

In searching for pleasure, we create ourselves pain; and seeking to be more happy, we increase our misery; the less we desire, the more we possess. In fine, whatever we wish beyond what Nature has given is pain; and nothing is pleasure but what she offers of herself. Nature presents to us pleasures without number; she has provided for our wants, and fortified us against pain. In the physical world, there is infinitely more good than evil; and therefore it is not the realities but the chimeras which we have to dread: it is not pain of body, disease, nor death that are terrible; but the agitation of the soul, the conflict of the passions, the mental anxiety, are those only we need apprehend.

Animals have but one mode of enjoying pleasure; the satisfying their appetite by the exercise of their sensations. We likewise enjoy this faculty, and have another mode of acquiring pleasure, the exercise of the mind, whose appetite is knowledge. This source of pleasure would be the more pure and copious did not our passions oppose its current, and divert the mind from contemplation. So soon as these obtain the ascendancy, reason is silenced; a disgust to truth ensues; the charm of illusion in-