we finally be finished with our caution and our protection? When will all these shadows of God stop darkening us? When will we have fully stripped nature of its divinity? When will we be allowed to begin to make ourselves *natural* again, with the pure, newly found, newly redeemed nature!

- 110 *Where Knowledge Came From.* — For immense stretches of time the intellect produced nothing but errors. Some of these turned out to be useful and to help the species survive. Whoever stumbled on them, or inherited them, fought his battle for himself and his children with better luck. Mistaken beliefs of this kind, passed down ever further until they became almost the basic stock of the human species, are for example these: that there are lasting things, that there are equal things, that there are things, substances and bodies, that a thing is what it looks like, that our willing is free, that what is good for me is also good in itself.

Very late did people appear who denied or doubted such claims. Very late did truth appear, as the weakest form of knowledge. It seemed that people could not live with it, because our bodies were built for its opposite. All their higher functions, the perceptions of the senses and every kind of feeling, worked with those ancient, built-in basic errors. More than that, those claims became the very standards within knowledge for measuring “true” and “untrue,” right into the most remote areas of pure logic. So the *strength* of knowledge lies not in how true it is, but in its age, how deeply it is built in, and its character as a condition of life. Where life and knowing seemed to come into conflict, there was never any serious fight. Denial and doubt were then taken for madness. Those exceptional thinkers, like the Eleatics, who nevertheless set up and held on to the opposites of the natural errors, believed it possible to *live* this opposite too. They invented the sage, a person of unchangeability, impersonality, and a universal view, as one and all at once, with a special ability for that reversed knowledge. They believed their knowledge was at the same time the principle of life. But to be able to claim all this, they had to *fool themselves* about their own condition. They had to credit themselves with impersonality and lasting without change, misjudge the nature of the knower, deny the force of drives within knowing, and in general understand reason as a completely free activity that arose out of itself. They closed their eyes to the fact that they too had reached their claims by contradicting what was accepted, or from a wish for rest, for sole possession, or for power. The finer growth of honesty and skepticism finally made these people impossible too. Their lives and judgments also turned out to depend on the ancient drives and basic errors of all feeling existence. That finer honesty and skepticism began wherever two opposite claims seemed *usable* for life, because both fit with the basic errors. There people could argue about how much or how little they were *useful* to life. It also began where new claims showed themselves to be not useful to life, but at least not harmful: as expressions of a play drive of the intellect, innocent and happy like all play. Gradually the human brain filled up with such judgments and convictions, and in this tangle there arose fermentation, struggle and a hunger for power. Not only usefulness and pleasure, but every kind of drive took sides in the struggle over

“truths.” The intellectual struggle became an occupation, a stimulus, a calling, a duty, a point of honor. Knowing and the striving for truth finally fit themselves in among the other needs as one more need. From then on, not only belief and conviction, but also testing, denial, distrust and contradiction were a *power*. All the “evil” instincts were put under knowledge and placed in its service, and they received the shine of the allowed, the respected, the useful, and finally the eye and innocence of the *good*. So knowledge became a piece of life itself, and as life it became a power that kept growing, until at last knowledge and those ancient basic errors collided, both as life, both as power, both in the same person. The thinker:

That is now the being in whom the drive to truth and those life-preserving errors fight their first battle, now that the drive to truth too has proved itself a life-preserving power. Compared with the importance of this struggle, everything else is unimportant. The last question about the conditions of life is asked here, and the first attempt is made to answer it by experiment. How far can truth take being built into us? That is the question, and that is the experiment.

- 111 *Where Logic Came From.* — Where did logic in the human head come from? Surely from the illogical, whose domain must have been enormous at the start. But countless beings that drew conclusions differently from the way we do now died out. It could still have been truer! For example, anyone who did not find the “same” often enough, with regard to food or the animals that threatened him, and who therefore grouped things too slowly and was too careful about grouping, had a smaller chance of surviving than the one who guessed sameness at once in anything similar. But the strong tendency to treat the similar as the same, an illogical tendency, since in itself nothing is the same, first created the whole basis of logic. In the same way, for the concept of substance to arise, which logic cannot do without, though nothing real strictly corresponds to it, the changing in things must for a long time not have been seen or felt. Beings that did not see precisely had an advantage over those that saw everything “in flux.” In itself, any high degree of caution in drawing conclusions, any skeptical

tendency, is already a great danger to life. No living beings would have survived if the opposite tendency, to affirm rather than hold back judgment, to err and invent rather than wait, to agree rather than deny, to judge rather than be fair, had not been bred to an extraordinary degree. The course of logical thoughts and conclusions in our brains today matches a process and a struggle of drives, each of which is in itself very illogical and unjust. We usually experience only the result of the struggle. This ancient mechanism runs in us so quickly and so hidden.

- 112 *Cause and Effect.* — We call it “explanation.” But what sets us apart from earlier stages of knowledge and science is “description.” We describe better. We explain no better than all earlier people did. We have uncovered a long series of events where the naive person and the researcher of older cultures saw only two things, “cause” and “effect,” as the saying went. We have improved the picture of becoming, but we have not gone beyond the picture, or behind it. In every case the series of “causes” stands much more completely before us. We conclude: this and that must happen first, so that the other follows. But with that we have understood nothing. Quality, for example in every chemical change, still appears as a “miracle,” and so does every movement. No one has “explained” the impact. How could we explain anything? We work with nothing but things that do not exist: lines, surfaces, bodies, atoms, divisible times, divisible spaces. How can explanation even be possible when we first turn everything into a *picture*, our picture? It is enough to regard science as the most faithful possible humanizing of things. We keep learning to describe ourselves more and more exactly as we describe things and their sequence. Cause and effect: such a pair probably never exists. In truth a continuum stands before us, from which we isolate a few pieces. In the same way we only ever perceive a movement as separate points, so we do not really see it, we infer it. The suddenness with which many effects stand out misleads us. But it is sudden only for us. In that second of suddenness there is an endless number of processes that escape us.

An intellect that saw cause and effect as a continuum, not as we do, as an arbitrary splitting-up and chopping-up, that saw the flow of what happens, would throw out the concept of cause and effect and deny all conditionality.

- 113 *On the Doctrine of Poisons.* — So much has to come together for scientific thinking to arise. All these necessary powers had to be invented, practiced and cultivated one at a time! On their own, however, they very often had an effect quite different from the one they have now, when within scientific thinking they limit and discipline one another. They worked like poisons. Take the doubting drive, the denying drive, the waiting drive, the collecting drive, the breaking-down drive. Many hecatombs of people were sacrificed before these drives learned to understand their living side by side, and to feel themselves as functions of one organizing power within a single person! And how far we still are from artistic powers and practical life wisdom joining scientific thinking, from a higher organic system forming, in relation to which the scholar, the doctor, the artist and the lawgiver, as we know them now, would have to look like poor antiques!
- 114 *The Reach of the Moral.* — When we build a new picture of what we see, we do it at once with the help of all the old experiences we have had, *in proportion to* our degree of honesty and justice. There are no experiences at all except moral ones, not even in the area of sense perception.
- 115 *The Four Errors.* — People have been educated by their errors. First, they always saw themselves only incompletely. Second, they gave themselves made-up qualities. Third, they felt they had a false rank compared with animals and nature. Fourth, they kept inventing new lists of goods and, for a time, took them as eternal and unconditional, so that now this human drive or condition and now that one stood at the top, and as a result of this valuation it became refined. If you subtract the effect of these four errors, you have also subtracted humanity, human kindness and “human dignity.”

116 *The Herd Instinct.* — Wherever we find a morality, we find an assessment and a ranking of human drives and actions. These assessments and rankings always express the needs of a community and a herd. What first benefits the herd, and then second and third, is also the highest measure for the value of every individual. Through morality the individual is taught to be a function of the herd, and to credit himself with value only as a function. Since the conditions for keeping one community alive have been very different from those for keeping another alive, there have been very different moralities. And with regard to the major changes that herds, communities, states and societies still face, one can predict that there will still be very different moralities. Morality is the herd instinct in the individual.

117 *The Herd's Bad Conscience.* — In the longest and most distant times of humanity there was a quite different bad conscience from the one we have today. Today we feel responsible only for what we want and do, and we take our pride in ourselves. All our legal teachers start from this feeling of self and pleasure in the individual, as if the source of right had always flowed from here. But for most of human history nothing was more dreadful than feeling alone. Being alone, feeling as an individual, neither obeying nor ruling, meaning something as a single person: that was then not a pleasure but a punishment. People were sentenced “to be an individual.” Freedom of thought counted as discomfort itself. While we experience rules and fitting in as constraint and loss, people in earlier times experienced selfishness as a painful thing, a real distress. To be oneself, to measure and weigh oneself by one's own standard: that went against taste back then. Anyone inclined to it would have been seen as mad, because every misery and every fear was linked to being alone. Then “free will” had the bad conscience as its closest neighbor. The less freely a person acted, and the more the herd instinct rather than his personal sense spoke through the action, the more moral he considered himself. Everything that harmed the herd, whether or not the individual had wanted it, then gave the individual a bad conscience, and his neighbor too, and even the whole herd! It is in this that we have most of all unlearned.

- 118 *Goodwill.* — Is it virtuous when one cell turns itself into the function of a stronger cell? It has to. And is it wicked when the stronger one absorbs the other? It has to do that too. It is necessary for it, since it strives for an excess of replacement and wants to renew itself. So in goodwill we must distinguish between the drive to take possession and the drive to submit, depending on whether the stronger or the weaker person feels goodwill. In the stronger one, who wants to shape something into his function, joy and desire come together. In the weaker one, who wants to become a function, joy and the wish to be wanted come together. Pity is mainly the first: a pleasant stirring of the drive to take possession, at the sight of the weaker one. In this we must also remember that “strong” and “weak” are relative terms.
- 119 *No Altruism!* — In many people I see a surplus of strength and a joy in wanting to be a function. They push toward it and have the keenest sense for all the places where exactly they can be useful. Among them are those women who turn themselves into a function of a man, in the area where he is weakly developed, and in this way become his purse, or his politics, or his social life. Such beings preserve themselves best when they fit into someone else’s body. If they do not succeed, they become annoyed, irritated, and they eat themselves up.
- 120 *Health of the Soul.* — The popular medical formula for morality, which comes from Ariston of Chios, “virtue is the health of the soul,” would at least have to be changed to be useful: “your virtue is the health of your soul.” There is no health in general, and every attempt to define something that way has failed miserably. To decide what health means, even for your body, you need to know your goal, your horizon, your strengths, your impulses, your mistakes, and above all the ideals and phantasms of your soul. So there are countless healths of the body. And the more we let the single and unique person raise its head again, the more we unlearn the dogma of the “equality of people,” the more our doctors must lose the idea of a normal health, along with a normal diet and a normal course of illness. Only then would it be the right time to think about the health and sickness of the *soul*, and to put each person’s own particular virtue into its health. That health might look, in one person, like the opposite

of health in another. Finally, the big question would remain open: could we *do without* sickness, even for developing our virtue? And does our thirst for knowledge, and for knowing ourselves, not need the sick soul just as much as the healthy one? In short, is the sole will to health not a prejudice, a cowardice, and perhaps a piece of the most refined barbarism and backwardness?

¹²¹ *Life Is Not an Argument.* — We have made ourselves a world we can live in, by accepting bodies, lines, surfaces, causes and effects, movement and rest, shape and content. Without these articles of faith, no one could bear to live now! But that does not make them proven. Life is not an argument. Under the conditions of life, error might be exactly what it needs.

¹²² *Moral Doubt in Christianity.* — Christianity also made a major contribution to enlightenment. It taught moral doubt in a very forceful and effective way: accusingly, bitterly, but with tireless patience and subtlety. It destroyed in each person the belief in his own “virtues.” It made the great virtuous figures disappear from the earth for good, and antiquity had plenty of them. These were the popular people who walked around, believing in their own perfection, with the dignity of a hero of the bullfight. When we now read the moral books of the ancients, Seneca’s and Epictetus’s for example, we have been educated in this Christian school of doubt. We feel an amusing superiority, and we are full of secret insights and overviews. It feels as if a child were talking to an old man, or a young, lovely enthusiast were talking to La Rochefoucauld. We understand what virtue is better! But in the end we have used this same doubt on all *religious* states and events too, such as sin, repentance, grace and holiness. We have let the worm dig so thoroughly that now we have the same feeling of subtle superiority and insight when we read every Christian book. We understand religious feelings better too!

And it is time to understand them well and describe them well, because the devout of the old faith are dying out as well. At least let us save their image and their type for knowledge!

123 *Knowledge Is More Than a Means.* — Even without this new passion, I mean the passion for knowledge, science would still be promoted. It has grown and become great without it up to now. The good faith in science, the favorable prejudice that now rules our states (in earlier times it was even the church), rests at bottom on the fact that this unconditional urge has shown itself so rarely in science, and that science is treated as a *state* and an “ethos,” not as a passion. Indeed, the pleasure of curiosity is often enough. A habit of it is enough, with the hidden aim of honor and bread. For many people it is enough that they have a surplus of free time and do not know what to do with it except read, collect, sort, observe and then retell. Their “scientific drive” is their boredom. Pope Leo X once sang the praises of science, in a brief to Beroaldus. He called it the finest decoration and the greatest pride of our life, a noble occupation in happiness and in unhappiness. “Without it,” he finally says, “all human undertakings would have no firm footing. Even with it, they are changeable and uncertain enough!” But this moderately skeptical pope, like all the other church speakers who praise science, keeps quiet about his final judgment of it. From his words you can pick out something remarkable for such a friend of the arts: he puts science above art. But in the end it is only politeness when he does not speak here of what he also places far above all science: “revealed truth” and “the eternal salvation of the soul.” Compared with these, what are decoration, pride, amusement and keeping life secure? “Science is something of second rank, not something final or unconditional, not an object of passion.” This judgment stayed in Leo’s soul: it is the properly Christian judgment of science! In antiquity its dignity and recognition were reduced, because even among its most eager students the pursuit of virtue came first. People thought they had given knowledge its highest praise when they celebrated it as the best means to virtue. It is something new in history that knowledge wants to be more than a means.

124 *On the Horizon of the Infinite.* — We have left the land and gone out to sea! We have the bridge behind us, or more than that, we have broken off the land behind us! Now, little ship, be careful! The ocean lies beside you. It is true that

it does not always roar, and sometimes it lies there like silk and gold and the daydream of kindness. But there will be hours when you realize that it is infinite, and that nothing is more frightening than infinity. Oh, poor bird, that felt free and now bangs against the walls of this cage! Woe to you when homesickness for land comes over you, as if there had been more *freedom* there. And there is no “land” anymore!

- 125 *The Madman.* — Have you not heard of that madman who lit a lantern in the bright morning, ran to the marketplace, and kept shouting, “I seek God! I seek God!” Since many of those who did not believe in God were standing around there together, he caused a great deal of laughter. “Has he gotten lost?” said one. “Has he wandered off like a child?” said another. “Or is he hiding? Is he afraid of us? Has he gone to sea? Emigrated?” So they shouted and laughed all at once. The madman jumped into their midst and pierced them with his eyes. “Where has God gone?” he cried. “I will tell you! *We have killed him*, you and I! We are all his murderers! But how did we do it? How could we drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the whole horizon? What did we do when we unchained this earth from its sun? Where is it moving now? Where are we moving? Away from all suns? Are we not falling all the time? Backward, sideways, forward, in every direction? Is there still an up and a down? Are we not wandering as if through an endless nothing? Does empty space not breathe on us? Has it not grown colder? Is night not coming on, more and more night? “Do lanterns not have to be lit in the morning? Do we not hear anything yet of the noise of the gravediggers who are burying God? Do we not smell anything yet of God’s decay? Gods decay too! God is dead! God stays dead! And we have killed him! How shall we comfort ourselves, we murderers of all murderers? The holiest and most powerful thing the world has ever owned has bled to death under our knives. Who will wipe this blood off us? What water could we use to clean ourselves? What atonement festivals and sacred games will we have to invent? Is the greatness of this deed not too great for us? Must we not become gods ourselves, just to seem worthy of it? There has never been a greater deed, and whoever is born after us, because of this deed, belongs to a

higher history than all history has been until now!” Here the madman fell silent and looked at his listeners again. They were silent too, and looked at him in surprise. At last he threw his lantern on the ground, so that it broke into pieces and went out. “I am too early,” he said then. “I am not yet the right time. This huge event is still on its way and wandering. It has not yet reached human ears. Lightning and thunder need time. The light of the stars needs time. Deeds need time, even after they have been done, before they are seen and heard. This deed is still farther from them than the farthest stars, *and yet they have done it themselves!*” It is also said that on the same day the madman went into several churches and sang his *Requiem aeternam deo* there. When he was taken outside and questioned, he always gave only this answer: “What are these churches still, if they are not the tombs and graves of God?”

126 *Mystical Explanations.* — Mystical explanations are thought to be deep. The truth is that they are not even shallow.

127 *The Lasting Effect of the Oldest Religion.* — Every thoughtless person thinks that the will is the only thing that acts. Willing seems to him something simple, simply given, not derived from anything, obviously understood. He is convinced that when he does something, for example strikes a blow, *he* is the one who strikes, and he struck because he *wanted* to. He sees no problem in this at all. For him the feeling of the *will* is enough, not only to accept cause and effect, but also to believe that he *understands* how they are related. He knows nothing about the mechanism of what happens, or about the hundreds of fine steps that have to be taken before the blow can land. Nor does he know that the will by itself cannot do even the smallest part of that work. For him the will is a magically working force. Belief in the will as the cause of effects is belief in magical forces. Originally, people believed that wherever they saw something happen, a will was the cause, and that personal, willing beings were working behind it. The idea of mechanics was far from them. But because human beings believed for enormous stretches of time only in persons, and not in materials, forces, things and so on, belief in cause and effect became their basic belief. They use it wherever something happens, and they still do so now, by

instinct, as a piece of the oldest atavism. The statements “no effect without a cause” and “every effect in turn a cause” look like generalizations of much narrower statements: “where something has an effect, something has been willed,” “only willing beings can be affected,” “there is never a pure, consequence-free suffering of an effect; all suffering is an arousal of the will (to act, to defend, to take revenge, to pay back).” But in humanity’s earliest times, these statements and those were the same. The first were not generalizations of the second. The second were explanations of the first. Schopenhauer, by assuming that everything that exists is only something that wills, lifted an ancient mythology onto the throne. He never seems to have tried to analyze the will, because he *believed*, like everyone else, in the simplicity and immediacy of all willing. Yet willing is only a mechanism so well rehearsed that it almost escapes the observing eye. Against him I set these statements. First, for a will to arise, a representation of pleasure and displeasure is needed. Second, that a strong stimulus is felt as pleasure or displeasure is the work of the *interpreting* intellect, which for the most part works unconsciously for us. And one and the same stimulus *can* be interpreted as pleasure or as displeasure. Third, only among thinking beings are there pleasure, displeasure and will. The vast majority of organisms have none of these.

- 128 *The Value of Prayer.* — Prayer was invented for people who, in fact, never have thoughts of their own, and for whom an uplifting of the soul is unknown or passes unnoticed. What should such people do in holy places and in all the important moments of life that call for calm and some dignity? So that they at least do not *disturb* anyone, the wisdom of all founders of religions, the small ones and the great, has commanded them a prayer formula: a long, mechanical work of the lips, combined with an effort of memory and with a fixed posture of hands, feet and eyes! So let them chew over their “om mane padme hum” countless times, like the Tibetans. Or, as in Benares, let them count off the name of the god Ram-Ram-Ram on their fingers (and so on, with or without grace). Or let them honor Vishnu with his thousand names, or Allah with his ninety-nine names. Or let them use prayer wheels and rosaries. The main thing

is that for a while they are kept busy with this work and make a tolerable sight. Their kind of prayer was invented for the benefit of the devout, who have thoughts and elevations of their own. Even these people have their tired hours, when a row of venerable words and sounds and a pious routine does them good. But suppose these rare people (in every religion the religious person is an exception) know how to help themselves. The poor in spirit do not know how to help themselves, and forbidding them the clatter of prayer means taking their religion away from them, as Protestantism more and more makes clear. Religion does not want more from such people than that they *keep still*, with their eyes, hands, legs and every other organ. In this way they are made temporarily more beautiful, and more human!

- 129 *The Conditions of God.* — “God himself cannot exist without wise people,” said Luther, and with good reason. But “God can exist even less without unwise people” is something the good Luther did not say!
- 130 *A Dangerous Decision.* — The Christian decision to find the world ugly and bad has made the world ugly and bad.
- 131 *Christianity and Suicide.* — When it began, Christianity turned the enormous longing for suicide into a lever of its power. It left only two forms of suicide, clothed them in the highest dignity and the highest hopes, and forbade all other forms in a terrible way. But martyrdom, and the slow self-destruction of the ascetic, were permitted.
- 132 *Against Christianity.* — Now our taste decides against Christianity, no longer our reasons.
- 133 *Principle.* — An unavoidable hypothesis, to which humanity must keep returning, is in the long run *more powerful* than even the most firmly held belief in something untrue (such as the Christian faith). “In the long run” here means a hundred thousand years.

134 *The Pessimists as Victims.* — Where a deep displeasure with existence gets out of hand, the aftereffects of a great dietary mistake come to light, one that a people has long been guilty of. The spread of Buddhism (*not* its origin) depends in large part on the Indians' excessive and almost exclusive diet of rice, and on the general weakness that follows from it. Perhaps the European dissatisfaction of modern times should be seen in the same light. Our forebears, the whole Middle Ages, were devoted to drinking, thanks to the influence of Germanic tastes on Europe. The Middle Ages, in other words, were Europe's alcohol poisoning. German displeasure with life is basically a winter sickness, not counting the effects of cellar air and stove fumes in German living rooms.

135 *Where Sin Came From.* — Sin, as it is now felt everywhere Christianity rules or once ruled, is a Jewish feeling and a Jewish invention. Against that background of all Christian morality, Christianity really set out to "Judaize" the whole world. You can feel most sharply how far it succeeded in Europe by how foreign the ancient Greek world still feels to us. That world had no feelings of sin. Despite all our good will to get closer to it and absorb it, which whole generations and many outstanding individuals did not lack, it still feels strange. "Only if you *repent* will God be merciful to you." To a Greek this would be ridiculous and offensive. He would say, "That is how slaves might feel." Here a powerful being is assumed, an overpowerful one, yet one who is eager for revenge. His power is so great that no harm can be done to him at all, except in his honor. Every sin is an insult to respect, a *crimen laesae majestatis divinae*, and nothing more! Contrition, humiliation, rolling in the dust: these are the first and last conditions his mercy depends on. That means restoring his divine honor! Whether sin also does damage to anything else, whether a deep, growing disaster is planted by it, one that takes hold of one person after another like a disease and strangles them: this honor-hungry Oriental in heaven does not care. Sin is a wrong done to him, not to humanity! To whomever he has given his grace, he also gives this indifference to the natural results of sin. God and humanity are thought of here as so separate and opposed that, at bottom, no sin against humanity can even be committed. Every deed is to be looked at *only* for its

supernatural consequences, not its natural ones. That is what the Jewish feeling wants, for which everything natural is unworthy in itself. The Greeks, by contrast, found it more natural to think that even a crime could have dignity: even theft, as in Prometheus, even the slaughter of cattle as an expression of crazed envy, as in Ajax. In their need to invent dignity for a crime and to take it in, they invented *tragedy*. That is an art and a pleasure which, despite all his poetic gift and his taste for the sublime, has remained at the deepest level foreign to the Jew.

136 *The Chosen People.* — The Jews feel that they are the chosen people among the peoples. They feel this because they are the moral genius among the peoples, thanks to their ability to have *despised humanity within themselves more deeply* than any other people. About their divine king and holy one, the Jews feel something like what the French nobility felt about Louis XIV. That nobility had let all its power and self-rule be taken away and had become contemptible. To avoid feeling this, to be able to forget it, they needed royal splendor, royal authority and a plenitude of power *without equal*, to which only the nobility had access. By this privilege they raised themselves to the height of the court, and from there they looked down on everything beneath them and saw it as contemptible. In this way they rose above all sensitivity of conscience. So they deliberately built the tower of royal power higher and higher into the clouds, and set the last building blocks of their own power on top of it.

137 *A Story Told in Parable.* — A Jesus Christ was possible only in a Jewish landscape, one over which the dark and sublime storm cloud of the angry Jehovah always hung. Only there was the rare, sudden shining through of a single ray of sun across the dreadful, general, endless day and night felt as a miracle of “love,” as a ray of the most undeserved “grace.” Only there could Christ dream his rainbow and his ladder, on which God came down to human beings. Everywhere else, sunny weather counted too much as the rule and as everyday fact.

- 138 *Christ's Mistake.* — The founder of Christianity believed that people suffered from nothing so much as their sins. That was his mistake, the mistake of someone who felt himself without sin, and who lacked experience in this matter! So his soul filled with that wonderful, fantastic compassion, meant for a distress which, even among his own people, the inventors of sin, was seldom a great distress. But Christians have known how to make things right for their master afterward, and to hold up his mistake as “truth.”
- 139 *The Color of the Passions.* — Natures like that of the apostle Paul have an evil eye for the passions. From the passions they learn only what is dirty, disfiguring and heartbreaking. So their ideal goal is to destroy the passions, and they see their complete purity in the divine. The Greeks were quite different from Paul and the Jews. They aimed their ideals precisely at the passions. They loved them, raised them up, gilded them and made them divine. Clearly they felt not only happier in passion, but also purer and more divine than at other times. And the Christians? Did they want to become Jews in this? Perhaps they have become Jews.
- 140 *Too Jewish.* — If God wanted to become an object of love, he would first have had to give up judging and justice. A judge, even a merciful judge, is not an object of love. The founder of Christianity did not feel this subtly enough, because he was a Jew.
- 141 *Too Oriental.* — What? A God who loves people, on the condition that they believe in him, and who hurls terrible looks and threats at anyone who does not believe in this love! What? A love with conditions attached, as the feeling of an almighty God! A love that has not even mastered the feeling of honor and of provoked vengeance! How Oriental it all is! “If I love you, what is it to you?” is already enough criticism of all of Christianity.
- 142 *Incense.* — Buddha says, “Do not flatter your benefactor!” Repeat this saying in a Christian church, and it immediately clears the air of everything Christian.

143 *The Greatest Benefit of Polytheism.* — Until now it was considered one of the most monstrous human mistakes, and idolatry itself, for an individual to set up his *own* ideal and to derive from it his own law, his own joys and his own rights. In fact, the few who dared to do it always needed an excuse in front of themselves, and it usually went like this: “Not I! Not I! It is a god, working through me!” The wonderful art and power of creating gods, which is polytheism, was the place where this drive could be let out, where it could purify itself, improve itself and become noble. Originally it was a common, unattractive drive, related to stubbornness, disobedience and envy. Being *hostile* to this drive toward one’s own ideal was once the law of all morality. There was only one standard: “*man*.” And each people believed it *had* this one and final standard. But above and outside themselves, in a distant other world, people could see *many standards*. One god was not the denial or blasphemy of another god! Here people first allowed individuals, here they first honored the rights of individuals. The invention of gods, heroes and superhumans of every kind, as well as lesser beings and lower beings such as dwarfs, fairies, centaurs, satyrs, demons and devils, was the priceless preparation for justifying the selfishness and self-rule of the individual. The freedom people granted to their god against the other gods, they finally granted to themselves against laws, customs and neighbors. Monotheism, on the other hand, is the rigid consequence of teaching one *normal human being*, which means believing in one normal god, beside whom there are only false, lying gods. This was perhaps the greatest danger humanity has faced. It threatened a premature standstill, which most other animal species, as far as we can see, reached long ago. All of them believe in one normal animal, one ideal of their kind, and the morality of custom has finally been translated into flesh and blood. Polytheism already contained the freethinking and many-mindedness of human beings. It had the power to create new and individual eyes, and again new and even more individual ones. So for humans alone, of all animals, there are no eternal horizons and perspectives.

- ¹⁴⁴ *Wars of Religion.* — The greatest progress the masses have made so far is the war of religion, because it proves that the masses have begun to treat ideas with reverence. Wars of religion arise only when the finer disputes between sects have refined general reason, so that even the common people become subtle and take trifles seriously. They even think it possible that the “eternal salvation of the soul” depends on small differences in ideas.
- ¹⁴⁵ *The Danger of Vegetarians.* — A huge consumption of rice leads to the use of opium and narcotic things, just as a huge consumption of potatoes leads to brandy. But in a finer aftereffect, it also leads to ways of thinking and feeling that act like narcotics. This fits with the fact that the promoters of narcotic ways of thinking and feeling, like those Indian teachers, want to praise a purely vegetable diet and make it the law for the masses. In this way they want to create and increase the need that they are able to satisfy.
- ¹⁴⁶ *German Hopes.* — Let us not forget that the names of peoples are usually insults. The Tatars, for example, are “the dogs” by name. The Chinese gave them that name. The “Germans”: this originally meant “the heathens.” After their conversion, the Goths called the great mass of their unbaptized kinsmen by this name. They did this following their translation of the Septuagint, in which the heathens are named by the word that means “the peoples” in Greek. See Ulfilas. It would still be possible for the Germans to make an honorary name out of their old insult by becoming the first *unchristian* people of Europe. Schopenhauer counted it to their credit that they were so well suited for this. Then Luther’s work would be completed, since he taught them to be un-Roman and to speak: “Here I stand. *I cannot do otherwise!*”
- ¹⁴⁷ *Question and Answer.* — What do wild tribes first take from Europeans? Brandy and Christianity, the European narcotics. And what do they die of fastest? The European narcotics.
- ¹⁴⁸ *Where Reformations Begin.* — At the time of the great corruption of the church, the church was least corrupt in Germany. That is why the Reformation began *here*. It was a sign that even the early signs of corruption were felt to be

unbearable. Compared with other peoples, no people was ever more Christian than the Germans at the time of Luther. Their Christian culture was just about to burst into a hundredfold splendor of bloom. Only one night was missing. But that night brought the storm that put an end to everything.

149 *Why Reformations Fail.* — It shows the higher culture of the Greeks, even in fairly early times, that several attempts to found new Greek religions failed. It shows that there must already have been a great many different kinds of people in Greece, whose different distress could not be cured with a single recipe of belief and hope. Pythagoras and Plato, perhaps Empedocles too, and long before them the Orphic enthusiasts, all set out to found new religions. The first two had such genuine souls and talents for founding religions that one cannot be astonished enough at their failure. But they only ever produced sects. Every time the reformation of a whole people fails and only sects raise their heads, you may conclude that the people is already very varied inside, and is beginning to free itself from the coarse herd instincts and the morality of custom. This is a meaningful unsettled state, which people are used to slandering as the decline of morals and corruption, but which announces the egg ripening and the eggshell about to crack. That Luther's Reformation succeeded in the North shows that the North had lagged behind the South of Europe and still had fairly uniform, one-colored needs. There would never have been a Christianization of Europe at all if the culture of the old southern world had not gradually been barbarized, and lost its cultural lead, through too much admixture of Germanic barbarian blood. The more widely and unconditionally a single person, or a single person's idea, can have an effect, the more uniform and the lower the masses must be on which it works. Counter-movements, by contrast, reveal inner counter-needs that also want to satisfy themselves and prevail. In reverse, you can always infer a real height of culture when powerful and domineering natures achieve only a small, sectarian effect. This holds for the individual arts too, and for the fields of knowledge. Where there is rule,

there are masses. Where there are masses, there is a need for slavery. Where there is slavery, there are only a few individuals, and these have the herd instincts and conscience against them.

150 *A Critique of the Saints.* — Must one, in order to have a virtue, want it in its most brutal form? That is how the Christian saints wanted it, and needed it. They got through life only with the thought that at the sight of their virtue everyone would be overcome by contempt for himself. I call a virtue with such an effect brutal.

151 *Where Religion Comes From.* — The metaphysical need is not the origin of religions, as Schopenhauer thinks. It is only a shoot that grows from them. Under the rule of religious thoughts, people got used to the idea of an “other world” (behind, below or above). When religious thoughts are destroyed, people feel an uncomfortable emptiness and a lack. Now from this feeling another “other world” grows back, but now only a metaphysical one, no longer a religious one. What led people in the earliest times to assume an “other world” at all was not a drive or a need. It was an error in interpreting certain natural events, a confusion of the intellect.

152 *The Greatest Change.* — The light and the colors of all things have changed! We no longer fully understand how the ancient people felt about the nearest and most common things, for example the day and being awake. Because the ancients believed in dreams, waking life had different lights. The same goes for all of life, with the reflection of death and its meaning: our “death” is a completely different death. All experiences shone differently, because a god gleamed out of them. So did all decisions and views of the distant future, because people had oracles and secret signs and believed in prophecy. “Truth” was felt differently, because at one time a madman could pass as its mouthpiece, which makes *us* shudder or laugh. Every injustice affected feeling differently, because people feared divine punishment, not only civil penalty and disgrace. What was joy in the time when people believed in devils and tempters! What was passion, when you saw demons lurking nearby! What was philosophy, when doubt was felt as

a sin of the most dangerous kind, indeed as an offense against eternal love, as mistrust of everything good, high, pure and merciful! We have newly colored things, and we keep painting on them. But what can we set against the *splendor of colors* of that old mistress for now? I mean the old humanity.

- 153 *Homo poeta.* — “I myself, who with the greatest care have made this tragedy of tragedies, as far as it is finished; I, who first tied the knot of morality into existence and pulled it so tight that only a god can loosen it (so Horace demands!), I have now killed all the gods in the fourth act, out of morality! What is to become of the fifth act! Where will I still find the tragic resolution? Must I begin to think about a comic resolution?”
- 154 *Different Dangers of Life.* — You have no idea what you are going through. You stagger through life as if you were drunk, and now and then you tumble down a staircase. But thanks to your drunkenness, you do not break your limbs. Your muscles are too limp and your head too dull for you to find the stones of that staircase as hard as we others do! For us, life is a greater danger. We are made of glass. Woe to us if we *bump* into something! And everything is lost if we *fall*!
- 155 *What We Lack.* — We love *great* nature and have discovered it. This is because great human beings are missing from our heads. The Greeks were the other way around. Their feeling for nature is different from ours.
- 156 *The Most Influential Person.* — When a person resists his whole age, holds it up at the gate and calls it to account, that must have influence! Whether he wants to is beside the point. That he can is what matters.
- 157 *Mentiri.* — Pay attention! He thinks it over, and at once he has a lie ready. This is a stage of culture that whole peoples have stood on. Consider what the Romans meant by *mentiri*!
- 158 *An Uncomfortable Quality.* — Finding everything deep is an uncomfortable quality. It makes you constantly strain your eyes, and in the end you always find more than you wanted.

- 159 *Every Virtue Has Its Time.* — For someone who is unbending now, his honesty often brings a bad conscience, because unbendingness is the virtue of a different age than honesty is.
- 160 *In Dealings with Virtues.* — You can also be undignified and fawning toward a virtue.
- 161 *To the Lovers of the Times.* — The runaway priest and the released convict keep making faces. What they want is a face with no past. But have you ever seen people who know that the future is reflected in their face, and who are so polite to you, you lovers of “the times,” that they make a face with no future?
- 162 *Egoism.* — Egoism is the *perspective* rule of feeling. By it, what is closest looks big and heavy, while everything gets smaller and lighter as it moves into the distance.
- 163 *After a Great Victory.* — The best thing about a great victory is that it takes away the winner’s fear of losing. “Why not lose once?” he thinks. “I am rich enough now to afford it.”
- 164 *Those Who Want Rest.* — I can tell which minds want rest by the many dark objects they set up around themselves. Whoever wants to sleep makes his room dark, or crawls into a cave. A hint for those who do not know what they are really looking for most, and would like to find out!
- 165 *The Happiness of Those Who Give Things Up.* — If you deny yourself something thoroughly and for a long time, then when you come across it again by chance, you will almost think you have discovered it. And what happiness every discoverer has! Let us be wiser than the snakes, which lie too long in the same sun.
- 166 *Always in Our Own Company.* — Everything of my kind, in nature and in history, speaks to me, praises me, pushes me forward, comforts me. The rest I do not hear, or I forget it right away. We are always only in our own company.

- ¹⁶⁷ *Misanthropy and Love.* — People talk about being sick of others only when they can no longer digest them and still have their stomach full of them. Misanthropy comes from a love of people that is too greedy, a kind of “people-eating.” But who told you, my Prince Hamlet, to swallow people like oysters?
- ¹⁶⁸ *About a Sick Man.* — “Things are going badly for him!” What is wrong? “He suffers from a craving to be praised, and finds no food for it.” That makes no sense! Everyone celebrates him. People carry him not only on their hands but on their lips! “Yes, but he has a poor ear for praise. If a friend praises him, it sounds to him as if the friend is praising himself. If an enemy praises him, it sounds to him as if the enemy wants credit for it. If one of the rest praises him at last (there are not many of the rest left, he is so famous), it insults him that they do not want him as either friend or enemy. He likes to say: ‘What do I care about someone who can even play the just man against me!’”
- ¹⁶⁹ *Open Enemies.* — Courage in front of an enemy is a separate thing. You can still be a coward and an indecisive muddlehead with it. Napoleon judged this way about the “bravest man” he knew, Murat. So it follows that open enemies are necessary for some people, if they are to rise to their virtue, their manliness and their cheerfulness.
- ¹⁷⁰ *With the Crowd.* — Until now he has run with the crowd and praised it. But one day he will be its opponent! He follows it believing that his laziness will profit from it. He has not yet learned that the crowd is not lazy enough for him! That it always pushes forward! That it lets no one stand still! And he likes so much to stand still!
- ¹⁷¹ *Fame.* — When the gratitude of many toward one person throws off all shame, fame comes into being.
- ¹⁷² *The Spoiler of Taste.* — A: “You are a spoiler of taste, everyone says so!” B: “Certainly! I spoil everyone’s taste for their own side. No side forgives me for that.”

- 173 *Being Deep and Seeming Deep.* — Whoever knows himself to be deep works for clarity. Whoever wants to seem deep to the crowd works for darkness. The crowd thinks everything is deep whose bottom it cannot see. It is so timid, and goes into the water so unwillingly.
- 174 *Off to the Side.* — Parliamentarism, that is, the public permission to choose among five basic political opinions, flatters those many people who like to seem independent and individual, and who would like to fight for their opinions. In the end, though, it makes no difference whether the herd has been ordered one opinion or allowed five. Whoever departs from the five public opinions and steps to the side always has the whole herd against him.
- 175 *On Eloquence.* — Who has had the most convincing eloquence so far? The drumroll. And as long as kings have control of it, they are still the best speakers and rabble-rousers.
- 176 *Sympathy.* — The poor ruling princes! All their rights are suddenly turning into claims, and soon every claim sounds like presumption! When they only say “we” or “my people,” the old, spiteful Europe already smiles. Truly, a head master of ceremonies of the modern world would make few ceremonies for them. He might even decree: “*Les souverains rangent aux parvenus.*”
- 177 *On “Education.”* — In Germany the higher person lacks a great tool of education: the laughter of higher people. They do not laugh in Germany.
- 178 *On Moral Enlightenment.* — The Germans have to be talked out of their Mephistopheles, and their Faust along with him. Two moral prejudices are at work against the value of knowledge.
- 179 *Thoughts.* — Thoughts are the shadows of our feelings, always darker, emptier and simpler than the feelings themselves.
- 180 *The Good Time of Free Spirits.* — Free spirits still take their freedoms with science too, and for now people let them have them, as long as the church still stands! In this way they now have their good time.

- 181 *Following and Leading.* — A: “Of the two, one will always follow and the other always lead, wherever fate takes them. *And yet* the first stands above the other, by his virtue and his spirit!” B: “And yet? And yet? That is said for the others, not for me, not for us! *Fit secundum regulam.*”
- 182 *In Solitude.* — When you live alone, you do not speak too loudly, and you do not write too loudly either, because you are afraid of the hollow echo, the criticism of the nymph Echo. And in solitude every voice sounds different!
- 183 *The Music of the Best Future.* — For me the first musician would be the one who knew only the sadness of the deepest happiness, and no other sadness. No such musician has existed so far.
- 184 *Justice.* — I would rather be robbed than have scarecrows around me. That is my taste. And in every case it is a matter of taste, and nothing more!
- 185 *Poor.* — He is poor today, but not because everything was taken from him. He is poor because he threw everything away. What does that matter to him? He is used to finding things. It is the poor who misunderstand his voluntary poverty.
- 186 *Bad Conscience.* — Everything he does now is decent and orderly, and yet he has a bad conscience about it. Because the extraordinary is his job.
- 187 *What Offends in the Delivery.* — This artist offends me by the way he presents his ideas, his very good ideas: so broadly and emphatically, with such crude tricks of persuasion, as if he were speaking to the mob. After a while, the time we have given to his art, we always feel as if we were “in bad company.”
- 188 *Work.* — How close work and the worker now stand even to the idlest of us! The royal politeness in the words “we are all workers!” would still have been cynical and indecent under Louis XIV.
- 189 *The Thinker.* — He is a thinker, which means he knows how to take things more simply than they are.

- 190 *Against Those Who Praise.* — A: “You are only praised by your equals!” B: “Yes! And whoever praises you says to you: you are one of mine!”
- 191 *Against Certain Defenses.* — The most treacherous way to harm a cause is to defend it on purpose with faulty reasons.
- 192 *The Good-Natured.* — What sets apart those good-natured people, whose faces shine with goodwill, from other people? They feel at ease with a new person, and they fall in love with them quickly. They wish them well for it, and their first judgment is, “I like them.” In them the following come one after another: the wish to possess (they have few scruples about the other person’s worth), quick possession, pleasure in owning, and acting for the good of what they own.
- 193 *Kant’s Joke.* — Kant wanted to prove, in a way that shocked “all the world,” that “all the world” was right. That was the secret joke of his mind. He wrote against the scholars in support of popular prejudice, but for scholars, not for the people.
- 194 *The “Open-Hearted” Man.* — That man probably always acts on reasons he keeps to himself. He always has reasons he can share on his tongue, and almost in his open hand.
- 195 *Laughable!* — Look there! Look there! He is running *away* from people. But they follow him, because he runs *ahead* of them. That is how much they are a herd!
- 196 *The Limit of Our Hearing.* — People hear only the questions they are able to answer.
- 197 *So Be Careful!* — We share nothing so gladly with others as the seal of secrecy, along with whatever lies under it.
- 198 *The Proud Man’s Annoyance.* — The proud man is annoyed even with those who push him forward. He looks angrily at the horses pulling his carriage.

- 199 *Generosity.* — Generosity among the rich is often just a kind of shyness.
- 200 *Laughter.* — Laughing means taking pleasure in someone else's misfortune, but with a clear conscience.
- 201 *In Applause.* — Applause is always a kind of noise, even the applause we give ourselves.
- 202 *A Spendthrift.* — He does not yet have the poverty of a rich man who has already counted his whole treasure through once. He wastes his mind with the recklessness of Nature, the spendthrift.
- 203 *Hic niger est.* — As a rule he has no thoughts. But for the rare occasion, bad thoughts come to him.
- 204 *Beggars and Politeness.* — "One is not rude when one knocks on the door with a stone, if the doorbell is missing." That is how beggars and the needy of every kind think. But nobody agrees with them.
- 205 *Need.* — Need is thought to be the cause of things coming into being. In truth it is often only an effect of what has already come into being.
- 206 *In the Rain.* — It is raining, and I think of the poor people who are now crowding together with their many worries, and without practice in hiding them. Each one is ready and willing to hurt the other, and even in bad weather to make a wretched kind of comfort for himself. That, only that, is the poverty of the poor!
- 207 *The Envious One.* — He is a jealous fellow. You should not wish him children, because he would envy them, since he can no longer be a child himself.
- 208 *Great Man!* — From the fact that someone is "a great man" we may not yet conclude that he is a man. Perhaps he is only a boy, or a chameleon of every age, or a bewitched little woman.

- 209 *One Way of Asking for Reasons.* — There is a way of asking us for our reasons that makes us not only forget our best reasons, but also feel a stubbornness and dislike for reasons in general rising up in us. It is a very dulling way to ask, and a real trick of tyrannical people!
- 210 *Measure in Work.* — You must not try to outdo your father's hard work. It makes you sick.
- 211 *Secret Enemies.* — Being able to keep a secret enemy is a luxury, and even high-minded people's morality is usually not rich enough for it.
- 212 *Do Not Be Fooled.* — His mind has bad manners. He is hasty and always stammers from impatience, so you can hardly tell what long-winded and broad-chested soul he lives in.
- 213 *The Way to Happiness.* — A wise man asked a fool the way to happiness. The fool answered at once, like someone asked the way to the next town: "Admire yourself and live in the street!" "Stop!" cried the wise man. "You are asking too much. It is enough to admire yourself!" The fool replied, "But how can you admire constantly without despising constantly?"
- 214 *Faith Makes You Blessed.* — Virtue brings happiness, and a kind of blessedness, only to those who have a good faith in their own virtue. It does not bring them to the finer souls, whose virtue consists in deep distrust of themselves and of all virtue. In the end, then, "faith makes you blessed" here too! And notice: not virtue!
- 215 *Ideal and Material.* — You have a noble ideal before your eyes. But are you such a noble stone that a statue of a god could be carved out of you? And without that, is all your work not a barbaric sculpture? A blasphemy against your ideal?
- 216 *Danger in the Voice.* — With a very loud voice in your throat, you are almost unable to think delicate thoughts.

- 217 *Cause and Effect.* — Before an effect, people believe in different causes than they do after it.
- 218 *My Dislike.* — I do not like people who have to burst like bombs in order to have any effect at all, and near whom you are always in danger of suddenly losing your hearing, or even more.
- 219 *The Purpose of Punishment.* — Punishment is meant to improve the one who punishes. That is the last refuge of the defenders of punishment.
- 220 *Sacrifices.* — The sacrificial animals think differently about sacrifice and self-sacrifice than the spectators do. But they have never been allowed to speak.
- 221 *Sparing.* — Fathers and sons spare each other much more than mothers and daughters do.
- 222 *Poet and Liar.* — The poet sees in the liar his milk-brother, whose milk he drank up. So the liar has stayed wretched, and has not even managed to get a good conscience.
- 223 *The Senses Standing In for One Another.* — “You have eyes in order to hear, too,” said an old confessor who had gone deaf. “And among the blind, the king is whoever has the longest ears.”
- 224 *A Critique of Animals.* — I fear that animals see humans as creatures of their own kind who have lost their healthy animal sense in a very dangerous way: as the mad animal, the laughing animal, the weeping animal, the unhappy animal.
- 225 *The Natural Ones.* — “Evil has always had the great effect on its side! And nature is evil! So let us be natural!” That is how the great hunters of effect in humanity secretly reason. They have all too often been counted among the great human beings.
- 226 *The Distrustful and Style.* — We say the strongest things plainly, as long as there are people around us who believe in our strength. Such surroundings teach “simplicity of style.” The distrustful speak emphatically. The distrustful

make everything emphatic.

- 227 *A Faulty Conclusion, a Faulty Shot.* — He cannot control himself. From this that woman concludes it will be easy to control him, and she throws her lines of capture out at him. The poor woman, who will soon be his slave.
- 228 *Against Mediators.* — Whoever wants to mediate between two resolute thinkers is marked as mediocre. He has no eye for seeing what is unique. The habit of seeing likenesses and making everything equal is a sign of weak eyes.
- 229 *Defiance and Loyalty.* — He holds on to a cause out of defiance, a cause that has become transparent to him. But he calls it “loyalty.”
- 230 *Lack of Discretion.* — His whole manner does not persuade. That is because he has never kept quiet about a good deed he has done.
- 231 *The “Thorough.”* — The slow people of knowledge think that slowness belongs to knowledge.
- 232 *Dreaming.* — People either do not dream at all, or they dream in an interesting way. You have to learn to be awake the same way: either not at all, or in an interesting way.
- 233 *The Most Dangerous Point of View.* — What I do or leave undone now is as important for everything to come as the greatest event of the past. In this huge perspective of effect, all actions are equally large and small.
- 234 *A Musician’s Words of Comfort.* — “Your life does not ring in people’s ears. To them you live a silent life, and all the delicacy of the melody, all the gentle decisions in following or leading, stay hidden from them. It is true: you do not come down the wide street with a military band. But these good people have no right to say that your way of life lacks music for that reason. Whoever has ears, let him hear.”
- 235 *Mind and Character.* — Some people reach their peak as a character, but their mind does not match that height. And some the other way around.

- 236 *To Move the Crowd.* — Must not whoever wants to move the crowd be an actor of himself? Must he not first translate himself into something grotesquely clear, and present his whole person and cause in this coarsening and simplifying?
- 237 *The Polite One.* — “He is so polite!” Yes, he always carries a cake for Cerberus, and he is so timid that he takes everyone for Cerberus, even you and me. That is his “politeness.”
- 238 *Without Envy.* — He is completely without envy, but there is no merit in it. He wants to conquer a land that no one has yet owned and hardly anyone has even seen.
- 239 *The Joyless One.* — One joyless person is enough to bring lasting bad temper and a gloomy sky to a whole household. And it takes a miracle for this one person to be absent! Happiness is far from being such a contagious disease. Why is that?
- 240 *By the Sea.* — I would not build myself a house (and it is even part of my happiness not to own a house!). But if I had to, I would build it, like many a Roman, right out into the sea. I would like to share a few secrets with that beautiful monster.
- 241 *The Work and the Artist.* — This artist is ambitious and nothing more. In the end his work is only a magnifying glass, which he offers to anyone who looks at him.
- 242 *Suum cuique.* — However greedy my knowledge is, I can take out of things only what already belongs to me. The property of others stays in the things. How can a person be a thief or a robber at all!
- 243 *Where “Good” and “Bad” Come From.* — Only someone who can feel “This is not good” invents an improvement.
- 244 *Thoughts and Words.* — You cannot put even your thoughts fully into words.

- 245 *Praise Through Choice.* — The artist chooses his subjects. That is his way of praising.
- 246 *Mathematics.* — We want to push the precision and rigor of mathematics into every science, as far as possible. Not because we believe this path will reveal things to us, but to fix our human relationship to things. Mathematics is only the tool for the general and final knowledge of people.
- 247 *Habit.* — All habit makes our hand cleverer and our wit clumsier.
- 248 *Books.* — What is the point of a book that does not even carry us beyond all books?
- 249 *The Sigh of the Knower.* — “Oh, my greed! There is no selflessness in this soul. Instead there is a self that wants everything, that would like to see through many individuals as if through its eyes and grasp as if with its hands. It is a self that would even drag the whole past back and that wants to lose nothing that could possibly belong to it! Oh, this flame of my greed! Oh, that I could be reborn in a hundred beings!” Whoever does not know this sigh from experience does not know the passion of the knower either.
- 250 *Guilt.* — Even though the sharpest judges of witches, and the witches themselves, were convinced of the guilt of witchcraft, the guilt was still not there. That is how it is with all guilt.
- 251 *Misunderstood Sufferers.* — Great natures suffer differently from what their admirers imagine. They suffer most from the petty, low surges of certain bad moments, in short, from their own doubt about their greatness. They do not suffer most from the sacrifices and martyrdoms their task demands. As long as Prometheus pities human beings and sacrifices himself for them, he is happy and great within himself. But when he becomes jealous of Zeus, and of the homage that mortals pay him, then he suffers!
- 252 *Better to Stay in Debt.* — “Better to stay in debt than to pay with a coin that does not carry our picture!” That is what our sovereignty demands.

- 253 *Always at Home.* — One day we reach our goal, and then we proudly point to the long journeys we took to get there. In truth we did not notice that we were traveling. But we got so far that at every stop we imagined we were at home.
- 254 *Against Embarrassment.* — Whoever is always deeply occupied is beyond all embarrassment.
- 255 *Imitators.* — A: “What? You do not want imitators?” B: “I do not want people to copy something of mine. I want everyone to pretend to himself that he does what I do.” A: “So —?”
- 256 *Surface-ness.* — People of depth all find their happiness in becoming, for once, like flying fish, and playing on the very tips of the waves. They think the best thing about things is that they have a surface: their surface-ness, *sit venia verbo*.
- 257 *From Experience.* — Some people do not know how rich they are until they find out how many rich people still turn into thieves because of them.
- 258 *The Deniers of Chance.* — No winner believes in chance.
- 259 *From Paradise.* — “Good and evil are God’s prejudices,” said the serpent.
- 260 *The Multiplication Table.* — One is always wrong. But the truth starts with two. One cannot prove oneself. But two can no longer be refuted.
- 261 *Originality.* — What is originality? To *see* something that has no name yet, that cannot be named yet, even though it lies in plain view of everyone. Ordinary people see a thing at all only once it has a name. The original ones have mostly also been the ones who gave the names.
- 262 *Sub specie aeterni.* — A: “You are moving away from the living faster and faster. Soon they will strike you off their lists!” B: “It is the only way to share in the privilege of the dead.” A: “Which privilege?” B: “Not dying anymore.”
- 263 *Without Vanity.* — When we love, we want our flaws to stay hidden. Not out of vanity, but because the one we love should not suffer. Indeed, the lover would like to seem like a god, and that too is not out of vanity.

- ²⁶⁴ *What We Do.* — What we do is never understood. It is only ever praised or blamed.
- ²⁶⁵ *The Last Skepticism.* — What are the truths of humanity, in the end? They are the *irrefutable* errors of humanity.
- ²⁶⁶ *Where Cruelty Is Needed.* — Whoever has greatness is cruel toward his virtues and his second-rank concerns.
- ²⁶⁷ *With a Great Goal.* — With a great goal you are even superior to justice, not only to your deeds and your judges.
- ²⁶⁸ *What Makes Someone Heroic?* — Walking toward your highest suffering and your highest hope at the same time.
- ²⁶⁹ *What Do You Believe In?* — In this: that the weights of all things must be set anew.
- ²⁷⁰ *What Does Your Conscience Say?* — “You should become the one you are.”
- ²⁷¹ *Where Are Your Greatest Dangers?* — In pity.
- ²⁷² *What Do You Love in Others?* — My hopes.
- ²⁷³ *Whom Do You Call Bad?* — Whoever always wants to shame others.
- ²⁷⁴ *What Is Most Human to You?* — Sparing someone from shame.
- ²⁷⁵ *What Is the Sign of Freedom Reached?* — No longer being ashamed before yourself.

Book IV



Sanctus Januarius.
You who with your flame-spear
Break up the ice of my soul,
So that now it rushes roaring to the sea
Of its highest hope:
Brighter always, always healthier,
Free in the most loving necessity: —
So it praises your wonders,
Most beautiful Januarius!
Genoa, January 1882.

²⁷⁶ *For the New Year.* — I am still alive, and I still think. I must still live, because I must still think. *Sum, ergo cogito; cogito, ergo sum.* Today everyone lets himself say his wish and his dearest thought. Very well, I will also say what I wished for myself today, and which thought first ran across my heart this year, the thought that is to be my reason, my guarantee and my sweetness for the rest of my life! I want to keep learning to see the necessity in things as their beauty. That way I will be one of those who make things beautiful. *Amor fati*: let that be my love from now on! I do not want to fight a war against the ugly. I do not want to accuse anyone, not even the accusers. *Looking away* will be my only “no.” And, all in all, in the big picture, I want to be nothing but a sayer of yes, someday!

277 *Personal Providence.* — There is a certain high point in life. Once we reach it, then, with all our freedom, and however much we have denied the beautiful chaos of existence any caring reason or goodness, we are once again in the greatest danger of spiritual unfreedom, and must pass our hardest test. Now the idea of a personal providence stands before us with the most insistent force. It has the best advocate on its side: the plain evidence, now that we can see with our own hands that all things, every single thing that happens to us, keeps turning out for our good. The life of each day and each hour seems to want nothing more than to prove this sentence over and over again. Whatever it is, bad weather or good, the loss of a friend, an illness, a slander, a letter that does not come, a sprained foot, a look into a shop window, a counterargument, the opening of a book, a dream, a deception: it turns out at once, or very soon after, to be something that “could not be missing,” full of deep meaning and useful precisely for us! Is there a more dangerous temptation than to give up believing in Epicurus’s gods, those carefree unknown beings, and to believe instead in some anxious, petty god, who personally knows every hair on our heads and finds no disgust in the most wretched service? Well, I think in spite of everything! Let us leave the gods in peace, and the helpful spirits too, and be satisfied with the idea that our own practical and theoretical skill at interpreting and arranging events has now reached its height. Let us not think too highly of this nimbleness of our wisdom, even when the wonderful harmony that comes out as we play our instrument surprises us too much. It is a harmony that sounds too good for us to dare to take credit for it. In fact, now and then someone plays along with us: dear chance. Every so often he guides our hand, and the wisest providence could not think up better music than the music our foolish hand then manages to make.

278 *The Thought of Death.* — It gives me a melancholy happiness to live in the middle of this tangle of little streets, needs and voices. How much enjoyment, impatience and desire, how much thirsty life and intoxication with life comes to light every moment! And yet soon it will be so quiet for all these noisy, living, life-hungry people! Behind each of them stands his shadow, his dark com-

panion on the road! It is always like the last moment before an emigrant ship leaves: people have more to say to each other than ever, the hour is pressing, and the ocean, with its empty silence, waits impatiently behind all the noise, so eager, so sure of its prey. And all of them think that the past is nothing or little, and that the near future is everything. That is why there is this haste, this shouting, this drowning out of oneself and outdoing oneself! Everyone wants to be first in this future, and yet death and the silence of the grave are the only certain thing about this future, the one thing everyone shares! How strange that this one certainty and shared fact has almost no power over people, and that they are farthest from feeling like a brotherhood of death! It makes me happy to see that people absolutely do not want to think the thought of death! I would gladly do something to make the thought of life a hundred times more worth thinking for them.

279 *Star Friendship.* — We were friends, and we have become strangers to each other. But that is quite all right. Let us not hide it or cloud it, as if we had to be ashamed of it. We are two ships, each with its own destination and course. We may cross paths and hold a celebration together, as we did. Then the good ships lay so quietly in one harbor, under one sun, that it seemed they had already reached their goal, and had one goal. But then the all-powerful force of our task drove us apart again, into different seas and under different skies, and perhaps we will never see each other again. Or perhaps we will see each other, and not recognize each other: the different seas and suns have changed us! That we must become strangers is the law over us. That is exactly why we should also become more worthy of respect! That is exactly why the memory of our old friendship should become more sacred! There is probably an enormous invisible curve and star path in which our very different roads and goals are included as small stretches of the way. Let us raise ourselves to this thought! But our life is too short and our sight too weak for us to be more than friends in the sense of that lofty possibility. So let us believe in our star friendship, even if we have to be enemies on earth.

- 280 *The Architecture of Thinkers.* — We will need, and probably soon, to understand what our big cities lack above all: quiet, wide, spacious places for thinking. Places with long, high halls for bad weather or too much sun, where no noise of carriages or street criers can get in, and where a finer manners would even forbid a priest to pray out loud. Buildings and grounds that together express the grandeur of reflection and of stepping aside. The time is past when the church had a monopoly on thinking, when the contemplative life always had to be first a religious life. Everything the church has built expresses that idea. I do not know how we could be content with its buildings, even if they were stripped of their church purpose. These buildings speak a language that is far too grand and stiff, as houses of God and showplaces of a traffic with the other world, for us godless people to think our thoughts in them. We want to be translated into stone and plant. We want to walk around inside ourselves when we stroll through these halls and gardens.
- 281 *Knowing How to Finish.* — Masters of the first rank show who they are by knowing how to finish well, in large things and small. It may be the end of a melody or of a thought, the fifth act of a tragedy or of a political action. The first-rate people of the second level always get restless toward the end, and they do not drop into the sea with the proud, calm regularity of, for example, the mountains near Portofino, where the Gulf of Genoa finishes singing its song.
- 282 *The Walk.* — Some habits of the mind reveal that even great minds come from common or half-common stock. The gait and step of their thoughts are especially what gives them away: they cannot walk. Napoleon too could not, to his deep annoyance, walk like a prince by birth, on the occasions when one really has to know how, such as great coronation processions and the like. Even there he was always only the leader of a column, proud and hasty at once, and very aware of it. It is funny to see those writers who make the pleated robes of their period rustle around them. They want to hide their feet this way.

283 *Preparing People.* — I welcome every sign that a more manly, warlike age is beginning, one that above all will bring courage back into honor! It is meant to clear the way for an even higher age, and to gather the strength that this higher age will one day need: an age that carries heroism into knowledge and wages wars for the sake of ideas and their consequences. For this, for now, we need many brave people who prepare the way. They cannot come from nothing, and just as little from the sand and slime of present civilization and big-city culture. We need people who know how to be silent, lonely, determined, content and steady in invisible work. People who, with an inner pull toward all things, look for what in them has to be overcome. People who have cheerfulness, patience, simplicity and contempt for great vanities as their own traits, just as they have generosity in victory and forgiveness toward the small vanities of everyone who loses. People with a sharp, free judgment about all winners, and about the part that luck plays in every victory and every fame. People with their own festivals, their own workdays, their own times of mourning, used to giving orders and sure of it, and just as ready to obey when it matters. Equally proud in one role as in the other, equally serving their own cause. More endangered people, more fruitful people, happier people! Believe me, the secret of reaping the greatest fruitfulness and the greatest enjoyment from existence is this: *live dangerously!* Build your cities on Vesuvius! Send your ships into unexplored seas! Live at war with your equals and with yourselves! Be robbers and conquerors, as long as you cannot be rulers and owners, you people who know! The time is coming soon when it will no longer be enough for you to live hidden in the woods like shy deer! Knowledge will at last reach out its hand for what is owed to you. It will want to rule and to own, and you along with it!

284 *Faith in Oneself.* — Very few people have faith in themselves at all. Of those few, some get it as a useful blindness, or a partial darkening of their minds. (What would they see if they could look down to the bottom of themselves!) Others have to earn it. Everything they do that is good, capable or great is, first

of all, an argument against the skeptic who lives inside them. They have to convince him or talk him around, and for that they almost need genius. These are the great ones who are never satisfied with themselves.

285 *Excelsior!* — “You will never pray again, never worship again, never rest again in endless trust. You refuse to stop before a final wisdom, a final goodness, a final power, and to unharness your thoughts. You have no constant guardian and friend for your seven solitudes. You live without the view of a mountain that has snow on its head and fire in its heart. For you there is no longer any rewarder, any improver with the final touch. There is no longer any reason in what happens, no love in what will happen to you. No resting place is still open to your heart, where it has only to find and no longer to search. You resist every kind of final peace; you want the eternal return of war and peace. Man of renunciation, do you want to give up all of this? Who will give you the strength for it? No one has had that strength yet!” There is a lake that one day refused to flow out, and threw up a dam where it had always flowed out before. Since then this lake keeps rising higher. Perhaps this very renunciation will also give us the strength to bear renunciation itself. Perhaps from then on the human being will keep rising, at the point where he no longer flows out into a god.

286 *An Interlude.* — Here are hopes. But what will you see and hear in them if you have not lived through shining, glow and dawns in your own souls? I can only remind you. I cannot do more! Move stones, make animals into human beings: is that what you want from me? Ah, if you are still stones and animals, first go and look for your Orpheus.

287 *Delight in Blindness.* — “My thoughts,” said the wanderer to his shadow, “should show me where I stand. But they should not tell me where I am going. I love not knowing about the future, and I do not want to be ruined by impatience and by tasting promised things in advance.”

288 *High Moods.* — It seems to me that most people do not believe in high moods at all, except for moments, at most quarter-hours. The few exceptions are those who know from experience a longer duration of high feeling.

But for a person to be the embodiment of a single high feeling, the incarnation of one great mood, has been only a dream and a tempting possibility until now. History does not yet give us a clear example of it. Still, history might one day give birth to such people, once many favorable conditions have been created and made secure, conditions that even the luckiest chance cannot put together right now. Perhaps for these future souls, what has come into our souls here and there as a rare exception, which we feel with awe, would be the normal state: a constant movement between high and low, and the feeling of high and low, a steady climbing as on stairs, and at the same time resting as on clouds.

289 *All Aboard!* — Think about how a philosophical justification of a person's way of living and thinking, taken as a whole, works on each individual. It is like a warm, blessing, fertilizing sun that shines just for him. Independent of praise and blame, it makes people self-sufficient, rich and generous with happiness and goodwill. It constantly turns evil into good, brings all powers to flower and ripeness, and does not let the small and great weeds of grief and annoyance take root at all. Then at last you cry out with longing: "Oh, if only many such new suns could be made!" Even the evil person, the unhappy person, the exceptional person should have his philosophy, his good right, his sunshine! We do not need pity for them! We must unlearn this idea of arrogance, even though humanity has so far learned and practiced it precisely through this idea. We have no confessors, soul-conjurers or sin-forgivers to set up for them. What we need is a new justice! And a new watchword! And new philosophers! The moral earth is round too! The moral earth has its antipodes too! The antipodes have their right to exist as well! There is still another world to discover, and more than one! All aboard, you philosophers!

290 *One Thing Is Needful.* — To "give style" to one's character is a great and rare art. It is practiced by someone who surveys everything his nature offers in strengths and weaknesses, and then fits it into an artistic plan, until every part looks like art and reason, and even the weakness delights the eye. Here a great deal of second nature has been added, and there a piece of first nature has been taken away. Both took long practice and daily work. Here the ugly, which could

not be taken away, has been hidden. There it has been reinterpreted as sublime. Much that is vague and resists shaping has been saved for distant views and put to use. It is meant to beckon toward the wide and the immeasurable. In the end, when the work is finished, it becomes clear that the same taste ruled and shaped everything, large and small. Whether the taste was good or bad matters less than people think. It is enough that it is *one* taste! It is the strong, domineering natures who take their finest pleasure in such compulsion, in such restriction and completeness under their own law. The passion of their mighty will is relieved at the sight of all stylized nature, all defeated and serving nature. Even when they have palaces to build and gardens to lay out, they dislike letting nature go free. On the other hand, it is the weak characters, who do not have power over themselves, who hate the restriction of style. They feel that if this bitterly harsh restriction were imposed on them, they would become common under it. They turn into slaves as soon as they serve, and they hate serving. Such minds, which can be minds of the first rank, always want to shape or interpret themselves and their surroundings as free nature: wild, arbitrary, fantastic, messy, surprising. And they are right to do so, because only this way do they do themselves good. For one thing is needful: that a person reach contentment with himself, whether through this poetry or that art. Only then is a person at all bearable to look at! Whoever is dissatisfied with himself is always ready to take revenge for it. We others will be his victims, if only in having always to put up with the sight of his ugliness. For the sight of the ugly makes people bad and gloomy.

²⁹¹ *Genoa.* — I have looked at this city for quite a while now, at its country houses and pleasure gardens and the wide ring of its inhabited hills and slopes. In the end I have to say: I see faces from past generations. This region is covered with the likenesses of bold, self-ruling people. They lived, and they wanted to keep living. Their houses tell me so: built and decorated to last for centuries, not for a passing hour. They were good to life, however harsh they may often have been to themselves. I always see the builder, his eyes resting on everything built around him, near and far, and on the city, the sea and the lines of the moun-

tains as well. With this gaze he exercises force and conquest. He wants to fit all of it into his plan and in the end make it his property by making it a piece of himself. This whole region is overgrown with the splendid, insatiable selfishness of the lust for owning and for loot. Just as these people, far away, accepted no limits, and in their thirst for the new set a new world beside the old, so at home everyone still rebelled against everyone else. Each found a way to show his superiority and to put his personal infinity between himself and his neighbor. Each conquered his own homeland again, overwhelming it with his architectural ideas and reshaping it into a feast for the eyes of his house. In the North, when you look at how the cities are built, the law impresses you, and the general love of rules and obedience. You can guess at that inner urge to make oneself equal and to fit in, which must have ruled the minds of all the builders. But here, around every corner, you find a person who stands on his own. He knows the sea, adventure and the Orient. He turns away from law and from the neighbor, as if from a kind of boredom, and he looks with envious eyes at everything already established and old. With a wonderful slyness of imagination, he wants to found all of it again, at least in his mind. He wants to lay his hand on it and put his own meaning into it, even if only for the moment of a sunny afternoon, when his restless and melancholy soul feels full for once, and only what is his own may show itself to his eye, and nothing foreign.

²⁹² *To the Preachers of Morality.* — I am not trying to make a morality. But to those who do, I offer this advice. If you want to rob the best things and conditions of all honor and value in the end, keep talking about them the way you have been! Put them at the top of your morality, and talk from morning to night about the happiness of virtue, the peace of the soul, justice and the retribution that is built into things. The way you do it, all these good things will end up with popularity and a street-corner shouting all their own. But then all the gold will have been rubbed off them, and worse, all the gold inside them will have turned into lead. Truly, you are skilled in the reverse art of alchemy, the art of devaluing what is most valuable! Try a different recipe for once, so that you stop getting the opposite of what you are looking for:

deny those good things, take from them the applause of the crowd and their easy circulation, make them once again the hidden modesties of lonely souls, and say that morality is something forbidden! Perhaps in this way you will win over the kind of people for whom these things matter at all, I mean the heroic ones. But then there has to be something frightening about them, and not, as so far, something disgusting! Should we not say today, about morality, what Master Eckhart said: "I pray God to make me quit of God!"

293 *Our Air.* — We know that someone who glances at science only in passing, the way women do, and unfortunately many artists too, finds something dizzying and frightening in the strictness of its work. He finds the unrelenting attitude toward small things as much as large, and the speed of weighing, judging and condemning. What alarms him most is how the hardest things are asked for here, and the best things are done, with no praise or honors given. Instead, as among soldiers, you hear almost only blame and sharp reprimands. Doing things well counts as the rule, and failure as the exception. But the rule, here as everywhere, has a silent mouth. This "strictness of science" is like the form and courtesy of the very best society: it frightens those who are not initiated. But anyone who is used to it does not want to live anywhere else but in this bright, clear, strong, highly charged air, this manly air. Everywhere else it seems to him not clean and airy enough. He suspects that his best skill would be of little use to anyone there and no joy to himself. He suspects that half his life would slip through his fingers because of misunderstandings, and that constant caution, constant hiding and holding back would be needed. All of these are large and useless losses of strength! But in this strict, clear element he has all his strength. Here he can fly! Why should he go back down into those murky waters, where you have to swim and wade and your wings get dirty? No! Here it is too hard for us to live. What can we do about being born for the air, the pure air? We are rivals of the ray of light, and we would most gladly ride, like it, on tiny particles of ether, not away from the sun but toward it. But we cannot do that. So let us do the one thing we can do: bring light to the earth, be "the light of the earth."

For this we have our wings, our speed and our strictness, and because of this we are manly, even frightening, like fire. Let those fear us who do not know how to warm themselves at us, or to light up by us!

294 *Against the Slanderers of Nature.* — There are people I find unpleasant, for whom every natural urge at once turns into a sickness, something disfiguring or even shameful. They have led us to believe that human urges and drives are evil. They are the cause of our great unfairness toward our nature, toward all nature! There are enough people who could give in to their drives with grace and carelessness. But they do not, out of fear of that imagined “evil being” in nature! That is why so little nobility is found among people. Its mark will always be having no fear of oneself, expecting nothing shameful from oneself, and flying without hesitation wherever it drives us, we birds born free! Wherever we arrive, it will always be free and full of sunlight around us.

295 *Short Habits.* — I like short habits, and I think they are the priceless way to get to know many things and conditions, all the way down to the bottom of their sweetness and bitterness. My nature is built entirely for short habits, even in the needs of my physical health, and as far as I can see in general, from the lowest things to the highest. I always believe this one will satisfy me forever. A short habit has that faith of passion too, the faith in eternity. I think I am to be envied for having found it and recognized it. And now it feeds me at noon and in the evening, and spreads a deep contentment around itself and into me, so that I long for nothing else, without having to compare, despise or hate anything. Then one day its time is up. The good thing leaves me, not as something that now fills me with disgust, but peacefully, and satisfied with me, as I am with it. It is as if we had to thank each other, so we reach out our hands to say goodbye. And the new thing is already waiting at the door, and so is my faith, the indestructible fool and sage! This new thing, I believe, will be the right one, the last right one. That is how it goes for me with food, thoughts, people, cities, poems, music, teachings, daily schedules and ways of living. I hate lasting habits, on the other hand. I feel a tyrant coming close, and the air I breathe thickens, whenever events arrange themselves so that lasting habits seem to grow out of them

by necessity: through a job, for example, or constant time with the same people, or a fixed home, or one unchanging kind of health. Indeed, deep in my soul I am grateful for all my misery and sickness, and for whatever is imperfect in me, because such things leave me a hundred back doors through which I can escape lasting habits. The most unbearable thing, though, the truly frightening thing, would be a life with no habits at all, a life that always demands improvisation. That would be my exile and my Siberia.

296 *The Firm Reputation.* — A firm reputation was once a matter of the greatest usefulness. Wherever society is still ruled by the herd instinct, even now it is most practical for each individual to present his character and his work as unchanging, even if they are not really so. “You can count on him, he stays the same.” In every dangerous situation in society, this is the praise that means the most. Society feels satisfied to have, in one person’s virtue, in another’s ambition and in a third person’s thinking and passion, a reliable tool that is always ready. It honors this tool-like nature, this staying true to oneself, this unchangeability of opinions and goals, and even of vices, with its highest honors. This kind of esteem has always flourished wherever the morality of custom has flourished, and it trains “characters,” and it puts all changing, relearning and transforming into disrepute. Whatever the advantages of this way of thinking may be, for knowledge it is the most harmful kind of general judgment. The good will of the knower, to contradict his own former opinion without fear at any time, and in general to be suspicious of everything in us that wants to become fixed, is condemned and disgraced here. The attitude of the knower, as being in conflict with the “firm reputation,” counts as dishonorable, while the hardening of opinions has all the honor on its side. We still have to live today under the spell of such a valuation! How hard it is to live when you feel the judgment of many thousands of years against you and around you. It is likely that for many thousands of years knowledge was burdened with a bad conscience, and that there must have been much self-contempt and secret misery in the history of the greatest minds.

- 297 *Being Able to Contradict.* — Everyone now knows that being able to put up with contradiction is a high sign of culture. Some even know that the higher person wants contradiction against himself and calls it forth, to get a hint about some injustice of his that he did not know about. But being able to contradict, the good conscience gained in opposition to what is familiar, handed down and sacred, is more than both of these. It is the truly great, new and astonishing thing about our culture, the step of all steps of the freed mind. Who knows that?
- 298 *Sigh.* — I caught this insight on the way, and quickly grabbed the nearest poor words to fasten it down, so that it would not fly away again. Now it has died in these dry words, and it hangs and sways in them. When I look at it, I can hardly remember how I was lucky enough to catch this bird.
- 299 *What to Learn from Artists.* — What means do we have for making things beautiful, attractive and worth wanting when they are not? And I think they never are in themselves! Here we can learn something from doctors, for example when they dilute the bitter taste, or put wine and sugar in the mixing jug. But we can learn even more from artists, who are always looking for such inventions and tricks. You step away from things until you no longer see much of them, and must look hard just to see them at all. Or you see things around a corner, as through a cutout. Or you arrange them so that they partly hide one another and allow only glimpses in perspective. Or you look at them through colored glass or in the light of the evening red. Or you give them a surface and a skin that is not fully transparent. We should learn all of this from artists, and in other matters be wiser than they are. For their fine power usually ends where art ends and life begins. We, however, want to be the poets of our own lives, and first of all in the smallest, most everyday things.
- 300 *Preludes to Science.* — Do you really believe the sciences would have come into being and grown great if they had not been led the way by sorcerers, alchemists, astrologers and witches? They first had to create thirst, hunger and a taste for hidden and forbidden powers, with their promises and illusions. Indeed,

infinitely more had to be promised than could ever be delivered, before anything at all could come true in the realm of knowledge. Perhaps, just as the preludes and preliminary exercises of science show themselves to us now, which were never practiced or felt as such, all of religion was practice and prelude for some distant age. Perhaps it was the strange means by which, one day, single human beings could enjoy the complete self-sufficiency of a god and all his power to redeem himself. Yes, one may ask: would humanity ever have learned, without that religious school and prehistory, to feel hunger and thirst within itself and to draw satisfaction and fullness from itself? Did Prometheus first have to believe he had stolen the light, and pay for it, before he could finally discover that he had created the light by longing for it, and that not only the human being but also the god was the work of his hands, the clay in his hands? Only images of the maker? And the same goes for the delusion, the theft, the Caucasus, the vulture, and the whole tragic Prometheus story of every knower!

- 301 *The Delusion of the Contemplatives.* — Higher people differ from lower ones in that they see and hear far more, and they see and hear with thought. This is exactly what sets human beings apart from animals, and the higher animals from the lower ones. The world becomes ever fuller for the person who grows up to the height of humanity. More and more hooks of interest are cast out toward him. The number of things that move him keeps growing, and so does the number of kinds of pleasure and displeasure. The higher person becomes at once happier and more unhappy. Still, a delusion stays with him always. He thinks he has been placed in front of the great show and concert of life as a spectator and listener. He calls his nature a *contemplative* one, and overlooks the fact that he himself is the real poet, and the poet who keeps writing life. Of course he is very different from the *actor* in this drama, the so-called active person. But he is even more different from a mere observer, a festival guest sitting in front of the stage. As a poet, he surely has the *vis contemplativa*, and the habit of looking back at his work. But he also has, first of all, the *vis creativa*, which the active person lacks, whatever appearances and common belief may say. We, the thinking and feeling ones, are the ones who really and constantly

make something that is not there yet: the whole ever-growing world of values, colors, accents, perspectives, ladders of rank, yeses and noes. This poetry we have invented is constantly learned, practiced, and translated into flesh and reality, even into everyday life, by the so-called practical people (our actors, as I said). What has *value* in the present world does not have it in itself, by its nature. Nature is always without value. Value was once given to it, presented to it, and *we* were the ones who did the giving and presenting! We first created the world that *concerns human beings*! But this is exactly the knowledge we lack. When we catch hold of it for a moment, we have forgotten it again by the next. We misjudge our best strength, and we contemplatives value ourselves a degree too low. We are *neither as proud nor as happy* as we could be.

- 302 *The Danger of the Happiest.* — To have fine senses and good taste. To be used to the choicest and best of the mind, the way one is used to the right and simplest food. To have a strong, bold, reckless soul. To go through life with a calm eye and a steady step, always ready for the extreme, as if for a party, and full of longing for undiscovered worlds and seas, people and gods. To listen to every cheerful music as if brave men, soldiers and sailors were taking a short rest and a little pleasure there. And in the deepest enjoyment of the moment, to be overcome by tears and by the whole purple sadness of a happy person. Who would not want all this to be *his* own, his condition! It was the *happiness of Homer*! The condition of the man who invented gods for the Greeks, or rather invented *his own* gods for himself! But let us not fool ourselves. With this happiness of Homer's in your soul, you are also the creature most able to suffer under the sun! And only at this price do you buy the most precious shell the waves of existence have so far washed up on the shore. As its owner, you become ever more sensitive to pain, and in the end too sensitive. A little bad mood and disgust was enough, in the end, to make life miserable for Homer. He could not solve a silly little riddle that young fishermen set him! Yes, little riddles are the danger of the happiest people!

303 *Two Lucky Ones.* — Truly, this man, in spite of his youth, understands the *improvisation of life*, and astonishes even the sharpest observer. It seems he never makes a wrong move, although he keeps playing the most daring game. He reminds one of those improvising masters of music, to whom even the listener would like to credit a *divine infallibility* of hand, even though here and there they slip, as every mortal does. But they are practiced and inventive, and always ready in the moment to fit the most accidental note, wherever a flick of the finger or a whim pushes it, into the theme at once, and to breathe a beautiful meaning and a soul into chance. Here is a totally different kind of person. At bottom, everything he wants and plans goes wrong. What he once set his heart on has brought him to the edge of the abyss several times, and to the very brink of ruin. And if he has escaped, it was certainly not with only a black eye. Do you think he is unhappy about this? He decided long ago not to take his own wishes and plans so seriously. “If this does not work,” he tells himself, “then perhaps that will. And on the whole, I am not sure I do not owe more thanks to my failures than to any success. Was I made to be stubborn and to carry the horns of the bull? What makes life valuable and worthwhile for *me* lies somewhere else. My pride, and just as much my misery, lie somewhere else. I know more about life because I have so often been close to losing it. And for exactly that reason I have more of life than all of you!”

304 *In Doing, We Let Go.* — At bottom I dislike all those moralities that say, “Do not do this! Give it up! Overcome yourself!” I am on the side of the moralities that push me to do something, and to do it again, from morning until evening, and to dream about it at night, and to think of nothing but doing it *well*, as well as it is possible for *me* alone to do it! Whoever lives like this keeps losing one thing after another that does not belong to such a life. Without hatred or reluctance he watches this thing today and that thing tomorrow take their leave, like yellowed leaves that any stronger breeze carries off the tree. Or he does not even notice that they are leaving, because his eye looks so sternly toward his goal, and forward in general, not sideways, backward or downward. What we do should decide what we leave undone. By doing, we let go. That is

how I like it, that is *my* rule. But I do not want to work with my eyes open toward my own impoverishment. I do not like all the negative virtues, virtues whose very essence is saying no and refusing oneself.

305 *Self-Control.* — Those teachers of morality who first and foremost command people to get control of themselves bring a strange sickness on them: a constant irritability toward all natural urges and inclinations, a kind of itching. Whatever pushes, pulls, tempts or drives such a person, from inside or outside, it always seems to this irritable person that his self-control is now in danger. He may not trust any instinct, or any free stroke of the wing. Instead he stands there all the time, making a warding gesture, armed against himself, with a sharp and suspicious eye, the eternal guard of the castle he has made of himself. Yes, he can be *great* that way! But how unbearable he has become to others, how hard on himself, how impoverished and cut off from the most beautiful accidents of the soul! Even from any further *learning*! For you have to be able to lose yourself for a while if you want to learn something from the things that are not you.

306 *Stoics and Epicureans.* — The Epicurean picks out for himself the situation, the people and even the events that suit his very irritable intellectual makeup. He gives up the rest, which is most of it, because it would be too strong and heavy a diet for him. The Stoic, on the other hand, trains himself to swallow stones and worms, glass splinters and scorpions, and to feel no disgust. In the end his stomach is supposed to become indifferent to everything that the chance of life pours into it. He reminds one of that Arab sect of the Aissaoua, which you can get to know in Algiers. And like those insensitive people, he also likes an invited audience for showing off his insensitivity. The Epicurean does not need that, because he has his “garden”! For people whose fate improvises with them, people who live in violent times and depend on sudden and changeable people, Stoicism may be very sensible. But anyone who can see, at least a little, that fate allows him to spin a *long thread* does well to arrange his life the Epicurean way.

All people who do intellectual work have done this so far! For them, it would be the greatest loss of all to give up their fine irritability and get a stoic hard skin in exchange, bristling with hedgehog spines.

307 *In Favor of Criticism.* — Now something looks like an error to you that you once loved as a truth or a probability. You push it away and imagine that your reason has won a victory. But perhaps that error was as necessary to you back then, when you were still a different person (you are always a different person), as all your present “truths” are now. It was like a skin that hid and covered much that you were not yet allowed to see. Your new life has killed that opinion for you, not your reason. *You no longer need it.* Now it collapses under its own weight, and out of it crawls unreason, like a worm, into the light. When we practice criticism, it is nothing arbitrary or impersonal. At least very often, it is proof that living, driving forces are at work in us, shedding a bark. We deny, and we have to deny, because something in us wants to live and affirm itself: something we perhaps do not know yet, do not see yet! This is in favor of criticism.

308 *The Story of Each Day.* — What does your daily story add up to? Look at the habits it is made of. Are they the product of countless small cowardices and laziness, or the product of your courage and inventive reason? These two cases are so different that people might give you the same praise anyway, and you might bring them the same benefit anyway. But praise and benefit and respectability may be enough for someone who only wants a good conscience. They are not enough for you, you kidney-tester, who have a *knowledge of conscience!*

309 *From the Seventh Solitude.* — One day the wanderer slammed a door behind him, stopped, and wept. Then he said: “This inclination and urge toward the true, the real, the unadorned, the conscientious! How I resent it! Why does this gloomy, passionate driver follow me of all things? I want to rest, but it does not allow it. How much tempts me to linger! Everywhere there are gardens of Armida for me, and so always new tearings-away and new bitternesses of the

heart! I have to lift my foot and go farther, this tired, wounded foot. And because I have to, I often cast a furious look back at the most beautiful thing, which could not keep me, *because* it could not keep me!”

310 *Will and Wave.* — How greedily this wave comes rushing in, as if something had to be reached! How it crawls with frightening haste into the innermost corners of the rocky clefts! It seems to want to get ahead of someone. It seems that something valuable, very valuable, is hidden there. And now it comes back, a bit more slowly, still quite white with excitement. Is it disappointed? Did it find what it was looking for? Is it pretending to be disappointed? But already another wave is coming, even greedier and wilder than the first, and its soul too seems full of secrets and the lust of treasure hunting. That is how the waves live, and that is how we live, we who will! I will say no more. — So? You distrust me? You are angry at me, you beautiful monsters? Are you afraid I will give away your secret completely? Well! Just be angry at me. Raise your green, dangerous bodies as high as you can. Build a wall between me and the sun, just as you are doing now! Truly, there is nothing left of the world but green twilight and green flashes. Carry on as you please, you overbold ones, roar with delight and spite. Or dive back down, pour your emeralds into the deepest depth, and throw your endless white, shaggy mane of foam and spray over them. It is all fine with me, because everything suits you so well, and I am so well disposed toward you in everything. How could I betray *you*! For, listen well: I know you and your secret, I know your kind! You and I are of one kind! You and I have one secret!

311 *Broken Light.* — One is not always brave, and when one gets tired, one of us may also complain like this. “It is so hard to hurt people. Oh, that it is necessary! What good is it to live in hiding, if we do not want to keep to ourselves what causes offense? Would it not be wiser to live in the crowd, and to make up to the individual for what is to be sinned against everyone, and has to be? To be foolish with the fool, vain with the vain, enthusiastic with the enthusiast? Would that not be fair, given such an exaggerated degree of difference overall? When I hear of other people’s malice toward me, is my first feeling not satisfac-

tion? That is right! I seem to say to them: I agree with you so little, and I have so much truth on my side. Go ahead and have a good day at my expense, as often as you can! Here are my faults and my mistakes. Here is my delusion, my bad taste, my confusion, my tears, my vanity, my owl-like hiding, my contradictions! Here you have something to laugh at! So laugh and be glad! I am not angry at the law and the nature of things, which want faults and mistakes to bring joy!" Of course, there was once a "more beautiful" time when you could feel so *indispensable* with any somewhat new thought that you could step into the street with it and call out to everyone: "Look! The kingdom of heaven has come near!" I would not be missed if I were gone. All of us are dispensable! But, as I said, that is not how we think when we are brave. We do not think about it at all.

- 312 *My Dog.* — I have given my pain a name, and I call it "dog." It is as loyal, as pushy and shameless, as entertaining and as clever as any other dog. I can bark at it and take out my bad moods on it, the way others do with their dogs, their servants and their wives.
- 313 *No Pictures of Martyrdom.* — I want to do as Raphael did and paint no more pictures of martyrdom. There are plenty of sublime things, so there is no need to look for sublimity where it lives as a sister of cruelty. Besides, my ambition would find no satisfaction in it if I made myself a sublime torturer.
- 314 *New Household Animals.* — I want to have my lion and my eagle around me, so that I always have signs and omens of how great or how small my strength is. Must I look down at them today and be afraid of them? And will the hour come again when they look up at me in fear?
- 315 *The Last Little Hour.* — Storms are my danger. Will I have my own storm, in which I perish, the way Oliver Cromwell perished in his storm? Or will I go out like a light that is not blown out by any wind, but grows tired and sick of itself: a burned-out light? Or finally: will I blow myself out so that I do not burn out?

316 *Prophetic People.* — You have no feeling for the fact that prophetic people are people who suffer greatly. You think only that they have been given a beautiful “gift,” and you would gladly have it yourselves. But let me explain with a comparison. How much animals must suffer from electricity in the air and in the clouds! We see that some kinds of animals have a prophetic power about the weather. Monkeys, for example, as you can observe well even in Europe, and not only in zoos, namely on Gibraltar. But we do not think about the fact that their *pains* are their prophets! When a strong positive electricity suddenly turns into negative electricity, under the influence of an approaching cloud that is still far from visible, and a change in the weather is coming, these animals behave as if an enemy were approaching. They get ready for defense or flight. Mostly they hide. They do not understand the bad weather as weather, but as an enemy whose hand they already *feel*!

317 *A Look Back.* — While we stand in a period of our lives, we seldom become aware of its real pathos. We always think it is the only possible and reasonable state for us now, and wholly *ethos*, not *pathos*, to use the Greek terms and keep them apart. A few notes of music brought back to my memory today a winter, a house, and a very solitary life, and along with it the feeling I lived in back then. I thought I could go on living like that forever. But now I understand that it was entirely pathos and passion, something comparable to this painfully brave and comfort-sure music. You should not have such things for years, or even for eternities. For this planet, you would become too “otherworldly.”

318 *Wisdom in Pain.* — There is as much wisdom in pain as in pleasure. Like pleasure, it belongs to the first rank of forces that preserve the species. If it were not so, it would have died out long ago. That it hurts is no argument against it. Hurting is its nature. In pain I hear the captain of a ship calling out, “Take in the sails!” The bold sailor, the human being, must have practiced setting sails in a thousand ways. Otherwise it would soon be over for him, and the ocean would swallow him up too fast. We must also know how to live with less energy. As soon as pain gives its safety signal, it is time to reduce our energy. Some great danger, a storm, is on its way, and it is wise for us to puff ourselves up as

little as possible. It is true that some people hear the opposite order when great pain approaches. They never look prouder, more warlike and happier than when the storm is coming up. Pain itself gives them their greatest moments! These are the heroic people, the great *bringers of pain* to humanity: the few, or rare ones, who need exactly the same defense that pain itself needs. And truly, one should not deny it to them! They are forces of the first rank for preserving and advancing the species, if only because they resist comfort and do not hide their disgust for that kind of happiness.

319 *As Interpreters of Our Experiences.* — Religious founders and people like them have never had a certain kind of honesty. They never made a matter of conscience for knowledge out of their experiences. “What did I actually experience? What was going on in me and around me back then? Was my reason clear enough? Was my will turned against all the tricks of the senses, and brave in resisting what is fantastic?” None of them asked this, and the dear religious people still do not ask it now. They have a thirst for things that go *against reason*, and they do not want to make it hard on themselves to satisfy it. So they experience “miracles” and “rebirths,” and they hear the voices of little angels! But we others, who are thirsty for reason, want to look at our experiences as strictly as at a scientific test, hour by hour, day by day!

We ourselves want to be our own experiments and our own test animals.

320 *On Meeting Again.* — A: “Do I still understand you completely? You are searching? Where in the world as it is now is your corner and your star? Where can you lie down in the sun, so that a surplus of well-being comes to you too, and your existence is justified? Let everyone do that for himself,” you seem to be saying to me, “and let go of talk in general terms, and of worrying about others and society!” B: “I want more. I am not a seeker. I want to create a sun of my own.”

321 *New Caution.* — Let us stop thinking so much about punishment, blame and improvement! We will rarely change a person. And if we did succeed, perhaps something else succeeded too without our noticing: we were changed by him!

Let us see instead that our own influence on *everything that is to come* balances out and outweighs his. Let us not struggle in direct combat! That is what all blaming, punishing and wanting to fix people comes down to. Instead, let us raise ourselves higher! Let us give our example ever brighter colors! Let us darken the others by our light! No! We do not want to become darker ourselves for his sake, like all the punishers and the discontented! Let us step aside instead! Let us look away!

322 *A Comparison.* — Those thinkers in whom all the stars move in circular orbits are not the deepest. Whoever looks into himself as into a huge universe, and carries Milky Ways inside him, also knows how irregular all Milky Ways are. They lead right into the chaos and maze of existence.

323 *Good Fortune in Fate.* — Fate gives us its greatest honor when it lets us fight for a while on the side of our enemies. By this we are *destined* for a great victory.

324 *In Media Vita.* — No! Life has not disappointed me! From year to year I find it truer, more desirable and more mysterious. Ever since the day the great liberator came over me, the thought that life may be an experiment of the knower, and not a duty, not a fate, not a deception! And knowledge itself: for others it may be something else, for example a couch to rest on, or the way to one, or entertainment, or idleness. For me it is a world of dangers and victories, where even heroic feelings have their dancing and playing grounds. “Life as a means of knowledge!” With this principle in your heart you can live not only bravely but even cheerfully, and laugh cheerfully! And who would know how to laugh and live well if he did not first know how to handle war and victory?

325 *What Belongs to Greatness.* — Who will ever achieve anything great if he does not feel in himself the strength and the will to inflict great pain? Being able to suffer is the least of it. Weak women and even slaves often become masters of that. But to not perish from inner distress and insecurity when you cause great suffering and hear the cry of that suffering: that is great, that belongs to greatness.

326 *The Doctors of the Soul and Pain.* — All moral preachers, and all theologians too, share a common bad habit: they all try to convince people that they are in very bad shape, and that a harsh, final, radical cure is needed. And since people as a whole have listened too eagerly to these teachings, and have held their ears out to them for whole centuries, something of the superstition that things are going very badly for them has finally rubbed off on them. Now they are only too ready to sigh, to find nothing more in life, and to make sad faces together, as if it were really very hard to *endure*. In truth they are wildly sure of their life and in love with it, and full of endless tricks and refinements for breaking what is unpleasant and pulling the thorn out of pain and misfortune. It seems to me that pain and misfortune are always talked about with *exaggeration*, as if exaggerating were a matter of good manners. People deliberately keep quiet about the countless means of relief against pain: stupefaction, the feverish haste of thoughts, a calm position, good and bad memories, intentions, hopes, and many kinds of pride and sympathy, which almost work like anesthetics. And at the highest degrees of pain, people faint on their own. We understand very well how to drip sweetness onto our bitternesses, especially the bitternesses of the soul. We have aids in our courage and our loftiness, and in the nobler delirium of submission and resignation. A loss is hardly a loss for an hour. Somehow a gift from heaven has fallen to us along with it, a new strength for example, or at least a new chance to be strong! What the moral preachers have fantasized about the inner “misery” of wicked people! And what they have lied to us about the misfortune of passionate people! Lying is the right word here. They knew very well about the overflowing happiness of this kind of person, but they kept quiet about it, because it refuted their theory, according to which all happiness comes only with the destruction of passion and the silence of the will! And finally, as for the prescription of all these doctors of the soul, and their praise of a harsh radical cure: one may ask, is our life really painful and troublesome enough to make it worth trading it for a stoic way of life and a hardening against it? We are *not in bad enough shape* to have to feel bad in the stoic way!

327 *Taking Things Seriously.* — For the great majority, the intellect is a clumsy, gloomy, creaking machine that is hard to get going. They call it “*taking the matter seriously*” when they want to work with this machine and think well. Oh, how tiresome good thinking must be for them! The lovely beast, man, seems to lose its good mood every time it thinks well. It becomes “serious”! And “where there is laughter and cheerfulness, thinking is worth nothing”: that is the prejudice of this serious beast against all “joyful science.” Well then! Let us show that it is a prejudice!

328 *Doing Harm to Stupidity.* — The belief that selfishness is reprehensible as a whole, preached so stubbornly and so convincingly, has certainly done harm to selfishness. (It has done this *in favor*, as I will repeat a hundred times, *of the herd instincts*!) It has especially done so by taking away selfishness’s good conscience and teaching it to look for the real source of all misfortune inside itself. “Your selfishness is the disaster of your life”: that was the sermon for thousands of years. As I said, it harmed selfishness and took away a great deal of its spirit, its cheerfulness, its inventiveness and its beauty. It dulled, uglified and poisoned selfishness! Classical antiquity, on the other hand, taught another main source of misfortune. From Socrates on, thinkers never tired of preaching: “Your thoughtlessness and stupidity, your living by the rules, your submission to your neighbor’s opinion, is why you so rarely achieve happiness. We thinkers, as thinkers, are the happiest.” Let us not decide here whether this sermon against stupidity had better reasons behind it than that sermon against selfishness. But it is certain that it took away stupidity’s good conscience. These philosophers *did harm to stupidity*.

329 *Leisure and Idleness.* — There is a wildness in the way Americans chase gold, an Indian-like wildness that seems to belong to Indian blood. Their breathless rush to work, the real vice of the New World, has already begun to make old Europe wild through contagion, and to spread a strange lack of spirit over it. People are already ashamed of rest. A long period of reflection almost makes them feel guilty. They think with a clock in their hand, even while they eat lunch, with their eyes on the stock-market page. They live like someone who

might constantly “miss out” on something. “Better to do something than nothing”: this principle too is a rope for strangling all culture and all higher taste. And just as obviously all forms perish in this rush of workers, so the feeling for form itself perishes, and the ear and eye for the melody of movements. The proof is in the *clumsy clarity* now demanded everywhere, in all those situations where a person wants to be honest with other people: in dealings with friends, women, relatives, children, teachers, students, leaders and princes. There is no longer time or strength for ceremonies, for courtesy that goes around in a roundabout way, for all the wit of conversation, and in general for all *otium*. For life in the hunt for profit keeps forcing people to spend their minds until they are exhausted, through constant pretending, outwitting or getting ahead of others. The real virtue now is to do something in less time than someone else. So there are only rare hours of *permitted* honesty. In those hours people are tired, and they do not just want to “let themselves go,” but to stretch out long and broad and clumsily. In keeping with this inclination, people now write their letters, and their style and spirit will always be the real “sign of the times.” If there is any pleasure left in society and in the arts, it is the kind that tired slaves put together for themselves. Oh, this contentment with “fun” among our educated and uneducated people! Oh, this growing suspicion of all pleasure! Work keeps gaining all the good conscience for itself. The urge for enjoyment already calls itself “need for recreation,” and it is beginning to be ashamed of itself. “We owe it to our health,” people say when they are caught on an outing. Indeed, it could soon come to the point where you could not give in to a desire for the *vita contemplativa* (that is, walking about with thoughts and friends) without self-contempt and a bad conscience. Formerly it was the other way around: work had the bad conscience. A person of good birth *hid* his work when need forced him to work. The slave worked under the pressure of the feeling that he was doing something contemptible. The “doing” itself was something contemptible. “Nobility and honor belong only to *otium* and *bellum*”: that was the voice of the ancient prejudice!

- 330 *Applause.* — A thinker does not need applause or handclapping, as long as he is sure of his own handclapping. But this he cannot do without. Are there people who could do without it, and without every kind of applause at all? I doubt it. Even about the wisest, Tacitus, who is no slanderer of the wise, says: *quando etiam sapientibus gloriae cupido novissima exuitur*. In his case that means: never.
- 331 *Better Deaf Than Stunned.* — Formerly people wanted to make themselves a *reputation*. That is no longer enough now that the market has grown so big. It has to be a *clamor*. As a result, even good throats have to shout themselves hoarse, and the best goods are sold by hoarse voices. Without hawking and hoarseness there is no genius anymore. This is certainly a bad age for the thinker. He has to learn to find his quiet between two noises, and to pretend to be deaf until he really is. As long as he has not learned this, he is of course in danger of perishing from impatience and headaches.
- 332 *The Bad Hour.* — Every philosopher has probably had a bad hour when he thought: “What does it matter to me if people do not believe even my bad arguments?” And then some gleeful little bird flew past him and chirped: “What does it matter to you? What does it matter to you?”
- 333 *What Knowing Means.* — *Non ridere, non lugere, neque detestari, sed intelligere!* says Spinoza, as simply and nobly as is his way. But what is this *intelligere* at bottom, other than the form in which those three become felt at the same time? A result of the different and conflicting urges to mock, to mourn and to curse? Before any knowing is possible, each of these urges must first put forward its one-sided view of the thing or event. Afterward a struggle arose among these one-sided views, and out of it sometimes came a middle, a calm, a granting of rights on all three sides, a kind of justice and a settlement. Through justice and settlement all these urges can hold their ground in existence and be proved right in relation to one another. We, to whom only the last reconciliation scenes and final settlements of this long process come to consciousness, therefore think that *intelligere* is something conciliatory, just, good, something

essentially opposed to the urges. But it is only a *certain relation of the urges to one another*. For the longest time people considered conscious thinking to be thinking in general. Only now does the truth begin to dawn on us, that by far the largest part of our mental work goes on unconsciously and without feeling. I mean, however, that these urges fighting here understand very well how to make themselves felt by one another, and how to hurt one another. That enormous sudden exhaustion, which all thinkers are visited by, may have its origin here. It is the exhaustion of the battlefield. Yes, perhaps there is much hidden heroism in our inner struggle, but certainly nothing divine, eternally at rest in itself, as Spinoza thought. *Conscious* thinking, and especially the philosopher's, is the weakest kind of thinking, and therefore also the relatively mildest and calmest. So it is precisely the philosopher who can most easily be led astray about the nature of knowing.

334 *One Must Learn to Love.* — It is the same with music. First you must learn to *bear* a figure and a melody at all, to pick it out, to tell it apart, to isolate it and mark it off as a life of its own. Then it takes effort and good will to *put up with* it, despite its strangeness. You must practice patience with its look and expression, and kindness toward its oddness. At last there comes a moment when we are *used* to it, when we expect it, when we sense that we would miss it if it were gone. And now it keeps exerting its force and its spell on us, and it does not stop until we have become its humble and delighted lovers, who want nothing better in the world than it, and again it. But it is not only with music that this happens. In exactly the same way we have *learned to love* all the things we love now. In the end we are always rewarded for our good will, our patience, our fairness and our gentleness toward what is foreign. The foreign slowly drops its veil and shows itself as a new, unspeakable beauty. This is its *thanks* for our hospitality. Even someone who loves himself will have learned it this way. There is no other way. Love too must be learned.

335 *Long Live Physics!* — How many people know how to observe? And among the few who do, how many observe themselves? “Everyone is farthest from himself.” All the kidney-testers know this, and it makes them uncomfortable. And

the saying “know yourself!” is, when a god says it to human beings, almost a cruel joke. Nothing shows more clearly how badly self-observation is doing than the way almost everyone talks about what makes an action moral. It is quick, eager, sure of itself, and chatty, with its look, its smile and its helpful zeal! You seem to be told: “But my dear friend, this is exactly my specialty! You have come with your question to the right person, since I happen to be no wiser about anything than this. So: when a person judges, ‘*That is right,*’ and concludes, ‘*Therefore it must happen,*’ and then does what he has recognized as right and called necessary, then the nature of his action is moral!” But my friend, you are describing three actions instead of one. Your judging, for example, “That is right,” is also an action. Could it not already be judged in a moral or an immoral way? *Why* do you hold this, and exactly this, to be right? “Because my conscience tells me so. Conscience never speaks immorally. It is what decides first what is to be moral!” But why do you listen to the voice of your conscience? And how do you have the right to treat such a judgment as true and infallible? Is there no conscience left for this *belief*? Do you know nothing about an intellectual conscience? A conscience behind your “conscience”? Your judgment “That is right” has a history behind it, in your drives, inclinations, dislikes, experiences and non-experiences. You have to ask, “How did it come about?” and afterward, “What actually drives me to listen to it?” You can listen to its command like a good soldier who hears his officer’s order. Or like a woman who loves the one giving the orders. Or like a flatterer and coward who is afraid of the one in charge. Or like a fool who obeys because he has nothing to say against it. In short, you can listen to your conscience in a hundred ways. But the fact that you hear this or that judgment as the voice of conscience, that you feel something as right, may come from the fact that you have never thought about yourself, and blindly accepted what has been called *right* for you since childhood. Or it may come from the fact that bread and honor have so far come to you through what you call your duty. It counts as “right” for you, because it seems to be the condition of your existence. (That you have a *right* to exist, though, seems to you beyond dispute!) The firmness of your moral judgment could still be proof of a very personal wretchedness, a lack of a personal

self. Your “moral strength” could come from your stubbornness, or from your inability to see new ideals! And in short: if you had thought more carefully, observed better and learned more, you would no longer, under any circumstances, call this “duty” of yours and this “conscience” by those names. Insight into *how moral judgments came about at all* would make these solemn words distasteful to you, just as other solemn words, such as “sin,” “salvation of the soul” and “redemption,” have already become distasteful to you. Now do not talk to me about the categorical imperative, my friend! That word tickles my ear, and I have to laugh, in spite of your very serious presence. I think of old Kant, who, as a punishment for having *sneaked in* “the thing in itself” (also a very ridiculous matter!), was ambushed by the categorical imperative. With it in his heart, he wandered back to “God,” “soul,” “freedom” and “immortality,” like a fox that wanders back into its cage, even though his strength and cleverness had broken that cage open! What? You admire the categorical imperative in yourself? This “firmness” of your so-called moral judgment? This “unconditionality” of the feeling “everyone must judge this way, as I do”? Admire your *selfishness* in it instead! And the blindness, pettiness and modesty of that selfishness! For it is selfishness to feel *your* judgment as a law for everyone. And a blind, petty, modest selfishness, in turn, shows that you have not yet discovered yourself, that you have not yet created an ideal of your own, your most personal ideal. Such an ideal could never belong to another person, much less to everyone! Whoever still thinks, “In this case everyone would have to act this way,” has not yet gone five steps in knowing himself. Otherwise he would know that there are no equal actions, and there cannot be any. Every action that has been done was done in a completely unique and unrepeatable way, and the same will be true of every future action. All the rules of action refer only to the rough outside, even the innermost and finest rules of all moralities so far. With them you can reach an appearance of equality, but *only an appearance*. Every action, whether you look at it ahead of time or afterward, is and remains an impenetrable thing. Our opinions about “good,” “noble” and “great” can never be *proved* by our actions, because every action is unknowable. Our opinions, valuations and lists of goods surely belong among the most powerful levers in the machin-

ery of our actions. But for each single case, the law of their working cannot be shown. So let us *limit ourselves* to cleaning up our opinions and valuations, and to *creating new lists of goods of our own*. But let us stop brooding over the “moral value of our actions”! Yes, my friends! As for all the moral chatter that some people direct at others, disgust is the right response! Sitting in moral judgment should go against our taste! Let us leave this chatter and this bad taste to those who have nothing to do but drag the past a little further through time, and who are never the present themselves: to the many, the very many! But we want to become who we are: the new, the one-of-a-kind, the incomparable, the self-legislating, the self-creating! And to do that, we must become the best learners and discoverers of all the lawful and necessary things in the world. We must be *physicists*, so that in that sense we can be *creators*. Until now all valuations and ideals have been built on *ignorance* of physics, or in *contradiction* with it. And so: long live physics! And higher still, whatever forces us toward it: our honesty!

336 *Nature's Stinginess.* — Why has nature been so stingy toward human beings that it did not let them shine, some more and some less, according to the fullness of their inner light? Why do great people not have as beautiful a visibility at their rising and setting as the sun does? How much clearer all life among people would be!

337 *The Future “Humanity.”* — When I look at the present from the eyes of a distant age, I find nothing more remarkable about the human being of today than his peculiar virtue and sickness, called “the historical sense.” It is the beginning of something entirely new and strange in history. If this seed were given a few centuries, or more, something wonderful might grow out of it in the end, with an equally wonderful smell, and our old earth would be more pleasant to live on because of it. We people of today are just beginning to form the chain of a future, very powerful feeling, link by link. We hardly know what we are doing. It almost seems to us that this is not a new feeling at all, but the fading of all the old feelings. The historical sense is still something so poor and cold that many people are struck by it like a frost, and made even poorer and colder by it. To

others it looks like a sign of approaching old age, and our planet seems like a melancholy invalid, who writes down the story of its youth so as to forget its present. Indeed, this is one color of this new feeling. Whoever knows how to feel the history of humankind as *his own history* feels, in a huge generalization, all of the grief of the sick person who thinks of health, the old man who thinks of his youthful dream, the lover robbed of his beloved, the martyr whose ideal is perishing, the hero on the evening of a battle that decided nothing and still brought him wounds and the loss of a friend. But to carry this enormous sum of grief of every kind, to be able to carry it, and still to be the hero who greets the dawn and his own happiness when a second day of battle begins. To be a human being with a horizon of thousands of years in front of him and behind him, the heir to all the nobility of all past spirit, and an heir with obligations. To be the noblest of all the old nobles and at the same time the first-born of a new nobility, the like of which no age has yet seen or dreamed of. To take all of this on his soul, the oldest and the newest, the losses, hopes, conquests and victories of humanity. And finally to have all of it in *one* soul and to press it into *one* feeling. That would have to produce a happiness that humans have not yet known: a god's happiness, full of power and love, full of tears and full of laughter. A happiness that, like the sun in the evening, keeps giving away its inexhaustible wealth, pouring it into the sea, and, like the sun, feels richest only when even the poorest fisherman is still rowing with a golden oar! This divine feeling would then be called humanity!

- 338 *The Will to Suffering and the Compassionate.* — Is it good for you yourselves to be compassionate above all? And is it good for those who suffer if you are? Let us leave the first question unanswered for a moment. What we suffer from most deeply and most personally is almost incomprehensible and inaccessible to everyone else. In this we are hidden from our neighbor, even if he eats from the same pot as we do. But wherever we are *noticed* as sufferers, our suffering is explained in a flat way. It is part of the nature of compassion that it strips the other person's suffering of what is truly personal. Our "benefactors" are, more than our enemies, the ones who belittle our worth and our will. Most of the

kindnesses shown to unfortunate people have something outrageous in them: the intellectual carelessness with which the compassionate person plays with fate. He knows nothing about the whole inner sequence and tangle of what is called misfortune *for me* or *for you*. He does not think about the whole balance of my soul, and how it is brought back into balance through “misfortune”: the breaking open of new springs and needs, the healing of old wounds, the throwing off of whole pasts. None of what can be connected with misfortune troubles the dear compassionate person. He wants to *help*, and does not think that there is a personal necessity in misfortune, that terror, deprivation, poverty, midnights, adventures, risks and mistakes are as necessary to me and to you as their opposites. Indeed, to put it in mystical terms, the path to one’s own heaven always goes through the pleasure of one’s own hell. No, he knows nothing of this. The “religion of compassion” (or “the heart”) tells him to help, and one thinks one has helped best when one has helped fastest! If you followers of this religion had the same attitude toward yourselves that you have toward your fellow human beings, if you did not want to let your own suffering lie on you for even an hour, and if you were always guarding yourselves from all sorts of misfortune in advance, if you felt suffering and displeasure in general as evil, hateful, deserving of destruction, a blemish on existence, then you would have yet another religion in your heart, alongside your religion of compassion. And this one is perhaps the mother of the first: the *religion of comfort*. Ah, how little you know about human *happiness*, you comfortable and kind-hearted people! For happiness and misfortune are two siblings and twins, who grow up together, or, as with you, stay small together! But now back to the first question. How is it even possible to stay on *one’s own* path? Some cry for help is always calling from the side. Our eye rarely sees anything without making it necessary, right away, to drop our own business and rush over. I know there are a hundred decent and praiseworthy ways to lose myself from *my path*, and very “moral” ways too! Indeed, the present moral preachers of compassion hold that this very thing, and this alone, is moral: to lose oneself from one’s own path in this way, and to rush to the aid of one’s neighbor. I know just as surely that all I have to do is give myself up to the sight of real need, and I am lost too! If a suffering

friend said to me, "Look, I will die soon; promise me you will die with me," I would promise it. Just as the sight of that little mountain people fighting for their freedom would make me offer them my hand and my life. To choose bad examples for good reasons, just this once. Yes, there is a secret temptation even in all this compassion-stirring and cries for help. Our "own path" is simply too hard and too demanding, and too far from the love and gratitude of others. We do not run away from it unwillingly at all, from it and from our most personal conscience. We take refuge under the conscience of others, and inside the lovely temple of the "religion of compassion." As soon as a war breaks out, the most noble people of a nation are filled with a delight they keep secret. They throw themselves toward the new danger of *death* with ecstasy, because in sacrifice for the fatherland they finally believe they have the permission they have long sought: the permission to *dodge their goal*. For them, war is a detour to suicide, but a detour with a clear conscience. And so, to leave out some things, I will not keep quiet about my own morality, which tells me: live in hiding, so that you can live with yourself! Live *unaware* of what your age thinks most important! Put at least the skin of three centuries between yourself and today! Let the outcry of today, the noise of wars and revolutions, be a mumble to you! You will also want to help, but only those whose need you fully *understand*, because they share your suffering and your hope: your friends. And only in the way you help yourself: I want to make them braver, more patient, simpler, more cheerful! I want to teach them what so few understand now, and what the preachers of compassion understand least of all: *sympathetic joy*!

- 339 *Vita femina*. — All knowledge and all good will are not enough to see the last beauties of a work. It takes the rarest lucky chances for the cloud-veil over these peaks to soften for us one day, and for the sun to glow on them. Not only must we stand in exactly the right place to see it. Our own soul must have pulled the veil off its own heights, and it must need an outer expression and a likeness, as if to have something to hold on to, and to stay master of itself. And all of this comes together so rarely at the same time that I am inclined to believe the highest peaks of all good things, whether work, deed, person or nature, have so far

been something hidden and veiled for most people, and even for the best of them. But what reveals itself to us reveals itself *only once!* The Greeks did pray, “Two and three times all that is beautiful!” Ah, they had good reason to call on the gods, because godless reality gives us the beautiful not at all, or only once! I mean that the world is overflowing with beautiful things, and yet poor, very poor, in beautiful moments and revelations of those things. But perhaps this is life’s strongest magic: a veil of beautiful possibilities lies over it, shot through with gold, promising, resisting, bashful, mocking, pitying, seductive. Yes, life is a woman!

340 *The Dying Socrates.* — I admire Socrates for his courage and wisdom in everything he did and said, and in everything he did not say. This mocking, lovesick monster and rat-catcher of Athens, who made the most reckless young men tremble and sob, was not only the wisest talker there has ever been. He was just as great at keeping silent. I wish he had stayed silent at the last moment of his life too. Then perhaps he would belong to an even higher order of minds. Whether it was death, or the poison, or piety, or spite, something loosened his tongue at that moment, and he said: “Oh Crito, we owe a rooster to Asclepius.” For anyone with ears, this ridiculous and terrible “last word” means: “Oh Crito, *life is a sickness!*” Is it possible? A man like him, who lived cheerfully and in front of everyone like a soldier, was a pessimist! He had only put on a brave face toward life, and had hidden his final judgment, his innermost feeling, all his life! Socrates suffered *from life!* And he took his revenge for it with that veiled, dreadful, pious and blasphemous word! Did even a Socrates have to take revenge? Was a grain of generosity too little in his overflowing virtue? Ah, friends! We must overcome the Greeks too!

341 *The Heaviest Weight.* — What if one day or night a demon crept after you into your loneliest loneliness and said to you: “This life, as you live it now and have lived it, you will have to live once more, and countless times more. There will be nothing new in it. Every pain and every joy, every thought and sigh, and all the unspeakably small and large things in your life, must come back to you, all in the same order and sequence. And so too this spider, and this moonlight

between the trees, and so too this moment and I myself. The eternal hourglass of existence is turned over again and again, and you with it, speck of dust!" Would you not throw yourself down and grind your teeth and curse the demon who said this? Or have you once lived through an enormous moment in which you would answer him: "You are a god, and I have never heard anything more divine!" If that thought took hold of you, it would change you as you are, and perhaps crush you. The question asked about everything and everyone, "Do you want this once more, and countless times more?" would lie on your actions as the heaviest weight! Or how kind would you have to become toward yourself and toward life, so as to *want nothing more* than this last eternal confirmation and seal?

³⁴² *Incipit tragoedia.* — When Zarathustra was thirty years old, he left his homeland and the lake Urmi and went up into the mountains. There he enjoyed his spirit and his solitude, and for ten years he did not get tired of them. But at last his heart changed. One morning he got up with the dawn, stepped out before the sun, and spoke to it like this: "You great star! What would your happiness be if you did not have those you shine on! For ten years you have climbed up here to my cave. You would have grown tired of your light and of this path, without me, my eagle and my snake. But we waited for you every morning, took your extra light from you, and blessed you for it. Look! I am tired of my wisdom, like a bee that has gathered too much honey. I need hands that reach out. I want to give and share, until the wise among people are glad of their foolishness once again, and the poor are glad of their wealth once again. For that I must go down into the depths, the way you do in the evening when you go behind the sea and still bring light to the underworld, you overrich star! Like you, I must *go under*, as people call it, to those I want to go down to. So bless me, then, you calm eye, that can look without envy even at a happiness that is too great! Bless the cup that wants to overflow, so that the water pours out of it golden, and carries the reflection of your joy everywhere! Look! This cup wants to be empty again, and Zarathustra wants to become a human being again." That is how Zarathustra's going under began.

* * *

Book V



We Fearless Ones.

Carcass, you tremble? You would tremble much more if you knew where I am taking you.

Turenne.

343 *What Our Cheerfulness Means.* — The greatest recent event, that “God is dead,” that belief in the Christian God has become unbelievable, is already starting to throw its first shadows over Europe. For the few at least, whose eyes, whose *suspicion*, are strong and sharp enough for this spectacle, some sun seems to have set, some old and deep trust has turned into doubt. To them our old world must seem to get more evening-like every day, more suspicious, stranger, “older.” But on the whole it must be said that the event itself is far too big, too distant, and too far outside the understanding of most people for even the news of it to have *arrived*. Much less do many people yet know *what* has actually happened, and everything that must now fall apart, since it was built on this belief, leaned on it, and grew into it. Our whole European morality, for example. This long run of breaking, destruction, ruin, overturning and collapse that now lies ahead: who today understands enough of it to be the teacher and the forecaster of this enormous logic of terror? Who can be the prophet of a darkness and an eclipse of the sun, the like of which has probably never been on earth before?... Even we, the born riddle-solvers, who wait as it were on the

mountains, placed between today and tomorrow and stretched across the contradiction between them, we firstborn and premature children of the coming century, for whom the shadows that must soon wrap Europe *should* already have come into view. Why is it that even we, without any real concern about this darkening, and above all without any worry or fear for ourselves, look forward to its coming? Perhaps we are still too much under the *immediate effects* of this event. And these immediate effects, its effects on us, are, contrary to what one might expect, by no means sad or darkening. They are more like a new kind of light, hard to describe: happiness, relief, cheerfulness, encouragement, dawn... Indeed, we philosophers and “free spirits” feel, on hearing that “the old god is dead,” as if we were lit up by a new dawn. Our hearts overflow with gratitude, amazement, foreboding and expectation. At last the horizon seems open to us again, even if it is not bright. At last our ships may set out again, may sail out in the face of any danger. Every risk taken by the knower is allowed again. The sea, *our* sea, lies open before us again, and perhaps there has never been such an “open sea.” —

344 *How We Are Still Religious in Some Ways.* — In science, convictions have no right of citizenship, and people say this with good reason. Only when they agree to come down to the modesty of a hypothesis, a provisional position for an experiment, a regulating fiction, may they be let in, and even granted a certain value inside the realm of knowledge. Even then, they stay under police watch, the police of mistrust. — But if you look at this more closely, does it not mean that a conviction may enter science only once it *stops* being a conviction? Would the discipline of the scientific mind not begin by allowing itself no more convictions?... That is probably how it stands. The only question left is whether, in order for this discipline to begin, there must not already be a conviction, and one so commanding and unconditional that it sacrifices all other convictions to itself. You can see that science too rests on a faith, and that there is no science “without presuppositions” at all. The question whether *truth* is needed must not only be answered yes beforehand, but answered yes to such a degree that the statement, the faith, the conviction expressed in it reads: “Noth-

ing is needed more than truth, and compared with it everything else has only second-rank value.” — What is this unconditional will to truth? Is it the will *not to let yourself be deceived*? Is it the will *not to deceive*? The will to truth could be understood in this last way too, if under the general rule “I will not deceive” you also include the particular case “I will not deceive myself.” But why not deceive? And why not let yourself be deceived? — Notice that the reasons for the first lie on a completely different ground from the reasons for the second. One does not want to be deceived, on the assumption that being deceived is harmful, dangerous, fateful. In this sense science would be a long prudence, a caution, a usefulness, against which one may fairly object: is it really true that wanting not to be deceived is less harmful, less dangerous, less fateful? What do you know in advance about the character of existence, so that you can decide whether the greater advantage lies with the person who is completely mistrustful or with the one who is completely trusting? And if both were necessary, a lot of trust and a lot of mistrust, then where would science get its unconditional faith, the conviction it rests on, that truth is more important than any other thing, even more than every other conviction? This very conviction could not have arisen if truth and untruth had both kept proving useful, as they do. So the faith in science, which is undeniably there, *cannot* have come from such a calculation of usefulness. It must have arisen rather *in spite of* the constant proof that the will to truth, “truth at any price,” is useless and dangerous. “At any price”: oh, we understand that well enough, once we have offered one faith after another on this altar and slaughtered it! So “will to truth” does not mean “I will not let myself be deceived,” but, since there is no other choice, “I will not deceive, not even myself.” — *and with this we stand on the ground of morality*. For you need only ask yourself carefully, “Why do you not want to deceive?” especially if it seems, and it does seem, as if life were built on appearance, I mean on error, fraud, pretense, dazzling, self-dazzling. And if, on the other hand, the great forms of life have actually always sided with the most unscrupulous *polytropoi*. Such a resolve might, read generously, be a bit of Don Quixote, a small enthusiastic madness. But it might also be something worse: a principle hostile to life, a destructive one.... “Will to truth” could be a hidden

will to death. — In this way the question “why science?” leads back to the moral problem: *what is morality for at all*, if life, nature and history are “immoral”? There is no doubt that the truthful person, in that bold and final sense that the faith in science assumes, *affirms another world* than the world of life, nature and history. And insofar as he affirms this “other world,” must he not, by that very fact, *deny* its counterpart, this world, our world?... But you will have understood what I am getting at: our faith in science still rests on a *meta-physical faith*. We knowers of today, we godless ones and opponents of metaphysics, still take *our* fire from the blaze that a faith thousands of years old lit, the Christian faith, which was also Plato’s faith, that God is truth, that truth is divine.... But what if this is becoming more and more unbelievable, if nothing proves itself divine anymore except error, blindness and lying, if God himself turns out to be our longest lie?

345 *Morality as a Problem.* — The lack of a real personality takes revenge everywhere. A weakened, thin, extinguished personality that denies and disowns itself is no good for anything worthwhile anymore, least of all for philosophy. “Selflessness” has no value in heaven or on earth. The great problems all require *great love*, and only strong, rounded, secure minds are capable of it, minds that sit firmly on themselves. It makes a big difference whether a thinker stands *personally* toward his problems, so that his fate, his distress and also his greatest happiness are in them, or whether he is “impersonal,” that is, knows how to touch and grasp them only with the feelers of cold, curious thought. In the second case nothing comes of it. That much can be promised. The great problems, even if they can be grasped at all, cannot be *beld* by frogs and weaklings. That has been their taste forever, a taste they share with all the worthy little women. — How is it, then, that I have not yet met anyone, even in books, who stood as a person in this position toward morality, who knew morality as a problem, and this problem as *his own* personal distress, torment, delight and passion? Clearly, morality has not been a problem at all until now. It has been the very thing on which people agreed, after all their mistrust, division and contradiction: the sacred place of peace where thinkers rest even from themselves,

catch their breath, and come back to life. I see no one who has dared a *critique* of moral value judgments. I even miss the attempts of scientific curiosity, of the spoiled, tempting imagination of psychologists and historians, which easily anticipates a problem and grabs it in passing, without really knowing what it has grabbed. I have found barely a few sparse beginnings toward a *story of the origin* of these feelings and valuations (which is something different from a critique of them, and once more something different from the history of ethical systems). In one case I did everything I could to encourage an inclination and a talent for this kind of history. In vain, it seems to me today. These historians of morality, especially the English, are not of much use. They usually still stand, without suspecting it, innocently under the command of some particular morality, and without knowing it they serve as shield-bearers and retinue for it. Take that old popular superstition of Christian Europe, still repeated so trustingly, that the mark of a moral action lies in the selfless, the self-denying, the self-sacrificing, or in sympathy and compassion. Their usual mistake in assumptions is that they claim some agreement among peoples, at least among the tame peoples, about certain propositions of morality, and from this they infer their unconditional binding force, also for you and me. Or else, conversely, once it has dawned on them that the moral valuations of different peoples are *necessarily* different, they conclude that *all* morality is not binding. Both are equally big childishness. The mistake of the finer ones among them is that they uncover and criticize the perhaps foolish opinions a people has about its morality, or people have about all human morality: their origin, religious sanction, the superstition of free will and such things. And by this they believe they have criticized morality itself. But the value of a precept "you shall" is still thoroughly different from, and independent of, opinions of this kind about it, and of the weeds of error it may be overgrown with. Just as surely, the value of a medicine for a sick person is completely independent of whether the sick person thinks about medicine scientifically or like an old woman. A morality might even have grown out of an error. Even with that insight, the problem of

its value would not have been touched. — So no one has yet tested the *value* of that most famous of all medicines, called morality. What this first requires is that we *call it into question*. Well, then! That is exactly what our work is.

346 *Our Question Mark.* — But you do not understand this? Truly, people will have trouble understanding us. We look for words, and perhaps for ears too. Who are we, anyway? If we simply called ourselves godless, or unbelievers, or even immoralists, using the older terms, we would not believe we had been described at all. We are all three together, at too late a stage for it to be understood, for you to understand, gentlemen of curiosity, what it feels like to be us. No! Not any more with the bitterness and passion of the one who has broken loose, who must still make for himself a faith, a goal, a martyrdom of his own out of his unbelief! We have hardened and cooled in the insight that the world does not go on divinely at all, not even reasonably, mercifully or justly by human measure. We know that the world we live in is ungodly, immoral, “in-human.” For far too long we have interpreted it falsely and deceptively, according to the wish and will of our reverence, that is, according to a *need*. For the human being is a worshipping animal! But he is also a mistrustful one. And that the world is *not* worth what we have believed is probably the most certain thing our mistrust has finally gotten hold of. So much mistrust, so much philosophy. We take care not to say that it is *less* worth it. Today it even seems laughable to us when a human being claims the right to invent values meant to *outdo* the value of the real world. That is exactly what we have come back from, as from a wild aberration of human vanity and unreason that was for a long time not recognized as such. It found its last expression in modern pessimism, and an older, stronger one in the teaching of the Buddha. Christianity contains it too, though more doubtfully and ambiguously, and therefore no less seductively. The whole attitude of “human being *against* world,” the human being as a principle that negates the world, the human being as the measure of things, as the judge of the world, who finally puts existence itself on his scales and finds it too light: we have become aware of the monstrous absurdity of this attitude, and it has grown distasteful to us. We laugh already when we find “human

being and world" side by side, separated by the sublime presumption of the little word "and"! But how? By laughing, have we not only taken one more step in contempt for the human being? And so also in pessimism, in contempt for existence as *we* can know it? Have we not thereby fallen into the suspicion of an opposition, an opposition between the world in which we have so far been at home with our reverences, for whose sake we perhaps *endured* living, and another world, *which we ourselves are*: a merciless, thorough, lowest suspicion about ourselves, which takes ever more hold of us Europeans, and could easily put the coming generations before the terrible either-or: "either abolish your reverences or — *yourselves!*" The latter would be nihilism. But would the former not also be nihilism? *This* is our question mark.

³⁴⁷ *Believers and Their Need for Belief.* — How much a person needs to believe in order to thrive, how much "firmness" he needs, something he will not let anyone shake because he holds on to it, is a measure of his strength (or, to put it more bluntly, of his weakness). Most people in old Europe still need Christianity today, I think. That is why it still finds believers. People are like this: a belief could have been disproved a thousand times, but if they needed it, they would keep holding it to be "true," following that famous "proof of power" the Bible talks about. Some people still need metaphysics. But so does that headstrong *craving for certainty*, which today spills out among broad masses in a scientific-positivist form: the wish to have something firm, no matter what. Because the heat of this craving is so strong, people take the justification of their certainty more lightly and easily. This too is still the craving for a hold, a support, in short, that *instinct of weakness* which does not create religions, metaphysics or convictions of every kind, but does keep them alive. In fact, a haze of pessimistic gloom hangs around all these positivist systems. There is something of weariness, fatalism, disappointment, fear of new disappointment. Or else there is displayed anger, bad temper, an anarchism of indignation, and whatever other symptoms or masks there are of the feeling of weakness. Even the violence with which our cleverest contemporaries lose themselves in cramped corners and narrow places, for example in patriotism (what the French

call *chauvinisme* and the Germans call “German”), or in aesthetic creeds in the style of Parisian *naturalisme* (which pulls out and exposes only the part of nature that causes both disgust and astonishment, and which people now like to call *la vérité vraie*), or in nihilism of the Petersburg kind (that is, in *faith in unbelief*, even to the point of martyrdom for it), always shows first of all the *need* for belief, for a hold, a backbone, a support. Belief is always most wanted, most urgently needed, where will is lacking. For will, as the feeling of command, is the decisive mark of self-rule and strength. That means the less someone knows how to command, the more urgently he longs for someone who commands, and commands strictly: a god, a prince, a social class, a doctor, a confessor, a dogma, a party conscience. From this one might perhaps conclude that the two world religions, Buddhism and Christianity, had their origin, and especially their sudden spread, in a huge *sickness of the will*. And that is how it really was. Both religions found a demand for a “you must,” piled up to absurdity by a sickness of the will and pushed to the point of despair. Both religions taught fanaticism in times when the will had gone slack, and so they offered a hold to countless people, a new way to want, a pleasure in wanting. Fanaticism is the only “strength of will” that even the weak and uncertain can be brought to. It is a kind of hypnotizing of the whole sensual and intellectual system, in favor of overfeeding (hypertrophy) one single point of view and feeling, which then dominates. The Christian calls it his *faith*. When a person reaches the basic conviction that he *must* be commanded, he becomes “believing.” Conversely, one can imagine a joy and power of self-determination, a *freedom* of the will, in which a mind says goodbye to every belief and every wish for certainty, practiced as it is at holding itself on light ropes and possibilities, and even dancing at the edge of abysses. Such a mind would be the *free spirit par excellence*.

348 *Where Scholars Come From.* — In Europe the scholar grows out of every kind of class and social background, like a plant that needs no special soil. That is why he belongs, by nature and without choosing it, to the bearers of the democratic idea. But his origin shows itself. If you have trained your eye a little to see,

in a scholarly book or a scientific paper, the *intellectual quirk* of the scholar (every scholar has one), and to catch it in the act, you will almost always see behind it the scholar's "prehistory": his family, especially their jobs and trades. Where the feeling comes out, "that is now proved, I am done with it," it is usually the ancestor in the scholar's blood and instincts who approves of the "finished work" from his own point of view. Belief in proof is just a symptom of what, in a hardworking line of ancestors, was long considered "good work." For example, the sons of registrars and clerks of every sort, whose main job was always to put a mass of material in order, sort it into drawers, and generally make it into a system, show a tendency, if they become scholars, to think a problem almost solved once they have systematized it. There are philosophers who are at bottom only systematic minds. For them the formal side of their father's trade has become the content. A talent for classifying and making tables of categories tells you something. You cannot escape being your parents' child. The son of a lawyer will have to be a lawyer as a researcher too. First of all he wants to win his case, and perhaps only second, to be right. You can recognize the sons of Protestant ministers and schoolteachers by the naive certainty with which, as scholars, they treat their point as proved as soon as they have stated it boldly and warmly. They are thoroughly used to people *believing* them. That was part of their fathers' "trade"! A Jew, on the other hand, given the business background and the history of his people, is least used to exactly this: being believed. Look at Jewish scholars. They all think very highly of logic, that is, of *forcing* agreement through reasons. They know they have to win that way, even where there is racial and class dislike of them, where people are unwilling to believe them. For nothing is more democratic than logic. It recognizes no personal prestige, and it takes crooked noses for straight ones. (By the way, Europe owes the Jews no small thanks for logic, and for *cleaner* habits of thinking. The Germans, in particular, a sadly unreasonable race, still have to have their heads washed first. Wherever Jews have gained influence, they have taught people to make finer distinctions, to draw sharper conclusions, and to write more brightly and cleanly. Their task has always been to bring a people "to reason.")

349 *Once More on Where Scholars Come From.* — Wanting to preserve oneself is the sign of a state of need, a restriction of the true basic drive of life, which aims at *increasing power*, and which often enough, in that very will, puts self-preservation at risk and sacrifices it. It is telling that some philosophers, like the consumptive Spinoza, saw the decisive thing, had to see it, in the so-called drive for self-preservation. They were people living in need. That our modern natural sciences have become so tangled up with Spinoza's dogma (most recently, and most crudely, in Darwinism, with its incomprehensibly one-sided teaching about the "struggle for existence") is probably due to the origins of most natural scientists. In this respect they belong to "the people." Their ancestors were poor and humble folk who knew all too well, up close, how hard it is to get by. There is something like the stale air of English overpopulation around all English Darwinism, a smell of little people, of need and cramped quarters. But as natural scientists we should step out of our human corner. And in nature the rule is not need but plenty, waste, even to the point of nonsense. The struggle for existence is only an *exception*, a temporary limit on the will to live. The great and the small struggles everywhere turn on superiority, on growth and spreading, on power, in keeping with the will to power, which is simply the will of life.

350 *In Honor of the Homines Religiosi.* — The struggle against the church is certainly, among other things (for it means many things), also the struggle of the coarser, more cheerful, more familiar and more superficial natures against the rule of the heavier, deeper, more contemplative people. That is, the more evil and suspicious people, who brooded with a long suspicion over the value of existence, and over their own value too. The common instinct of the people, its sensual cheerfulness, its "good heart," rebelled against them. The whole Roman church rests on a southern suspicion about human nature, which is always misunderstood from the North. In this suspicion the European South inherited the legacy of the deep Orient, of ancient, mysterious Asia and its contemplation. Even Protestantism was a popular uprising in favor of the honest, the simple-hearted and the superficial. The North was always kinder and shallower

than the South. But it was only the French Revolution that finally and solemnly put the scepter into the hands of the “good human being.” (The sheep, the donkey, the goose, and everything that is hopelessly flat, a screamer, and ripe for the madhouse of the “modern ideas.”)

351 *In Honor of Priestly Natures.* — I think that what the people understand by wisdom (and who today is not “the people”?), that clever, cowlike calm of mind, piety and village-pastor gentleness, which lies in the meadow and *watches* life seriously while chewing its cud, is exactly what philosophers have always felt most distant from. Probably because they were not “the people” enough, not village pastors enough. And they will perhaps be the last to learn to believe that the people could understand something of what is farthest from it: the *great passion* of the knower, who lives constantly, and must live, in the thundercloud of the highest problems and the heaviest responsibilities (so not at all as a spectator, standing outside, indifferent, safe, objective...). When the people form an ideal of “the wise,” they honor a quite different kind of person. And they are right a thousand times over to pay homage, with the best words and honors, to exactly this kind of person: the gentle, seriously simple and chaste priestly natures, and those related to them. Praise in the people’s reverence for wisdom goes to them. And to whom would the people have more reason to be grateful than to these men, who belong to it and come out of it, but who, like the consecrated and chosen, have been *sacrificed* for its welfare (they believe they are sacrificed to God), and before whom it can pour out its heart without fear of punishment, and get rid of its secrets, its worries, and worse? (For a person who “opens up” frees himself, and whoever has “confessed” forgets.) Here a great need rules. Even spiritual filth requires drainage ditches and clean, purifying waters. There is a need for swift streams of love, and for strong, humble, pure hearts who prepare themselves and sacrifice themselves for such a service of non-public hygiene. For it is a sacrifice, and a priest is and remains a human sacrifice... The people feel such sacrificed, quieted, serious people of “faith” as *wise*: that is, as people who have come to know, as “certain” ones, in contrast to their own uncertainty. Who would want to take from them the word and this rever-

ence? — But, as is only fair in the eyes of philosophers, a priest still counts as “the people” and *not* as someone who knows. Above all, because philosophers themselves do not believe in “those who know,” and in this belief and superstition they already smell “the people.” It was *modesty* that invented the word “philosopher” in Greece, and left to the actors of the spirit the magnificent arrogance of calling oneself wise. It was the modesty of monsters of pride and self-rule such as Pythagoras and Plato.

352 *How Far Morality Is Hardly Dispensable.* — The naked human being is generally a shameful sight. I am talking about us Europeans (and not even about the European women!). Suppose the merriest dinner party were suddenly exposed and stripped by a magician’s trick. I believe not only the cheerfulness would be gone, but the strongest appetite would be discouraged. It seems we Europeans simply cannot do without that masquerade we call clothing. But does the disguise of “moral human beings,” their covering under moral formulas and notions of decency, the whole kindly hiding of our actions under the concepts of duty, virtue, public spirit, honorableness and self-denial, not have equally good reasons behind it? I do not mean that human malice and baseness, in short the bad, wild beast in us, is supposed to be disguised. My thought is the opposite: that precisely as *tame animals* we are a shameful sight, and need the moral disguise. The inner human being in Europe is by no means bad enough to “show himself” with it (to be *beautiful* with it). The European dresses himself *in morality* because he has become a sick, sickly, crippled animal, with good reasons for being “tame,” because he is almost a freak of nature, something half, weak, awkward... It is not the terrifying quality of the predator that needs a moral disguise, but the herd animal, with its deep mediocrity, its fear and its boredom with itself. *Morality dresses the European up*, let us admit it! Toward the more distinguished, the more significant, the more impressive, toward the “divine” —

353 *On the Origin of Religions.* — The real invention of the founders of religions is, first, to set up a certain kind of life and everyday routine of custom, which works as a *disciplina voluntatis* and at the same time gets rid of boredom. And

second, to give this very life an *interpretation*, by which it seems to shine with the highest value, so that it now becomes a good worth fighting for, and under some circumstances worth giving one's life for. In truth, of these two inventions the second is the more essential. The first, the way of life, was usually already there, but beside other ways of life, and without any awareness of what value was inherent in it. The significance and originality of a founder of religion usually shows in his *seeing* it, his *choosing* it, his being the first to *guess* what it is for and how it can be interpreted. Jesus (or Paul), for example, found the life of the little people in the Roman province already there: a modest, virtuous, oppressed life. He interpreted it. He put the highest meaning and value into it. And with that came the courage to despise every other way of life, the quiet fanaticism of the Moravian Brethren, the secret, underground self-confidence that grows and grows until at last it is ready to "overcome the world" (that is, Rome and the upper classes of the whole empire). Buddha too found such people, scattered through all the classes and levels of his people, who out of laziness are good and kind (above all harmless), and who, also out of laziness, live abstemiously and almost without needs. He understood that such people must inevitably roll, with all their *vis inertiae*, into a faith that promises to *prevent* the return of earthly toil (that is, of work and of action in general). This "understanding" was his genius. A founder of religion needs psychological infallibility, a knowledge of a certain average kind of souls that have not yet recognized that they belong together. He is the one who brings them together. So the founding of a religion always becomes a long festival of recognition.

354 *On the "genius of the species."*—The problem of consciousness (more exactly: of becoming conscious) comes up for us only when we begin to see how far we could do without it. And physiology and the history of animals now put us at the start of that insight (they needed two centuries, then, to catch up with the suspicion *Leibniz* had raised long before them). For we could think, feel, will, and remember; we could also "act" in every sense of the word. And yet none of this would need to "enter our consciousness" (as the usual image has it). All of life would be possible without its seeing itself, so to speak, in a mirror—just as,

in fact, by far the greater part of our life still goes on without this mirroring, even our thinking, feeling, and willing life, however insulting that may sound to an older philosopher. *What for* do we have consciousness at all, if it is *superfluous* in the main?—Now it seems to me, if anyone is willing to hear my answer to this question and its perhaps extravagant guess, that the subtlety and strength of consciousness always stand in proportion to a person's (or an animal's) *ability to communicate*, and that this ability stands in turn in proportion to the *need to communicate*. I do not mean this to say that the very individual who is a master at communicating and making their needs understood must also, because of those needs, depend most on others. But that is how it seems to me to be with whole races and chains of generations: where need, necessity, has long forced people to communicate, to understand one another quickly and finely, there is in the end a surplus of this power and art of communication, a kind of fortune that has gradually piled up and now waits for an heir to spend it lavishly (—the so-called artists are these heirs, and so are the orators, preachers, and writers, all of them people who always come at the end of a long chain, “late-born” every time, in the best sense of the word, and, as I said, spenders by their very nature). Suppose this observation is right; then I may go on to the guess that *consciousness in general has developed only under the pressure of the need to communicate*—that from the start it was necessary and useful only between one person and another (between those who command and those who obey, in particular), and that it developed only in proportion to the degree of this usefulness. Consciousness is really only a network of connections between people—only as such did it have to develop: a person living alone, like a beast of prey, would not have needed it. That our actions, thoughts, feelings, and movements come into our consciousness at all—at least a part of them—is the result of a terrible, long “must” that ruled over human beings: as the most endangered animal, they *needed* help and protection, they needed their own kind, they had to know how to express their distress and make themselves understood—and for all of this they first needed “consciousness,” that is, to “know” for themselves what they lacked, to “know” how they felt, to “know” what they thought. For, to say it again: a human being, like every living crea-

ture, thinks all the time but does not know it; the thinking that becomes *conscious* is only the smallest part of it, let us say the most superficial, the worst part:—for this conscious thinking alone *happens in words, that is, in signs for communication*, and with that the origin of consciousness itself is laid bare. In short, the development of language and the development of consciousness (*not* of reason, but only of reason's becoming conscious of itself) go hand in hand. Add to this that not only language serves as a bridge between one person and another, but also the look, the touch, the gesture; our becoming conscious of our own sense impressions, our power to hold them fixed and set them, as it were, outside ourselves, has grown to the same degree that the need grew to pass them on to *others* by signs. The sign-inventing human being is at the same time the human being who becomes ever more sharply aware of themselves; only as a social animal did human beings learn to become conscious of themselves—they are still doing it, and more and more.—My thought is, as you see, that consciousness does not really belong to a person's individual existence, but rather to what in them is community and herd nature; that, as follows from this, it has developed finely only in relation to what is useful to the community and the herd; and that consequently each of us, with the best will in the world to *understand* ourselves as individually as possible, to “know ourselves,” will still bring to consciousness only what is not individual in us, our “average”—that our thought itself is constantly, as it were, *outvoted* by the character of consciousness—by the “genius of the species” that commands in it—and translated back into the herd perspective. At bottom, our actions are all personal in an incomparable way, unique, without limit individual; there is no doubt of that. But as soon as we translate them into consciousness, *they no longer seem so...* This is the real phenomenism and perspectivism, as *I* understand it: the nature of *animal consciousness* means that the world of which we can become conscious is only a world of surfaces and signs, a world made general, a world made common—that everything which becomes conscious, for that very reason becomes shallow, thin, relatively stupid, general, a sign, a herd marker; that with all becoming conscious there goes a great, thorough corruption, falsification, flattening to the surface, and generalization. In the end, growing con-

sciousness is a danger; and whoever lives among the most conscious Europeans even knows that it is a disease. As you can guess, it is not the opposition of subject and object that concerns me here: I leave that distinction to the theorists of knowledge who have got caught in the snares of grammar (the metaphysics of the common people). Still less is it the opposition of “thing in itself” and appearance: for we “know” nowhere near enough to be allowed even to *separate* them like that. We simply have no organ for knowing, for “truth”: we “know” (or believe, or imagine) just as much as may be *useful* in the interest of the human herd, the species. And even what is called “usefulness” here is in the end only a belief, an imagination, and perhaps exactly that most fateful stupidity by which we will one day perish.

355 *The origin of our concept “knowledge.”*—I take this explanation from the street; I heard someone from the common people say “he recognized me,” and it made me ask myself: what do the people really mean by knowledge? What do they want when they want “knowledge”? Nothing more than this: something strange is to be traced back to something *familiar*. And we philosophers—have we really meant anything more by knowledge? The familiar, that is: what we are used to, so that we no longer wonder at it, our everyday life, some rule we are stuck in, anything at all in which we know ourselves to be at home:—what? Is our need to know not exactly this need for the familiar, the will to uncover, among everything strange, unusual, and questionable, something that no longer unsettles us? Should it not be the *instinct of fear* that bids us know? Should the rejoicing of the one who knows not be exactly the rejoicing at a regained feeling of security?... This philosopher fancied that the world was “known” once he had traced it back to the “idea”: ah, was it not because the “idea” was so familiar to him, so customary? because he was so little afraid of the “idea” any more?—Oh, how easily satisfied those who know are! Just look at their principles and their solutions to the riddles of the world with that in mind! When they find again in things, among things, behind things something that is, unfortunately, all too familiar to us, for example our multiplication table, or our logic, or our willing and desiring, how happy they are at once! For

“what is familiar is known”: on this they agree. Even the most cautious among them think that the familiar is at the very least *easier to know* than the strange; that it is, for example, a rule of method to start from the “inner world,” from the “facts of consciousness,” because it is the world *more familiar to us*! Error of errors! The familiar is the customary; and the customary is the hardest thing to “know,” that is, to see as a problem, that is, to see as strange, as distant, as “outside us”... The great certainty of the natural sciences, compared with psychology and the critique of the elements of consciousness—*unnatural* sciences, as one might almost say—rests precisely on their taking the *strange* as their object, whereas it is almost something self-contradictory and absurd to *want* to take what is not strange as an object at all...

356 *How far things in Europe will become ever more “artistic.”*—The care for making a living still forces on almost every European man—even today, in our age of transition, when so much is ceasing to compel—a definite *role*, their so-called profession. A few keep the freedom, an apparent freedom, to choose this role themselves; for most, it is chosen. The result is strange enough: almost all Europeans, at a more advanced age, mistake themselves for their role; they themselves are the victims of their “good acting,” they themselves have forgotten how much chance, mood, and arbitrariness had them at their disposal at the time when their “profession” was decided—and how many other roles they might perhaps have been able to play: for now it is too late! Seen more deeply, the role has really *become* character, art has become nature. There were ages when people believed, with stiff confidence, even with piety, that they were predestined for precisely this business, precisely this way of earning their bread, and flatly refused to admit the chance in it, the role, the arbitrary: social ranks, guilds, and inherited trade privileges, with the help of this belief, managed to put up those monsters of broad social towers that mark the Middle Ages and of which at least one thing remains to be praised: the ability to last (—and lasting is a value of the first rank on earth!). But there are opposite ages, the truly democratic ones, in which people unlearn this belief more and more, and a certain bold belief and viewpoint of the opposite comes to the front, that

Athenian belief first noticed in the age of Pericles, that American belief of today which increasingly wants to become the European belief too: where the individual is convinced they can do just about everything, is up to just about *any role*, where everyone experiments with themselves, improvises, tries anew, tries with delight, where all nature ceases and becomes art... The Greeks, having once entered into this *belief in roles*—an artist’s belief, if you like—went through, as is well known, step by step, a strange transformation that is not in every respect worth imitating: *they really became actors*; as such they bewitched and overcame the whole world and finally even the “world conqueror” (for the little Greek actor conquered Rome, and *not*, as the innocent are accustomed to say, Greek culture...). But what I fear, what one can already grasp with one’s hands today, if one had a mind to reach for it: we modern people are already quite on the same road; and every time a person begins to discover how far they play a role and how far they *can* be an actor, they *become* an actor... With that, a new flora and fauna of human beings comes up, which cannot grow in firmer, more limited ages—or are left “down below,” under the ban and suspicion of dishonor—; with it there come up every time the most interesting and maddest ages of history, in which the “actors,” *all* kinds of actors, are the real masters. Just by this, another kind of human being is put at an ever deeper disadvantage and finally made impossible, above all the great “builders”; now the power to build is paralyzed; the courage to make plans far ahead is discouraged; the organizing geniuses begin to be lacking;—who still dares now to undertake works whose completion would require one to *count on* thousands of years? That basic belief is dying out, on the strength of which a person could count in this way, make promises, anticipate the future in a plan, sacrifice it to their plan—namely, that a human being has worth and meaning only insofar as they are a *stone in a great building*: for which they must above all be firm, must be “stone”... Above all not—an actor! To put it briefly—ah, it will be kept quiet long enough yet!—what from now on is no longer built, can no longer be built, is a society in the old sense of the word; to build this building everything is lacking, above all the material. *None of us is material for a society any more*: that is a truth whose time has come! It seems to me a matter of indifference that

for the time being the most shortsighted, perhaps most honest, and at any rate loudest kind of human being there is today, our gentlemen the Socialists, believe, hope, dream, and above all shout and write roughly the opposite; one reads their future word “free society” already on all tables and walls. Free society? Yes! Yes! But you know, gentlemen, what it is built from? From wooden iron! From the famous wooden iron! And not even from wooden...

³⁵⁷ *On the old problem: “What is German?”*—Count up for yourself the real achievements of philosophical thought that we owe to German minds: can they, in any permissible sense, also be credited to the whole race? May we say that they are at the same time the work of the “German soul,” or at least a symptom of it, in the sense in which we are used to taking Plato’s idea-mania, his almost religious madness for forms, as an event and a testimony of the “Greek soul” at the same time? Or would the opposite be true? Would they be just as individual, just as much an *exception* to the spirit of the race, as Goethe’s paganism was, with a good conscience? Or as Bismarck’s Machiavellianism, his so-called “realpolitik,” is among Germans, with a good conscience? Did our philosophers perhaps even contradict the *need* of the “German soul”? In short, were the German philosophers really—philosophical *Germans*?—I recall three cases. First, *Leibniz*’s incomparable insight, in which he was proved right not only against Descartes but against everything that had philosophized before him,—that consciousness is only an accident of the mental image, *not* its necessary and essential attribute; that what we call consciousness therefore makes up only one state of our mental and spiritual world (perhaps a diseased state) and *by no means that world itself*:—is there anything German in this thought, whose depth is not exhausted even today? Is there any reason to suppose that a Latin would not easily have come upon this reversal of how things appear?—for it is a reversal. Let us recall, second, *Kant*’s enormous question mark, which he wrote beside the concept of “causality,”—not that he doubted its right to exist at all, as Hume did: rather, he began carefully to mark off the realm within which this concept has any meaning (people have not finished fixing this boundary even now). Let us take, third, *Hegel*’s astonishing stroke, which

reached right through all logical habits and indulgences when he dared to teach that the species-concepts develop *out of one another*: by this proposition the minds of Europe were shaped in advance for the last great scientific movement, Darwinism—for without Hegel, no Darwin. Is there anything German in this Hegelian novelty, which first brought the decisive concept of “development” into science?—Yes, without any doubt: in all three cases we feel that something of ourselves has been “uncovered” and guessed, and we are grateful for it and surprised at the same time; each of these three propositions is a thought-provoking piece of German self-knowledge, self-experience, self-grasping. “Our inner world is much richer, wider, more hidden,” so we feel with Leibniz; as Germans we doubt with Kant the final validity of the findings of natural science and of everything that *can* be known by cause and effect: the knowable, as such, already seems to us to be of *lesser* value. We Germans are Hegelians even if there had never been a Hegel, insofar as we (in contrast to all Latins) instinctively ascribe a deeper meaning and richer value to becoming, to development, than to what “is”—we hardly believe in the justification of the concept “being”—; and likewise insofar as we are not inclined to concede that our human logic is logic in itself, the only kind of logic (we would rather persuade ourselves that it is only a special case, and perhaps one of the strangest and stupidest—). A fourth question would be whether *Schopenhauer* too, with his pessimism, that is, the problem of the *value of existence*, had to be a German. I think not. The event after which this problem could be expected with certainty, so that an astronomer of the soul could have calculated the day and hour for it—the decline of belief in the Christian God, the victory of scientific atheism—is an event for all of Europe, in which all races are supposed to have their share of merit and honor. Conversely, it should be charged to the Germans—those Germans with whom *Schopenhauer* lived at the same time—that they *delayed* this victory of atheism longest and most dangerously; Hegel in particular was its delayer par excellence, in keeping with the grandiose attempt he made to persuade us, at the very last, of the divinity of existence, with the help of our sixth sense, the “historical sense.” As a philosopher, *Schopenhauer* was the *first* avowed and unbending atheist that we Germans have had: his enmity toward

Hegel had its background here. That existence is not divine counted for him as something given, tangible, beyond discussion; he lost his philosopher's composure every time and fell into indignation when he saw anyone hesitate and make detours on this point. Here lies all his integrity: unconditional, honest atheism is precisely the *presupposition* of the way he poses his problem, as a victory of the European conscience, won at last and with difficulty, as the most consequential act of a two-thousand-year discipline toward truth, which in the end forbids itself the *lie* in the belief in God... One sees what actually won out over the Christian God: Christian morality itself, the ever more strictly taken concept of truthfulness, the confessor's subtlety of the Christian conscience, translated and sublimated into the scientific conscience, into intellectual cleanliness at any price. To look at nature as if it were a proof of the goodness and care of a god; to interpret history in honor of a divine reason, as constant testimony to a moral world order and moral final purposes; to explain one's own experiences as pious people have long enough explained them, as if everything were providence, everything a hint, everything thought up and sent for the sake of the soul's salvation: that is now *over*, it has the conscience *against* it, it counts with every finer conscience as indecent, dishonest, as lying, effeminacy, weakness, cowardice—with this severity, if with anything, we are *good* Europeans and heirs of Europe's longest and bravest self-overcoming. As we thrust the Christian interpretation from us in this way and condemn its "meaning" as counterfeiting, Schopenhauer's question comes at us at once in a terrible way: *does existence have a meaning at all?*—that question which will need a few centuries to be heard even fully and in all its depth. What Schopenhauer himself answered to this question was—forgive me—something hasty, youthful, only a settlement, a stopping and getting stuck in exactly those Christian-ascetic moral outlooks from which, together with the belief in God, *belief had been withdrawn*... But he *posed the question*—as a good European, as I said, and *not* as a German.—Or might the Germans, at least by the way in which they took hold of Schopenhauer's question, have shown their inner belonging and kinship, their preparation, their *need* for his problem? That after Schopenhauer there was thinking and printing about the problem he set up in Germany too

—late enough, by the way!—is certainly not enough to decide in favor of this closer belonging; one could even bring the peculiar *clumsiness* of this post-Schopenhauerian pessimism to bear against it—the Germans plainly did not behave in it as in their element. I am not alluding here at all to Eduard von Hartmann; on the contrary, my old suspicion has not been lifted even today that he is too *clever* for us, I mean, that as a wicked rogue he may from the beginning have been making fun of more than German pessimism—that in the end he might even “bequeath” to the Germans, in his will, how far they themselves could be made fools of in the founding era. But I ask: should one perhaps count old Bahnsen, that humming top, to the Germans’ credit, who all his life spun with delight around his real-dialectical misery and his “personal bad luck”—would that be especially German? (I recommend his writings, by the way, for the very use I have made of them myself, as anti-pessimistic fare, namely for the sake of his *psychological elegances*, with which, it seems to me, even the most constipated body and mind can be reached.) Or might one count such dilettantes and old maids as the sugary apostle of virginity, Mainländer, among the real Germans? In the end he will have been a Jew (—all Jews turn sugary when they moralize). Neither Bahnsen, nor Mainländer, nor certainly Eduard von Hartmann gives us a sure handle on the question whether Schopenhauer’s pessimism—his horrified gaze into a world that had been stripped of the divine and had become stupid, blind, mad, and questionable, his *honest* horror...—was not only an exceptional case among Germans but a *German* event: whereas everything else that stands in the foreground, our brave politics, our cheerful flag-waving, which resolutely enough looks at all things from a not very philosophical principle (“Germany, Germany above all”), that is, under the aspect of the species, namely the German species, testifies with great clarity to the opposite. No! The Germans of today are *not* pessimists! And Schopenhauer was a pessimist, to say it once more, as a good European and *not* as a German.—

358 *The peasants' revolt of the spirit.*—We Europeans stand in view of an enormous world of ruins, where some things still tower high, where much stands rotten and uncanny, but most already lies on the ground, picturesque enough—where were there ever more beautiful ruins?—and overgrown with big and little weeds. The Church is this city of ruin: we see the religious society of Christianity shaken down to its lowest foundations,—belief in God is overturned, belief in the Christian-ascetic ideal is just now fighting its last fight. A work built so long and so thoroughly as Christianity—it was the last Roman building!—could not, of course, be destroyed all at once; every kind of earthquake had to shake it, and every kind of spirit that bores, digs, gnaws, and soaks had to help. But what is strangest: those who have taken the most trouble to hold and preserve Christianity have become its best destroyers,—the Germans. It seems that the Germans do not understand the nature of a church. Are they not spiritual enough for it? Not suspicious enough? The building of the Church rests, at any rate, on a southern freedom and free-mindedness of spirit, and equally on a southern suspicion of nature, human beings, and spirit,—it rests on a completely different knowledge of human beings, a different experience of them, than the north has had. The Lutheran Reformation was, in its whole breadth, the indignation of simplicity against something “manifold”—to speak cautiously, a coarse, honest misunderstanding, of which much is to be forgiven,—people did not grasp the expression of a *victorious* Church and saw only corruption; they misunderstood the noble skepticism, that *luxury* of skepticism and tolerance which every victorious, self-assured power allows itself... Today we can see well enough how Luther was fatefully shortsighted, shallow, and incautious in all cardinal questions of power, above all as a man of the people, who lacked any inheritance from a ruling caste, any instinct for power: so that his work, his will to restore that Roman work, became—without his wanting or knowing it—only the beginning of a work of destruction. He unpicked and tore apart, with honest fury, where the old spider had woven most carefully and longest. He handed the holy books over to everyone,—and so they finally fell into the hands of the philologists, that is, of the destroyers of every faith that rests on books. He destroyed the concept “Church” by throwing away

belief in the inspiration of the councils: for only on the presupposition that the inspiring spirit who founded the Church still lives in it, still builds, still goes on building his house, does the concept “Church” keep its force. He gave the priest back sexual relations with woman: but three quarters of the reverence of which the people, above all the woman of the people, are capable rests on the belief that a person who is an exception on this point will be an exception on other points too,—here precisely the popular belief in something superhuman in man, in the miracle, in the redeeming god in man, has its subtlest and most insidious advocate. Luther had to *take away* private confession from the priest after he had given him woman; that was psychologically right: but with that the Christian priest himself was at bottom abolished, whose deepest usefulness has always been to be a holy ear, a silent well, a grave for secrets. “Everyone his own priest”—behind such formulas and their peasant cunning, Luther’s bottomless hatred of the “higher man” and the rule of the “higher man,” as the Church had conceived him, hid itself:—he smashed an ideal that he did not know how to reach, while he seemed to fight and detest the degeneration of that ideal. In fact he, the impossible monk, pushed away from himself the *rule* of the religious men; so he did himself, within the church order of society, exactly what he fought so intolerantly with regard to the civil order—a “peasants’ revolt.”—Everything that grew afterward out of his Reformation, good and bad, and that today can be roughly reckoned up,—who would be naive enough to simply praise or blame Luther for these consequences? He is innocent of all of it; he did not know what he was doing. The flattening of the European spirit, especially in the north, its *turning good-natured*, if one prefers to hear it called by a moral word, took a solid step forward with the Lutheran Reformation, there is no doubt; and likewise through it grew the mobility and restlessness of the spirit, its thirst for independence, its belief in a right to freedom, its “naturalness.” If one wants to grant it, in this latter respect, the merit of having prepared and favored what we revere today as “modern science,” one must of course add that it is also partly guilty of the degeneration of the modern scholar, of their lack of reverence, shame, and depth, of all the naive trustfulness and solid-citizen manner in matters of knowledge, in short of that *plebeianism of the spirit* which is

peculiar to the last two centuries and from which even pessimism so far has by no means redeemed us,—the “modern ideas” too still belong to this peasants’ revolt of the north against the colder, more ambiguous, more suspicious spirit of the south, which built itself its greatest monument in the Christian Church. Finally, let us not forget what a church is, in contrast to every “state”: a church is above all a structure of rule that secures the highest rank for the *more spiritual* human beings and *believes* so far in the power of spirituality that it forbids itself all the coarser means of force,—by that alone the Church is under all circumstances a *nobler* institution than the state.—

- 359 *Revenge on the spirit, and other backgrounds of morality.*—Morality—where do you think it has its most dangerous and treacherous advocates?... Here is a human being who has turned out badly, who does not have enough spirit to be able to enjoy it, and just enough education to know that; bored, weary, a despiser of themselves; unfortunately cheated, through some inherited wealth, even of the last consolation, the “blessing of work,” the self-forgetting in “daily labor”; a person who at bottom is ashamed of their existence—perhaps they also harbor a few small vices—and who, on the other hand, cannot help spoiling themselves ever worse and making themselves vain and touchy through books to which they have no right, or through more spiritual company than they can digest: such a thoroughly poisoned person—for spirit becomes poison, education becomes poison, possessions become poison, solitude becomes poison in people who have turned out so badly—ends up in a habitual state of revenge, of the will to revenge... *What* do you think they need, need absolutely, to create for themselves, in their own eyes, the appearance of superiority over more spiritual people, to create for themselves the pleasure of *revenge carried out*, at least in their imagination? Always *morality*, you can bet on it, always the big moral words, always the boom-boom of justice, wisdom, holiness, virtue, always the stoicism of gesture (—how well stoicism hides what one *does not* have!...), always the cloak of wise silence, of affability, of mildness, and whatever else the idealists’ cloaks are called, under which the incurable self-despisers, and the incurably vain too, walk about. Do not misunderstand me: out of such

born *enemies of the spirit* there arises at times that rare piece of humanity which the people honor under the name of the saint, the sage; out of such people come those monsters of morality who make noise, who make history,—Saint Augustine belongs among them. The fear of the spirit, the revenge on the spirit—oh how often have these driving vices already become the root of virtues! Yes, of virtue!—And, between ourselves, even that philosophers' claim to wisdom which has been made here and there on earth, the maddest and most immodest of all claims,—was it not always so far, in India as in Greece, *above all a hiding place*? Sometimes perhaps from the viewpoint of education, which sanctifies so many lies, as tender consideration for those who are becoming, growing, for disciples who often have to be defended against themselves by belief in the person (by an error)... In the more frequent cases, though, a hiding place of the philosopher, behind which they save themselves out of weariness, age, cooling, hardening, as a feeling of the nearness of the end, as the cleverness of that instinct which animals have before death,—they go aside, grow quiet, choose solitude, creep into caves, become *wise*... What? Wisdom a hiding place of the philosopher from—the spirit?—

360 *Two kinds of cause that people mix up.*—This seems to me one of my most essential steps and advances: I learned to tell the cause of acting apart from the cause of acting in such-and-such a way, in this direction, toward this goal. The first kind of cause is a quantum of dammed-up force that is waiting to be used up somehow, for something; the second kind, by contrast, is something quite insignificant when measured against this force, mostly a small accident, by which that quantum now “discharges” itself in one definite way: the match in relation to the powder keg. Among these small accidents and matches I count all the so-called “purposes,” and likewise the even more so-called “callings in life”: they are relatively arbitrary, willful, almost indifferent in relation to the enormous quantum of force that presses, as I said, to be used up somehow. People commonly look at it differently: they are used to seeing the *driving* force precisely in the goal (purpose, calling, and so on), by a very ancient error,—but the goal is only the *steering* force; the helmsman and the steam have been mixed

up. And not even always the helmsman, the steering force... Is the "goal," the "purpose," not often enough only a flattering pretext, an after-the-fact self-deception of vanity, which does not want to admit that the ship follows the current into which it has happened to fall? That it "wants" to go there *because* it—must? That it has a direction, to be sure, but quite and entirely—no helmsman?—We still need a critique of the concept "purpose."

361 *On the problem of the actor.*—The problem of the actor has troubled me longest; I was uncertain about it (and sometimes still am) whether only from there will one get at the dangerous concept "artist"—a concept treated until now with unforgivable good nature. Falseness with a good conscience; the delight in disguise breaking out as a power, pushing aside, flooding over, sometimes extinguishing the so-called "character"; the inner craving to get into a role and a mask, into an *appearance*; a surplus of abilities to adapt of every kind, which no longer know how to satisfy themselves in the service of the nearest, narrowest advantage: is all that perhaps not only the actor as such?... Such an instinct will have developed most easily in families of the lower people, who had to carry through their lives under changing pressure and compulsion, in deep dependence, who had to stretch themselves supply to fit their blanket, to arrange themselves anew for each new circumstance, to give and present themselves ever differently, becoming gradually able to turn their cloak to *every* wind and thereby almost becoming the cloak, masters of that incorporated, fleshed-in art of the eternal game of hide-and-seek that is called mimicry in animals: until at last this whole capacity, stored up from generation to generation, becomes domineering, unreasonable, unruly, learns as an instinct to command other instincts, and produces the actor, the "artist" (the prankster, liar, buffoon, fool, and clown first, also the classic servant, Gil Blas: for in such types one has the prehistory of the artist and often enough even of the "genius"). In higher social conditions, too, under similar pressure, a similar kind of person grows up: only then the actor's instinct is mostly just barely held in check by another instinct, for example in the "diplomat,"—I would believe, by the way, that a good diplomat would always still be free to turn out a good stage actor too, provided it

were “open” to them. But as for the *Jews*, that people of the art of adaptation par excellence, one would like to see in them, following this line of thought, from the start something like a world-historical arrangement for breeding actors, a real breeding ground of actors; and indeed the question is quite timely: what good actor today is *not*—a Jew? The Jew too, as a born man of letters, as the actual ruler of the European press, exercises this power of his on the basis of his acting ability: for the man of letters is essentially an actor,—he plays, that is, the “expert,” the “specialist.”—Finally the *women*: think over the whole history of women,—must they not be, first and foremost, actresses? Listen to the doctors who have hypnotized women; finally, love them,—let them “hypnotize” you! What always comes of it? That they “present themselves,” even when they—give themselves... Woman is so artistic...

362 *Our belief in a masculinization of Europe.*—We owe it to Napoleon (and not at all to the French Revolution, which aimed at “brotherhood” between peoples and a general flowery exchange of hearts) that a few warlike centuries may now follow one another, which have no equal in history; in short, that we have entered the *classical age of war*, of learned and at the same time popular war on the grandest scale (of means, of talents, of discipline), on which all the coming millennia will look back with envy and reverence as on a piece of perfection:—for the national movement out of which this glory of war grows is only the counter-shock against Napoleon and would not exist without Napoleon. To him, then, one will someday be allowed to credit that the *man* in Europe has again become master over the merchant and the philistine; perhaps even over “woman,” who has been coddled by Christianity and the enthusiastic spirit of the eighteenth century, and even more by the “modern ideas.” Napoleon, who saw in the modern ideas and, directly, in civilization something like a personal enemy, proved himself by this enmity one of the greatest continuers of the Renaissance: he brought up again a whole piece of ancient character, the decisive piece perhaps, the piece of granite. And who knows whether this piece of ancient character will not in the end become master again over the national

movement too, and must make itself, in an *affirmative* sense, the heir and continuer of Napoleon:—who wanted the one Europe, as is well known, and this as *mistress of the earth*.—

363 *How each sex has its prejudice about love.*—For all the concessions I am willing to make to the monogamous prejudice, I will never admit that one can speak of *equal* rights in love for man and woman: there are none. The reason is that man and woman each understand something different by love,—and it is among the conditions of love in both sexes that one sex does *not* presuppose in the other sex the same feeling, the same concept of “love.” What woman understands by love is clear enough: total surrender (not merely devotion) with soul and body, without any regard, any reservation, with shame and horror rather at the thought of a surrender hedged with clauses, tied to conditions. In this absence of conditions her love is precisely a *faith*: woman has no other.—Man, when he loves a woman, *wants* precisely this love from her, and is consequently, for his own person, furthest from the presupposition of feminine love; but supposing that there should also be men to whom, for their part, the desire for total surrender is not foreign, well, then they are simply—not men. A man who loves like a woman becomes a slave by it; but a woman who loves like a woman becomes by it a more *perfect* woman... The passion of woman, in its unconditional renunciation of her own rights, has precisely as its presupposition that on the other side there is *not* an equal pathos, an equal wish to renounce: for if both renounced themselves out of love, there would arise from it—well, I do not know what, perhaps an empty space?—Woman wants to be taken, accepted as a possession, wants to be absorbed into the concept “possession,” “possessed”; consequently she wants one who *takes*, who does not give himself and give himself away, who on the contrary is precisely to be made richer in “himself”—by the gain in strength, happiness, and faith which woman gives him by giving herself. Woman gives herself away, man takes more for himself—I think that no social contracts, not even the very best will to justice, will get us past this natural opposition: desirable as it may be that one not keep the hard, terrible, enigmatic, immoral side of this antagonism constantly before one’s

eyes. For love, thought of whole, great, full, is nature, and as nature is something “immoral” for all eternity.—*Fidelity* is accordingly included in woman’s love, it follows from its definition; in man it *can* easily arise in the train of his love, perhaps as gratitude or as an idiosyncrasy of taste and so-called elective affinity, but it does not belong to the essence of his love,—and so little that one might almost with some right speak of a natural opposition between love and fidelity in man: his love being precisely a wanting-to-have and *not* a renouncing and giving away; the wanting-to-have, though, comes to an end every time with the *having*... In fact it is the subtler and more suspicious thirst for possession in man, which rarely and late admits this “having” to itself, that keeps his love going; so far it is even possible that it grows after the surrender,—he does not readily concede that a woman could have nothing more to “surrender” to him.

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364 *The hermit speaks.*—The art of dealing with people rests essentially on the skill (which presupposes long practice) of accepting, taking in, a meal whose kitchen one has no confidence in. Suppose one comes to the table with a wolf’s hunger, everything is easy (“the worst company makes itself *felt*—,” as Mephistopheles says); but one does not have it, this wolf’s hunger, when one needs it! Ah, how hard fellow human beings are to digest! First principle: as in a misfortune, put in your courage, reach out bravely, admire yourself in doing it, clench your aversion between your teeth, stuff your disgust down. Second principle: “improve” your fellow human being, for example by a praise, so that they begin to sweat out their happiness at themselves; or grab a corner of their good or “interesting” qualities and pull on it until you have the whole virtue out and can tuck your fellow human being away in its folds. Third principle: self-hypnosis. Fix your object of dealing like a glass button, until you cease to feel pleasure and displeasure in it and unnoticed fall asleep, go rigid, gain a bearing: a household remedy from marriage and friendship, amply tested, praised as indispensable, but not yet formulated scientifically. Its popular name is—patience.

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365 *The hermit speaks once more.*—We too deal with “people,” we too modestly put on the clothing in which (as which) people know, respect, and seek us, and so go into society, that is, among the disguised who do not want to be called that; we too do as all clever masks do and politely show the door to any curiosity that does not concern our “clothing.” But there are also other ways and tricks to “deal” with people, among people: for example as a ghost,—which is very advisable if you want to be rid of them soon and make them afraid. Test it: someone reaches for us and cannot get hold of us. That frightens. Or: we come through a closed door. Or: when all the lights are put out. Or: after we have already died. The last is the trick of *posthumous* people par excellence. (“What do you think?” one such person once said impatiently, “would we have any desire to endure this strangeness, cold, grave-like stillness around us, this whole underground, hidden, mute, undiscovered solitude, which with us is called life and could just as well be called death, if we did not know what will *become* of us,—and that only after death do we come to our life and become alive, ah! very alive! we posthumous people!”—)

366 *Before a scholarly book.*—We do not belong to those who come to thoughts only among books, at the prompting of books—our habit is to think outdoors, walking, jumping, climbing, dancing, most of all on lonely mountains or close by the sea, where even the paths become thoughtful. Our first questions of value, concerning book, person, and music, are: “can he walk? even more, can he dance?...” We seldom read, and we do not read worse for it—oh how quickly we guess how someone arrived at their thoughts: whether sitting before the inkwell, with squeezed-in belly, head bent over the paper: oh how quickly we are finished with their book too! The cramped bowels betray themselves, you can bet on it, just as room air, room ceiling, room narrowness betray themselves.—Those were my feelings as I was just closing an upright scholarly book, thankful, very thankful, but also relieved... In a scholar’s book there is almost always something pressing, something pressed: the “specialist” shows up somewhere, with their zeal, their seriousness, their fury, their overestimation of the corner in which they sit and spin, their hump,—every specialist has a hump. A

scholar's book always mirrors a crooked-drawn soul too: every trade draws crooked. Meet again the friends with whom you were young, after they have taken possession of their science: ah, but the reverse has happened all the same! Ah, how they themselves are now forever occupied and possessed by it! Grown into their corner, squeezed out of recognition, unfree, thrown off their balance, lean and angular all over, only at one spot superbly round,—one is moved and says nothing when one finds them again like that. Every trade, even supposing it has a golden floor, has above it also a leaden ceiling, which presses and presses on the soul until it is pressed strange and crooked. There is nothing to be done about it. Do not think it possible to get around this disfigurement by any arts of education. Every kind of mastery is paid for dearly on earth, where perhaps everything is paid for too dearly; one is a master of one's field at the price of being also the victim of one's field. But you want it otherwise—"cheaper," above all more comfortable—isn't that so, my dear contemporaries? Well then! But then you get something else at once, namely, instead of the craftsman and master, the man of letters, the adroit, "many-turning" man of letters, who of course lacks the hump—except the one he makes when he bows before you, as the shop clerk of the spirit and "bearer" of culture—the man of letters, who really *is* nothing, but "represents" almost everything, who plays and "stands in for" the expert, who even takes it on himself, in all modesty, to *have himself* paid, honored, celebrated in the expert's place.—No, my scholarly friends! I bless you even for your hump! And for despising, like me, the men of letters and parasites of culture! And for not knowing how to trade in spirit! And for having nothing but opinions that cannot be expressed in money value! And for representing nothing that you are not! That your only will is to become masters of your trade, in reverence for every kind of mastery and proficiency and with the most uncompromising rejection of everything that is mere show, half-genuine, dressed up, virtuoso-like, demagogic, theatrical in letters and the arts—of everything that, in regard to unconditional *integrity* of discipline and preparatory schooling, cannot prove itself before you! (Even genius does not help one over such a lack, however well it understands how to deceive about it: one grasps this when one has once watched our most gifted painters and musicians

from close up,—all of whom, almost without exception, know how to acquire artificially and after the fact, by a cunning inventiveness of manners, of makeshifts, even of principles, the *appearance* of that integrity, of that solidity of schooling and culture, though without deceiving themselves by it, without silencing their own bad conscience permanently by it. For, you know it, don't you? all great modern artists suffer from a bad conscience...)

367 *What one first has to tell apart in works of art.*—Everything that is thought, poetized, painted, composed, even built and shaped belongs either to monological art or to art before witnesses. Under the latter must also be counted that seeming monologue art which includes belief in God, the whole lyric of prayer: for to a pious person there is as yet no solitude,—this invention was first made by us, the godless. I know no deeper difference in the whole optics of an artist than this: whether they look from the eye of the witness at their work of art as it comes to be (at “themselves”—) or else have “forgotten the world”: as is the essence of all monological art,—it rests on *forgetting*, it is the music of forgetting.

368 *The cynic speaks.*—My objections to Wagner's music are physiological objections: why first dress them up in aesthetic formulas? My “fact” is that I no longer breathe easily when this music begins to work on me; that soon my *foot* turns angry at it and revolts—it needs beat, dance, march; it demands of music first of all the raptures that lie in *good* walking, striding, leaping, dancing—. But does my stomach not protest too? My heart? My circulation? My bowels? Do I not grow hoarse without noticing?—And so I ask myself: what does my whole body actually *want* from music at all? I believe, its *relief*: as if all the animal functions should be quickened by light, bold, unrestrained, self-assured rhythms; as if brazen, leaden life should be gilded by golden, good, tender harmonies. My melancholy wants to rest in the hiding places and abysses of *perfection*: for that I need music. What is the drama to me! What are the convulsions of its moral ecstasies, in which the “people” find their satisfaction! What is the whole hocus-pocus of gestures of the actor!... One guesses, I am by nature essentially anti-theatrical,—but Wagner was, conversely, essentially a man of the

theater and an actor, the most enthusiastic mime-maniac there has ever been, even as a musician!... And, by the way: if Wagner's theory was "the drama is the end, the music is always only its means,"—his *practice*, on the other hand, was from beginning to end, "the attitude is the end, the drama, and the music too, is always only *its* means." Music as a means for making the dramatic gesture clearer, stronger, more inward, and for the actor's appeal to the senses; and the Wagnerian drama only an occasion for many dramatic attitudes! He had, along with all his other instincts, the commanding instincts of a great actor, in everything and anything: and, as I said, as a musician too.—I once made this clear, with some trouble, to an upright Wagnerian; and I had reason to add: "do be a little more honest with yourself: we are not in the theater, after all! In the theater one is honest only as a mass; as an individual one lies, one lies to oneself. One leaves oneself at home when one goes into the theater, one gives up the right to one's own tongue and choice, to one's taste, even to one's bravery, as one has and exercises it within one's own four walls against God and man. Nobody brings the finest senses of their art into the theater, not even the artist who works for the theater: there one is people, public, herd, woman, Pharisee, voting cattle, democrat, neighbor, fellow human being; there even the most personal conscience succumbs to the leveling magic of the 'greatest number'; there stupidity works as lustfulness and contagion; there the 'neighbor' rules; there one *becomes* a neighbor..." (I forgot to tell what my enlightened Wagnerian replied to the physiological objections: "So you are really just not healthy enough for our music?"—)

³⁶⁹ *Our side by side.*—Must we not admit to ourselves, we artists, that there is an uncanny difference in us, that our taste and, on the other hand, our creative power stand by themselves in a strange way, remain standing by themselves, and have a growth of their own,—I mean, quite different degrees and tempi of old, young, ripe, mellow, rotten? So that, for example, a musician could create all their life things that *contradict* what their spoiled listener's ear and listener's heart value, taste, and prefer:—they need not even know about this contradiction! One can, as an almost painfully regular experience shows, easily outgrow

with one's taste the taste of one's power, even without the latter being thereby crippled and hindered from producing; but something reverse can also happen,—and this is exactly what I would like to draw artists' attention to. A constant creator, a “mother” among people, in the great sense of the word, one who knows and hears of nothing but the pregnancies and childbirths of their spirit, who has no time at all to reflect on themselves and their work, to compare, who is also no longer willing to practice their taste, and simply forgets it, that is, lets it stand, lie, or fall,—perhaps such a person finally produces works *which they with their judgment are long since no longer equal to*: so that they say foolish things about them and about themselves,—say them and think them. This seems to me, in fruitful artists, almost the normal relationship,—nobody knows a child worse than its parents—and it holds even, to take a huge example, of the whole Greek world of poets and artists: it never “knew” what it had done...

370 *What is romanticism?*—Perhaps one remembers, at least among my friends, that at the start I went at this modern world with some thick errors and overestimations and in any case as one who *hoped*. I understood—who knows on the basis of what personal experiences?—the philosophical pessimism of the nineteenth century as if it were the symptom of a higher power of thought, of a bolder bravery, of a more victorious *fullness* of life than had been proper to the eighteenth century, the age of Hume, Kant, Condillac, and the sensualists: so that tragic knowledge appeared to me as the real *luxury* of our culture, as its most precious, noblest, most dangerous kind of squandering, but still, on the basis of its superabundance, as its *permitted* luxury. Likewise I interpreted German music for myself as the expression of a Dionysian power of the German soul: in it I believed I heard the earthquake by which a primal force dammed up from of old at last gives itself air—indifferent to whether everything else that is called culture is shaken to trembling by it. One sees, I mistook at that time, in philosophical pessimism as in German music, what makes up their real character—their *romanticism*. What is romanticism? Every art, every philosophy may be regarded as a remedy and aid in the service of growing,

struggling life: they always presuppose suffering and those who suffer. But there are two kinds of those who suffer: first, those who suffer from the *overfullness of life*, who want a Dionysian art and likewise a tragic view and insight into life,—and then those who suffer from the *impoverishment of life*, who seek rest, stillness, a smooth sea, release from themselves through art and knowledge, or else frenzy, spasm, stupor, madness. To the double need of the *latter* corresponds all romanticism in the arts and in knowledge, and to them corresponded (and corresponds) both Schopenhauer and Richard Wagner, to name those most famous and most explicit romantics, whom I *misunderstood* at that time—not, incidentally, *to their disadvantage*, as I may in all fairness be granted. The one richest in fullness of life, the Dionysian god and human being, can afford not only the sight of the terrible and questionable but even the terrible deed and every luxury of destruction, decomposition, negation; in such a one evil, senseless, and ugly seem as it were permitted, as a result of a surplus of begetting, fertilizing forces, which is able to make a lush fruit land out of every desert. Conversely, the one who suffers most, the poorest in life, would need most of all mildness, peacefulness, goodness, in thinking and in acting, if possible a god who would be quite properly a god for the sick, a “savior”; likewise also logic, the conceptual intelligibility of existence—for logic calms, gives confidence—in short a certain warm, fear-averting narrowness and enclosure in optimistic horizons. In this way I gradually learned to understand Epicurus, the opposite of a Dionysian pessimist, likewise the “Christian,” who in fact is only a kind of Epicurean and, like him, essentially a romantic,—and my eye grew ever sharper for that most difficult and most treacherous form of *inference backward*, in which most errors are made—the inference from the work to the maker, from the deed to the doer, from the ideal to the one who *needs it*, from every way of thinking and valuing to the *need* commanding behind it.—With regard to all aesthetic values I now make use of this main distinction: I ask, in every single case, “has hunger or superabundance become creative here?” At first another distinction might seem more recommendable—it is far more obvious—namely, to look at whether the longing for making rigid, for making eternal, for *being* is the cause of the creating, or else the longing for destruction, for

change, for the new, for the future, for *becoming*. But both kinds of longing prove, seen more deeply, still ambiguous, and indeed interpretable precisely according to that scheme put first and, as it seems to me, rightly preferred. The longing for *destruction*, change, becoming can be the expression of overfull, future-pregnant power (my term for it, as is known, is the word “Dionysian”), but it can also be the hatred of the one who has turned out badly, who lacks, who has come off badly, who destroys, *must* destroy, because what exists, indeed all existing, all being itself, outrages and provokes them—to understand this affect, look at our anarchists up close. The will to *make eternal* likewise needs a twofold interpretation. It can come, on the one hand, from gratitude and love:—an art of this origin will always be an art of apotheosis, dithyrambic perhaps with Rubens, blissfully mocking with Hafiz, bright and kind with Goethe, spreading a Homeric light and halo over all things. But it can also be that tyrannical will of one who suffers heavily, struggles, is tortured, who would like to stamp the most personal, most individual, narrowest thing, the real idiosyncrasy of their suffering, as binding law and compulsion, and who as it were takes revenge on all things by pressing, forcing, branding *their* image, the image of *their* torture, onto them. The latter is *romantic pessimism* in its most expressive form, whether as Schopenhauer’s philosophy of will or as Wagner’s music:—romantic pessimism, the last *great* event in the fate of our culture. (That there *could* still be an entirely different pessimism, a classical one—this foreboding and vision belongs to me, as inseparable from me, as my own, my very own: only that my ears resist the word “classical,” it has become far too worn out, too round and unrecognizable. I call that pessimism of the future—for it is coming! I see it coming!—*Dionysian* pessimism.)

- 371 *We who are not understood*.—Have we ever complained about being misunderstood, misjudged, mistaken for others, slandered, misheard, and not heard at all? That is precisely our lot—oh for a long time yet! let us say, to be modest, until 1901—, it is also our distinction; we would not hold ourselves in enough honor if we wished it otherwise. People mix us up with others—the reason is that we ourselves grow, we change continually, we shed old bark, we still molt

every spring, we become ever younger, more future, higher, stronger, we drive our roots ever more powerfully into the depths—into evil—while at the same time we embrace the heavens ever more lovingly, ever more broadly, and suck their light ever more thirstily into ourselves with all our branches and leaves. We grow like trees—that is hard to understand, like all life!—not at one place, but everywhere, not in one direction, but just as much up and out as in and down,—our power drives at once in trunk, branches, and roots, it is no longer free to us to do anything singly, to still *be* anything single... That is our lot, as I said; we grow in height; and supposing it were even our doom—for we live ever nearer to the lightning!—well then, we hold it in no less honor; it remains what we do not want to share, do not want to impart, the doom of height, *our* doom...

372 *Why we are not idealists.*—Formerly philosophers were afraid of the senses: have we—perhaps unlearned this fear too much? We are all sensualists today, we who belong to the present and the future in philosophy, *not* in theory, but in practice, in procedure... Those others, by contrast, thought they would be lured by the senses away from *their* world, the cold realm of “ideas,” to a dangerous more southern island: where, they feared, their philosopher-virtues would melt away like snow in the sun. “Wax in the ears” was then almost a condition of philosophizing; a genuine philosopher no longer heard life, insofar as life is music, they *denied* the music of life,—it is an old philosophers’ superstition that all music is siren music.—Now we today might be inclined to judge exactly the reverse (which might in itself be just as false): namely, that *ideas* are worse seducers than the senses, with all their cold anemic appearance and not even in spite of this appearance,—they always lived on the philosopher’s “blood,” they always drained the philosopher’s senses, indeed, if one will believe us, their “heart” too. These old philosophers were heartless: philosophizing was always a kind of vampirism. Do you not feel, in such figures as even Spinoza’s, something deeply enigmatic and uncanny? Do you not see the spectacle that plays out here, the constant *growing paler*—the ever more idealistically interpreted removal of the senses? Do you not sense in the background some long-hidden blood-sucker, who begins with the senses and finally keeps,

leaves behind, bones and rattling—I mean categories, formulas, *words* (for, forgive me, what *was left over* of Spinoza, the intellectual love of God, is a rattling, nothing more! what is love, what is God, if every drop of blood is missing from them?...) In sum: all philosophical idealism has so far been something like a sickness, where it was not, as in Plato’s case, the caution of a superabundant and dangerous health, the fear of *overpowering* senses, the cleverness of a clever Socratic.—Perhaps we moderns are simply not healthy enough to *need* Plato’s idealism? And we do not fear the senses because—

373 “*Science*” as *prejudice*.—It follows from the laws of rank order that scholars, insofar as they belong to the middle class of the spirit, must not come to have the really *great* problems and question marks in sight at all: besides, their courage and likewise their vision does not reach so far,—above all, their need, which makes them researchers, their inner anticipation and wishing that it might be constituted *thus and so*, their fearing and hoping, comes to rest too soon, to satisfaction. What, for example, makes the pedantic Englishman Herbert Spencer rhapsodize in his own way and draw a line of hope, a horizon line of desirability, that final reconciliation of “egoism and altruism” that he fables about—that nearly makes people like us sick:—a humanity with such Spencerian perspectives as its last perspectives would seem to us worthy of contempt, of annihilation! But already *that* something has to be felt by him as the highest hope which others regard, and may regard, as a mere repulsive possibility, is a question mark that Spencer would not have been able to foresee... The same goes for that belief with which so many materialistic natural scientists are now content, the belief in a world that is supposed to have its equivalent and measure in human thinking, in human concepts of value, in a “world of truth” which could be finally got at with the help of our square little human reason—what? do we really want to let existence be degraded in this way to an exercise for reckoning-clerks and a stay-at-home pastime for mathematicians? Above all, one should not want to strip it of its *many-sided* character: that is required by *good* taste, gentlemen, the taste of reverence for everything that goes beyond your horizon! That only one interpretation of the world should be right, one

on which *you* can stand, on which research and work can go on scientifically in *your* sense (—do you really mean *mechanistically*?), one that permits counting, calculating, weighing, seeing, and touching and nothing more, is a crudeness and naivety, supposing it is not a mental illness, an idiocy. Would it not, conversely, be quite probable that precisely what is most superficial and external about existence—its most apparent aspect, its skin and sensory form—would be the first to be grasped? perhaps even the only thing to be grasped? A “scientific” interpretation of the world, as you understand it, could consequently still be one of the *stupidest*, that is, poorest in sense, of all possible interpretations of the world: this said into the ear and conscience of the gentlemen mechanists, who like to run in among the philosophers today and are quite convinced that mechanics is the doctrine of the first and last laws on which, as on a foundation, all existence must be built. But an essentially mechanical world would be an essentially *senseless* world! Suppose one estimated the *value* of a piece of music by how much of it could be counted, calculated, brought into formulas—how absurd would such a “scientific” estimate of music be! What would one have grasped, understood, known of it! Nothing, positively nothing of what is really “music” in it!...

374 *Our New “Infinite.”*—How far the perspective character of existence reaches, or whether it has any other character at all, whether an existence without interpretation, without “sense,” doesn’t simply turn into “nonsense,” whether, on the other hand, all existence isn’t essentially an *interpreting* existence—none of this can be settled, as is only fair, even by the most diligent and painstakingly conscientious analysis and self-examination of the intellect. For in this analysis the human intellect cannot help seeing itself under its perspective forms and seeing itself *only* in them. We cannot look around our corner: it is a hopeless curiosity to want to know what other kinds of intellect and perspective there *could* be. For example, whether some beings can feel time running backward, or alternately forward and backward (which would give a different direction of life and a different idea of cause and effect). But I think that today we are at least far from the ridiculous immodesty of decreeing from our corner that perspectives

may be had only from this corner. Rather, the world has become “infinite” to us once more, in that we cannot rule out the possibility that it contains *infinite* interpretations. The great shudder grips us once more—but who would feel like immediately making a god of *this* monstrous unknown world again in the old way? And perhaps worshiping the unknown from now on as “the Unknown One”? Ah, too many *ungodly* possibilities of interpretation are counted into this unknown, too much devilry, stupidity, and foolishness of interpretation—even our own human, all-too-human one, which we know...

375 *Why We Seem Like Epicureans.*—We modern people are wary of final convictions. Our distrust lies in wait against the enchantments and the tricks on conscience that lie in every strong faith, every unconditional Yes and No. How is that explained? Perhaps we may see in it, to a good extent, the caution of the “burned child,” of the disappointed idealist, but to another and better extent also the exulting curiosity of a former corner-sitter, whom the corner drove to despair and who now revels and raves in the opposite of the corner, in the unlimited, in the “open air as such.” In this way an almost Epicurean inclination toward knowledge develops, which does not want to give up the question-mark character of things cheaply. So does a dislike of the big moral words and gestures, and a taste that rejects all clumsy, heavy-handed opposites and is proudly aware of its practice in reservations. For *that* is what makes up our pride: this light tightening of the reins on our forward-storming urge for certainty, this self-control of a rider on the wildest rides. For now as before we have mad, fiery animals beneath us, and if we hesitate, it is least of all the danger that makes us hesitate...

376 *Our Slow Times.*—This is how all artists and people of “works” feel, the motherly kind of person: at every stage of their life—which a work each time cuts off—they always believe they have already reached the goal itself, they would always accept death patiently, with the feeling: “we are ripe for it.” This is not the expression of weariness—rather of a certain autumn sunniness and mild-

ness that the work itself, the ripeness of a work, leaves each time in its creator. Then the tempo of life slows down and becomes thick and flowing like honey—until long fermatas, until belief in the long fermata...

377 *We Homeless Ones.*—Among the Europeans of today there is no lack of those who have a right to call themselves homeless in a distinguishing and honorable sense; it is to them above all that I commend my secret wisdom and *gaya scienza*! For their lot is hard, their hope uncertain, it is quite a trick to invent a consolation for them—but what good is that! We children of the future, how could we *possibly* be at home in this today! We are against all ideals on the strength of which anyone could still feel at home even in this fragile, broken time of transition; as for the “realities” of those ideals, though, we do not believe that they will *last*. The ice that still bears weight today has already become very thin: the thaw wind is blowing, we ourselves, we homeless ones, are something that breaks up ice and other all-too-thin “realities”... We “conserve” nothing, we also do not want to go back to any past, we are not “liberal” at all, we do not work for “progress,” we do not need to plug our ears against the future sirens of the marketplace—what they sing, “equal rights,” “free society,” “no more masters and no servants,” does not tempt us!—we simply do not consider it desirable that the kingdom of justice and harmony be founded on earth (because it would in any case be the kingdom of the deepest mediocrity and Chinese-ness), we take pleasure in all who, like us, love danger, war, adventure, who do not let themselves be bought off, caught, reconciled, and castrated, we count ourselves among the conquerors, we think about the necessity of new orders, even of a new slavery—for every strengthening and raising of the type “human being” also requires a new kind of enslavement—isn’t that so? With all this we must be badly at home in an age that likes to claim the honor of being called the most humane, mildest, most just age the sun has seen so far? It is bad enough that we have all the uglier ulterior thoughts precisely at these beautiful words! That we see in them only the expression—also the masquerade—of deep weakening, weariness, age, declining strength! What can it matter to us what tinsel a sick person dresses up their weakness in! Let them

show it off as their *virtue*—there is no doubt that weakness makes people mild, oh so mild, so just, so inoffensive, so “human”!—The “religion of pity,” which people would like to talk us into—oh, we know well enough the hysterical little men and little women who need precisely this religion today as a veil and finery! We are not humanitarians; we would never dare to speak of our “love of humanity”—one of our kind is not enough of an actor for that! Or not enough of a Saint-Simonist, not enough of a Frenchman. One must be afflicted with a *Gallic* excess of erotic irritability and amorous impatience to approach even humanity honestly with one’s lust... Humanity! Was there ever a more hideous old woman among all old women? (—unless it were “the truth”: a question for philosophers). No, we do not love humanity; on the other hand, we are also by far not “German” enough, as the word “German” is current today, to speak in favor of nationalism and race hatred, to be able to take pleasure in the national scabies of the heart and blood poisoning because of which people in Europe now fence themselves off from one another, seal themselves off as if with quarantines. We are too unprejudiced for that, too malicious, too spoiled, also too well informed, too “traveled”: we by far prefer to live on mountains, apart, “untimely,” in past or coming centuries, just to spare ourselves the silent rage to which we would know ourselves condemned as eyewitnesses of a politics that makes the German spirit barren by making it vain, and that is a *petty* politics besides:—does it not need, so that its own creation does not immediately fall apart again, to plant it between two deadly hatreds? *Must* it not want to make Europe’s division into petty states permanent? ... We homeless ones are too varied and mixed in race and descent to be “modern people,” and so we are little tempted to take part in that lying racial self-admiration and indecency which is put on display in Germany today as a sign of German thinking, and which strikes one as doubly false and improper in the people of the “historical sense.” In a word—and let it be our word of honor!—we are *good Europeans*, the heirs of Europe, the rich, overloaded, but also overly obligated heirs of thousands of years of the European spirit: as such also grown out of Christianity and opposed to it, and precisely because we have grown *out of* it, because our ancestors were Christians of uncompromising honesty about Christianity, who will-

ingly sacrificed to their faith property and blood, rank and fatherland. We—do the same. But for what? For our unbelief? For every kind of unbelief? No, you know better than that, my friends! The hidden Yes in you is stronger than all the Nos and Maybes that you and your age are sick with; and if you must go to sea, you emigrants, you too will be forced to it by—a faith!...

378 *“And Become Bright Again.”*—We who are generous and rich in spirit, who stand like open wells by the road and do not want to keep anyone from drawing water from us: we unfortunately do not know how to defend ourselves where we would like to, and we cannot prevent in any way that people *cloud* us, make us dark—that the age we live in, its “most timely” stuff, that its dirty birds throw their droppings, boys their junk, and worn-out wanderers resting by us their small and great misery into us. But we will do as we have always done: whatever people throw into us, we take down into our depths—for we are deep, we do not forget—and become *bright again*...

379 *The Fool’s Interjection.*—The person who wrote this book is no misanthrope: hatred of humans costs too much today. To hate the way people once hated *the* human being, like Timon, as a whole, without deduction, with a full heart, out of the whole love of hatred—for that one would have to give up despising;—and how much fine joy, how much patience, how much kindness even do we owe precisely to our despising! Besides, with it we are the “chosen of God”: fine despising is our taste and privilege, our art, our virtue perhaps, we most modern of the moderns!... Hatred, on the other hand, makes equal, sets face to face; in hatred there is honor; and finally, in hatred there is *fear*, a large good part of fear. But we fearless ones, we more spiritual people of this age, know our advantage well enough to live without fear precisely as the more spiritual ones in relation to this age. Hardly anyone will behead us, imprison us, banish us; people will not even ban and burn our books. The age loves spirit, it loves us and needs us, even if we had to let it understand that we are artists in despising; that any contact with people gives us a slight shudder; that with all our mildness, patience, kindness to people, and politeness we cannot persuade our nose to give up its prejudice against the nearness of a human being; that we love nature

the less human it is, and art *when* it is the artist's flight from the human being, or the artist's mockery of the human being, or the artist's mockery of themselves...

380 *"The Wanderer" Speaks.*—To see our European morality from a distance for once, to measure it against other moralities, earlier or still to come, one has to do what a wanderer does who wants to know how high the towers of a city are: for that, the wanderer *leaves* the city. "Thoughts on moral prejudices," unless they are to be prejudices about prejudices, presuppose a position *outside* of morality, some beyond of good and evil to which one has to climb, scale, fly—and, in the case at hand, in any case a beyond of *our* good and evil, a freedom from all of "Europe," the latter understood as a sum of commanding value judgments that have passed into our flesh and blood. That one wants to go precisely out there, up there, is perhaps a small madness, an odd, unreasonable "you must"—for we who seek knowledge also have our idiosyncrasies of "un-free will"—: the question is whether one really *can* get up there. This may depend on many conditions; in the main it is the question of how light or how heavy we are, the problem of our "specific gravity." One must be *very light* to drive one's will to knowledge to such a distance, and as it were beyond one's time, to create for oneself eyes for surveying thousands of years, and clear sky in those eyes besides! One must have freed oneself from much that weighs on us Europeans of today, holds us back, holds us down, makes us heavy. The person of such a beyond, who wants to bring the highest standards of value of their time into view, first needs to "overcome" this time within themselves—it is the test of their strength—and consequently not only their time but also their previous dislike of and opposition *to* this time, their suffering *from* this time, their being out of step with the time, their *romanticism*...

381 *On the Question of Being Understood.*—When one writes, one wants not only to be understood but just as surely *not* to be understood. It is not yet an objection at all to a book if someone finds it unintelligible: perhaps precisely this was part of its writer's intention—the writer *did not want* to be understood by "just anyone." Every nobler spirit and taste, when it wants to communicate, also

chooses its listeners; by choosing them, it sets up barriers against “the others” at the same time. All the finer laws of a style have their origin here: they keep away at the same time, they create distance, they forbid “entrance,” understanding, as I said—while they open the ears of those who are related to us in the ears. And let me say it among ourselves and in my own case—I do not want to let either my ignorance or the liveliness of my temperament keep me from being understandable to *you*, my friends: not the liveliness, however much it forces me to go at a thing quickly in order to get at it at all. For I treat deep problems like a cold bath—quick in, quick out. That one does not get into the depths that way, does not get down *deep* enough, is the superstition of those afraid of water, of the enemies of cold water; they speak without experience. Oh! The great cold makes you quick!—And by the way: does a thing really remain not understood and not known for that reason alone, that it is only touched, looked at, flashed at in flight? Must one absolutely first sit firmly on it? Have brooded on it like on an egg? *Diu noctuque incubando*, as Newton said of himself? At least there are truths of a particular shyness and ticklishness that one cannot get hold of in any other way than suddenly—that one must surprise or leave alone... Finally, my brevity has another value: within the kinds of questions that occupy me, I have to say much briefly so that it will be heard even more briefly. For as an immoralist one has to prevent the corruption of innocence, I mean the donkeys and the old maids of both sexes, who have nothing of life but their innocence; more than that, my writings are meant to inspire them, to lift them up, to encourage them to virtue. I would not know anything on earth that would be funnier than to see inspired old donkeys and maids who are aroused by the sweet feelings of virtue: and “I have seen that”—thus spoke Zarathustra. So much for brevity; it is worse with my ignorance, which I make no secret of even to myself. There are hours when I am ashamed of it; but also hours when I am ashamed of this shame. Perhaps we philosophers are all in a bad position with regard to knowledge today: science grows, the most learned among us are close to discovering that they know too little. But it would still be worse if it were otherwise—if we knew too much; our task is and remains first of all not to mix ourselves up with something else. We are something other than scholars,

although it cannot be avoided that we are also, among other things, learned. We have different needs, a different growth, a different digestion: we need more, we also need less. How much a spirit needs for its nourishment, there is no formula for that; but if its taste is directed toward independence, toward quick coming and going, toward wandering, toward adventures perhaps that only the swiftest are up to, then it prefers to live free on slim fare rather than unfree and stuffed. Not fat, but the greatest suppleness and strength is what a good dancer wants from their food—and I would not know what the spirit of a philosopher could wish more to be than a good dancer. For the dance is their ideal, also their art, in the end also their only piety, their “divine service”...

382 *The Great Health.*—We new, nameless, hard-to-understand ones, we premature births of a still unproven future—for a new purpose we also need a new means, namely a new health, one that is stronger, shrewder, tougher, bolder, and merrier than all healths so far. Anyone whose soul thirsts to have lived through the whole range of values and desirable things so far, and to have sailed around all the coasts of this ideal “Mediterranean,” anyone who wants to know from the adventures of their own most personal experience how it feels to be a conqueror and discoverer of the ideal, and likewise an artist, a saint, a lawgiver, a sage, a scholar, a pious person, a soothsayer, a divinely aloof person of the old style: that person first of all needs one thing, *the great health*—a kind that one not only has but also constantly acquires, and must acquire, because one gives it up again and again, and must give it up!... And now, after we have been on our way like this for a long time, we Argonauts of the ideal, braver perhaps than is wise, and often enough shipwrecked and hurt, but, as I said, healthier than people would like to allow us, dangerously healthy, healthy again and again—it seems to us that, as a reward for it, we have before us a still undiscovered land, whose borders no one has yet seen, a beyond of all the lands and corners of the ideal so far, a world so overrich in the beautiful, the strange, the questionable, the terrible, and the divine that our curiosity as well as our thirst for possession have gone out of control—ah, so that nothing can satisfy us anymore! How could we, after such prospects and with such ravenous hunger in conscience

and knowledge, still let ourselves be content with the *present-day* human being? It is bad enough, but it is unavoidable that we look at their worthiest goals and hopes only with a seriousness we can barely keep up, and perhaps no longer look at them at all. Another ideal runs ahead of us, a strange, tempting, danger-filled ideal, to which we would not want to persuade anyone, because we do not readily grant anyone the *right to it*: the ideal of a spirit that plays naively—that is, unintentionally and out of overflowing fullness and power—with everything that has so far been called holy, good, untouchable, divine; for which the highest thing that the people reasonably take as their measure of value would already mean about as much as danger, decay, degradation, or, at the least, as relaxation, blindness, temporary self-forgetting; the ideal of a human-superhuman well-being and goodwill that will often enough seem *inhuman*, for example when it places itself next to all the earthly seriousness so far, next to every kind of solemnity in gesture, word, sound, look, morality, and task, as their most lifelike involuntary parody—and with which, in spite of all that, perhaps *the great seriousness* first begins, the real question mark is first set down, the fate of the soul turns, the hand of the clock moves on, the tragedy *begins*...

383 *Epilogue*.—But as I slowly, slowly paint this gloomy question mark at the end, and am just about to remind my readers of the virtues of the right reader—oh, what forgotten and unknown virtues!—it happens that the most malicious, liveliest, goblin-like laughter sounds around me: the spirits of my book itself fall on me, pull me by the ears, and call me to order. “We can’t stand it any longer,” they call to me, “away, away with this raven-black music! Isn’t it bright morning all around us? And green soft ground and grass, the kingdom of the dance? Was there ever a better hour to be merry? Who will sing us a song, a morning song, so sunny, so light, so fledged that it will *not* scare off the crickets—that instead invites the crickets to sing along, to dance along? And better a simple, peasant bagpipe than such mysterious sounds, such toad croaks, voices from the grave, and marmot whistles, with which you have so far entertained us in your wilderness, my dear Mr. Hermit and Musician of the Future! No! Not

such tones! Let us strike up more pleasant and more joyful ones instead!”—Do you like it that way, my impatient friends? Well then! Who would not gladly do as you wish?

My bagpipe is already waiting, and so is my throat—it may sound a little rough, take it as it comes! That is what we have the mountains for. But what you get to hear is at least new; and if you do not understand it, if you misunderstand the *singer*, what does it matter! That is just “the singer’s curse.” All the more clearly can you hear the singer’s music and melody, and all the better also dance to the singer’s pipe. Do you want that?...

* * *

Songs of Prince Free-as-a-Bird



Appendix:
Songs of Prince Free-as-a-Bird.

- ¹ To Goethe.
What lasts forever
Is only your image!
God, the tricky one,
Is a poets' swindle...
The rolling wheel of the world
Brushes past goal after goal:
Necessity—the grumbler calls it,
The fool calls it—play...
The domineering play of the world
Mixes being and appearance:—
The eternally foolish
Mixes us—in!...
- ² The Poet's Calling.

Lately, to refresh myself,
I sat under dark trees,
I heard a ticking, a soft ticking,
Neat, as if by beat and measure.
I got angry and made faces,—
But at last I gave in,
Until I even, like a poet,
Spoke in tick-tock myself.
While I was making verses,
Syllable by syllable did its hop-la,
I suddenly had to laugh, laugh
For a quarter of an hour.
You a poet? You a poet?
Is your head in such bad shape?
—“Yes, sir, you are a poet,”
Says the woodpecker with a shrug.
What am I waiting for here in the bush?
Whom am I lying in ambush for, robber that I am?
Is it a saying? A picture? In a flash
My rhyme is sitting on its back.
Whatever slips and hops, the poet at once
Cuts it to fit a verse.
—“Yes, sir, you are a poet,”
Says the woodpecker with a shrug.
Rhymes, I think, are like arrows?
How it twitches, trembles, jumps
When the arrow pierces the vital parts
Of the little lizard body!
Ah, you die of it, poor little wretches,
Or stagger as if drunk!
—“Yes, sir, you are a poet,”
Says the woodpecker with a shrug.

Crooked little sayings in a rush,
Drunken little words, how they crowd!
Until all of you, line by line,
Hang on the tick-tock chain.
And there is a cruel pack of riffraff
That likes this? Are poets—bad?
—“Yes, sir, you are a poet,”
Says the woodpecker with a shrug.
Are you mocking, bird? Do you want to joke?
If my head is already in bad shape,
Would it be worse with my heart?
Fear, fear my wrath!—
But the poet—he weaves rhymes
Even in wrath, after a fashion.
—“Yes, sir, you are a poet,”
Says the woodpecker with a shrug.

³ In the South.

So here I hang on a crooked branch
And rock my weariness.
A bird invited me here as a guest,
It is a bird’s nest where I rest.
Where am I? Ah, far! Ah, far!
The white sea lies asleep,
And a purple sail stands on it.
Rock, fig trees, tower and harbor,
Idyll all around, bleating of sheep,—
Innocence of the South, take me in!

Only step by step—that is no life,
Always one leg before the other makes you German and heavy.
I told the wind to lift me upward,
I learned to float with the birds,—
To the south I flew over the sea.
Reason! Irksome business!
It brings us to the goal all too soon!
In flying I learned what had been fooling me,—
Already I feel courage and blood and sap
For new life, new play...
To think alone I call wise,
But to sing alone would be stupid!
So hear a song in your praise
And sit quietly around me in a circle,
You naughty little birds!
So young, so false, so restless,
You seem to me made entirely for love
And for every pleasant pastime?
In the north—I confess it with hesitation—
I loved a woman so old it made me shudder:
“The Truth” was the name of this old woman...

4 The Pious Beppa.
As long as my figure is still pretty,
It pays to be pious.
Everyone knows God loves women,
The pretty ones as well.
He will certainly gladly forgive
The poor little monk
For wanting, like many a little monk,
To be with me so much.

No gray church father!
No, still young and often red,
Often, in spite of the worst hangover,
Full of jealousy and distress.
I do not love old men,
He does not love the old:
How strangely and wisely
God has arranged this!
The church knows how to live,
It examines heart and face.
It always wants to forgive me,—
Yes, who doesn't forgive me!
One whispers with a little mouth,
One curtsies and goes out,
And with the new little sin
One wipes out the old.
Praise to God on earth,
Who loves pretty girls
And gladly forgives himself
Such troubles of the heart.
As long as my figure is still pretty,
It pays to be pious:
As a shaky old woman
May the devil marry me!

5 The Mysterious Boat.

Last night, when everything slept,
When the wind barely ran with uncertain
Sighs through the lanes,
The pillow gave me no rest,
Nor did the poppy, nor what else
Makes one sleep deeply—a good conscience.

At last I put sleep
Out of my mind and ran to the shore,
It was moonlit and mild,—I found
A man and a boat on the warm sand,
Both drowsy, shepherd and sheep:—
Drowsily the boat pushed off from land.
One hour, maybe two,
Or was it a year?—then suddenly
My senses and thoughts sank
Into an eternal sameness,
And a boundless abyss
Opened up:—then it was over!
—Morning came: on black depths
A boat stands and rests and rests...
What happened? someone called, and soon
A hundred called: What was it? Blood?—
Nothing happened! We slept, slept,
All of us—ah, so well! so well!

6 Declaration of Love

(in the course of which, however, the poet fell into a pit—).

Oh wonder! Is he still flying?
He rises up, and his wings are at rest?
What lifts and carries him?
What are goal and pull and reins to him now?
Like star and eternity
He now lives in heights that life flees,
Compassionate even toward envy—:
And high flew whoever even just sees him float!

Oh bird Albatross!
An eternal drive pushes me to the heights.
I thought of you: then tear
After tear flowed from me,—yes, I love you!

7 Song
of a Theocritean Goatherd.
Here I lie, sick in my guts,—
The bedbugs are eating me.
And over there still light and noise!
I hear it, they are dancing...
She was going to sneak over to me
At this hour.
I wait like a dog,—
No sign comes.
The cross, when she promised it?
How could she lie?
—Or does she run after everyone
Like my goats?
Where did her silk skirt come from?—
Ah, my proud one?
Does many another billy goat live
Near this wood?
—How twisted and poisonous
Waiting in love makes one!
So on a sultry night
A poisonous mushroom grows in the garden.
Love eats away at me
Like seven illnesses,—
I can hardly eat anything.
Farewell, you onions!

The moon has already gone into the sea,
All the stars are tired,
Gray comes the day,—
I would gladly die.

8 “To These Uncertain Souls.”
Toward these uncertain souls
I am fiercely hostile.
All their honoring is torment,
All their praise is self-disgust and shame.
Because I do not pull on *their* rope
Through time,
The poisonous-sweet, hopeless envy
Of their looks greets me for it.
I wish they would curse me heartily
And thumb their noses at me!
The helpless searching of these eyes
Shall go astray with me forever.

9 Fool in Despair.
Ah! What I wrote on table and wall
With a fool’s heart and a fool’s hand,
Was that supposed to adorn table and wall for me?...
But you say: “Fools’ hands scribble,—
And table and wall must be cleaned
Until even the last trace is gone!”
Allow me! I will lend a hand—,
I learned to work sponge and broom,
As a critic, as a water-bearer.
But when the work is done,
I would gladly see you, you over-wise ones,
With wisdom, on table and wall, sh.....

10 Rimus remedium.

Or: How Sick Poets Console Themselves.

From your mouth,

You drooling witch, Time,

Hour after hour drips slowly.

In vain all my disgust cries:

“A curse, a curse on the maw

Of eternity!”

The world—is made of bronze:

A glowing bull,—it hears no screaming.

With flying daggers pain writes

Into my bones:

“The world has no heart,

And it would be stupid to be angry at it for that!”

Pour out all the poppies,

Pour, fever! Poison into my brain!

You have been testing my hand and forehead too long.

What are you asking? What? “For what—wages?”

—Ha! A curse on the hussy

And her scorn!

No! Come back!

It’s cold outside, I hear rain—

Should I meet you more tenderly?

—Take it! Here is gold: how the coin shines!—

Call you “happiness”?

Bless you, fever?—

The door flies open!

The rain sprays toward my bed!

Wind blows out the light,—disaster in heaps!

—Whoever didn’t have a hundred rhymes now,

I bet, I bet,

Would be done for!

11 “My Happiness!”

I see the doves of San Marco again:
The square is quiet, morning rests on it.
In the gentle coolness I idly send songs
Up into the blue like flocks of doves—
And I call them back,
To hang one more rhyme in their feathers
—my happiness! My happiness!
You quiet roof of heaven, light blue, of silk,
How you hover protectively over the colorful building
That I—what am I saying?—love, fear, envy...
I would truly gladly drink my soul dry for it!
Would I ever give it back?—
No, quiet about that, you wonderful feast for the eyes!
—my happiness! My happiness!
You stern tower, with what lion’s urge
You rose up here, victorious, without effort!
You ring over the square with a deep sound:
In French, would you be its accent aigu?
If I stayed behind like you,
I would know from what silk-soft constraint...
—my happiness! My happiness!
Away, away, music! First let the shadows darken
And grow until the brown, mild night!
It is too early in the day for music, the gold ornaments
Are not yet sparkling in rose-colored splendor,
Much day is still left,
Much day for writing poems, creeping, muttering alone
—my happiness! My happiness!

12 To New Seas.

There—that is where I want to go; and from now on I trust
Myself and my grip.
The sea lies open, into the blue
My Genoese ship drives.
Everything shines newer and newer to me,
Noon sleeps on space and time—:
Only your eye—enormous
It looks at me, infinity!

13 Sils-Maria.

Here I sat, waiting, waiting—but for nothing,
Beyond good and evil, now enjoying the light,
Now the shadow, all of it just play,
All lake, all noon, all time without a goal.
Then, suddenly, my friend! One became two—
—And Zarathustra walked past me...

14 To the Mistral.

A Dance Song.
Mistral wind, you cloud-chaser,
Killer of gloom, sweeper of the sky,
You roaring one, how I love you!
Are we two not the first gift
Of one womb, destined
For one fate forever?
Here on smooth rocky paths
I run dancing to meet you,
Dancing as you whistle and sing:
You who, without ship or oar,
As freedom's freest brother
Leap over wild seas.

Barely awake, I heard you calling,
I rushed to the rocky steps,
To the yellow wall by the sea.
Hurrah! There you came, already like bright
Diamond rapids of a river,
Victorious from the mountains.
On the level threshing floors of heaven
I saw your horses run,
I saw the carriage that carries you,
I saw your own hand flash
When it brings the whip down
On the horses' backs like lightning,—
I saw you leap from the carriage,
To swing yourself down faster,
I saw you, shortened like an arrow,
Strike straight down into the depths,—
Like a golden ray plunging through the roses
Of the first dawns.
Dance now on a thousand backs,
Backs of waves, tricks of waves—
Hurrah for whoever creates new dances!
Let us dance in a thousand ways,
“Free”—let our art be called,
“Joyful”—our science!
Let us snatch from every flower
One blossom for our fame
And two more leaves for the wreath!
Let us dance like troubadours
Between saints and whores,
The dance between God and world!

Whoever cannot dance with the winds,
Whoever has to wrap themselves in bandages,
Tied up, a crippled old man,
Whoever resembles the hypocrite fellows,
The honor-oafs, the virtue-geese,
Out of our paradise!
Let us whirl the dust of the streets
Into the noses of all the sick,
Let us scare off the sick brood!
Let us free the whole coast
From the breath of withered chests,
From eyes without courage!
Let us chase the sky-clouders,
World-blackeners, cloud-pushers,
Let us brighten the kingdom of heaven!
Let us roar... oh spirit of all free
Spirits, with you, the two of us,
My happiness roars like the storm.—
—And so that the memory of such happiness
May last forever, take its legacy,
Take this wreath up with you!
Throw it higher, farther, further,
Storm up the ladder of heaven,
Hang it—on the stars!