

[Curley:72](#)

< [Treatise on the Correction of the Intellect](#) >

< and on the way in which it is best directed toward the true knowledge of [things](#). >

On the Improvement of the [Understanding](#)

Treatise on the [Emendation of the Intellect](#) (TEI)

[Weinphal:104](#)—[Correction of Understanding](#)

[EL:\[33\]:xxi](#), [Hampshire:11](#), [Hampshire:13\[2a\]](#)

Circulated Unfinished - Before 1662?

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[1632 - 1677](#)

[Introduction](#)—[Purpose](#) - [CD of Entire Site](#)

[Spinozistic Glossary and Index](#)

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The text is the translation of the "[Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione](#)" by R. H. M. Elwes, (based on [Bruder's](#) 1843 Latin Text), as printed by Dover Publications (NY: 1955) in [Book 1](#). This is, the book assures us, "an unabridged and unaltered republication of the Bohn Library edition originally published by George Bell and Sons in 1883." As it is more than a century old, it is incontestably in the public domain.

JBY Notes:

1. Page numbers given refer to [Book I](#) except where otherwise noted.

2. JBY added the [Paragraph Numbers](#) as given in Spinoza's [Parkinson:286](#)¹⁸¹ "[Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect](#)" from Edwin Curley's translation ([Book VIII](#)) as edited in his "[The Collected Works of Spinoza](#)", Volume 1, 1985, and reprinted in [Book III](#), De Dijn, H. "[Spinoza: The Way of Wisdom](#)" with permission of Princeton University Press, [Book III:xi](#). For Book 1 Page # corresponding to Paragraph #, see Abridged version [Note 5](#).

Book III is valuable for showing Spinoza's [Method](#) for achieving Wisdom (PcM): [Posit G-D](#), [Define Conatus](#), [Define an infinite thing](#) [Burden of TEI](#) by its [Essence](#), and [Define finite things](#) by their [causes](#). These [precise definitions](#) lead to the [understanding](#) which brings [Blessedness](#).

[Book III](#) also has the [Gebhardt](#) Latin text and Curley's English translation on facing pages.

3. Sentence numbers, added by JBY, are shown thus [yy:xx].

yy = Curley's Paragraph Number.

xx = Sentence Number, if given.

4. Spinoza's endnotes are shown thus [a]. The letter is taken from Curley, see [Note 2](#).

5. Symbols:
 (Spinoza's quote or the Latin word),
 [Curley's [Book VIII](#) Translation variation or Footnote], see [TEI:Note 2](#),
] Shirley's [Book VII](#) Translation variation or Footnote [,
 < Parkinson's [Book XV](#) Translation variation or Endnote >,
 > De Dijn's [Book III](#) Translation variation or Comment <,
 { JBY Comment }. [LINKS](#).
6. For Bibliography, Citation abbreviations, and Book ordering see [Glossary and Index](#).
7. Please report errors, clarification requests, disagreement, or suggestions to josephb@yesselman.com.
8. [TEXT version](#). Latin versions; [Book III](#), [CD](#), [MEIJER](#).
9. For the burden of TEI see [POSIT](#).
10. The [secret](#) to understanding Spinoza is to posit [ONE—1D6](#); its [Foundation Rock](#).
11. For HTML version re-formatted for conversion to an eBook see [here](#).
 For HTML version converted for various eBook Readers see [here](#).

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Commentaries from Book III	
De Dijn, H. "Spinoza: The Way of Wisdom." Book III Page Numbers	Para. No.
The Introduction: The General Aim of the Treatise. [1-17]. De Dijn's Commentary Page 30.	[1]
A Short Survey of the Mind: The Means to Obtain the End. [18-29] De Dijn's Commentary Page 50	[18]
The Way and the Method : Spinoza's Methodology . [30-49], De Dijn's Commentary Page 76	[30]
First Part of the Method: The Separation between Intellect and Imagination. [50-90], De Dijn's Page 126	[50]
Elements important for rest of the Method. TEI:Bk.III:137 .	
Second Part of the Method: Rules of Definition . [91-98], De Dijn's Commentary Page 150	[91]
The Order of Thinking. [99-110], De Dijn's Commentary Page 172	[99]

"Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect"

[Book I](#) Page Numbers [Note 3](#)

From Bk.1:v

< [Preface](#). >

Of the ordinary objects of men's desires. Page 3	[3:1]
Of the true and final good. Page 6	[12:1]
Certain rules of life. Page 7	[17:1]
< Introduction . The Kinds of Knowledge and the Nature of Method >	
Of the four modes of perception. Page 8	[19:1]
Of the best mode of perception. Page 10	[25:1]
Of the instruments of the intellect, or true ideas . Page 12	[33:1]
Answers to objections. Page 16	[43:1]

First Part of [Method](#): [Book I](#) Page Numbers

< [Part One](#)—Truth, Fiction, [Falsity](#), Doubt > [Bk.III:52](#).

Distinction of true ideas from fictitious ideas. Page 18	[50:1]
And from false ideas. Page 24	[64:1]
Of doubt. Page 29	[77:1]
Of memory and forgetfulness. Page 31	[81:1]
Mental hindrances from words—and from the popular confusion of ready imagination with distinct understanding . Page 33	[86:1]

Second Part of Method: Rules of Definition.

< [Part Two](#)—Definition and the Order of Investigation >

[Book I](#) Page Numbers

Its object, the acquisition of clear and distinct ideas. Page 34	[91:1]
Its means, good definitions . Conditions of definition. Page 35	[94:1]
How to define understanding . Page 38	[106:1ff]

From [Book III](#), Page 19—

Notice to the Reader.

(This notice to the reader was written by the editors of the [Opera Postuma](#) in 1677. Taken from [Book III:19](#) and [Book VIII:6](#).)

This Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect etc., which we give

you here, kind reader, in its unfinished [that is, defective] state, was written by the author many years ago now. He always intended to finish it. But hindered by other occupations, and finally snatched away by death, he was unable to bring it to the desired conclusion. But since it contains many excellent and [useful](#) things, which—we have no [doubt](#)—will be of great benefit to anyone sincerely seeking the [truth](#), we did not wish to deprive you of them. And so that you would be aware of, and find less difficult to excuse, the many things that are still obscure, rough, and unpolished, we wished to warn you of them.

Farewell.

From [Bk.III:16](#):

Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect and on the way by which it is best directed toward the [t r u e](#) [knowledge](#) of [things](#).

[Cash Value](#)

The [Introduction](#): The General Aim of the Treatise.

[1-11], [De Dijn's](#) Commentary Page 30 - The Perspective of Everyman.

On the Improvement of the [Understanding](#).

Page 3

[Transforms one's life.](#)

[Bk.III:30](#); [Bk.XIB:44](#)¹⁸; [Bk.XX:101](#).

[1] (1:1) After experience had taught me that all the usual surroundings of social life are vain and futile; seeing that none of the objects

[Hampshire:13](#)[3]

[Bk.III:31](#).

of my [fears](#) contained in themselves anything either [good or bad](#),

< [Bk.XV:286](#)¹⁸²—[animus](#) , moved >

[Mark Twain](#)

except in so far as [the mind is affected](#) by them, I finally resolved to

> [try to find out](#) < [\[true \]](#)

[SCR:Dijn'sSalvation](#)

inquire whether there might be some [real](#) good having power to

[\[alone \]](#) [\[rejection \]](#)

communicate itself, which would affect the mind singly, to the exclu-

[{ Deus }](#)

[Spinoza's Religion](#)

sion of all else: whether, in fact, there might be anything of which

[{ more or less }](#)

the discovery and attainment would enable me to enjoy [continuous](#),

[E4:Dijn34](#)

[\[joy \]](#) [{ pleasure }](#) < [E1:Bk.XV:260](#)¹ >

supreme, and unending [happiness](#) [{ better °PcM }](#) [Bk.III:238](#)—[Salvation](#).

< [Bk.XV:281](#)¹⁴⁴ on [E4:XXI:203](#) >

[{ EL:\[39\]:xxiii, E2:XLIX\(62\):126, E5:XLII\(9\):270. }](#)

{ Aristotle "[Nicomachean Ethics](#)" Book I:

"Shall we not, like [archers](#) who have a mark to aim at, be more likely to hit upon what we should? If so, we must try, in outline at least, to determine what it is, . . . " }

[Bk.XX:102](#)so.

[2] (2:1) I say "I *finally* resolved," for at first sight it seemed unwise

willingly to lose hold on what was sure for the sake of something

[Bk.III:31](#).

then uncertain. (2:2) I could see the benefits which are acquired

through fame and riches, and that I should be obliged to abandon

the quest of such objects, if I seriously devoted myself to the

search for something different and new. (2:3) I perceived that if [true](#)

[happiness](#) chanced to be placed in the former I should necessarily

miss it; while if, on the other hand, it were not so placed, and I gave

them my whole attention, I should equally fail.

Of the ordinary objects of men's desires.

[Bk.III:32](#)—reach

[3] (3:1) I therefore debated whether it would not be possible to arrive

[[goal](#)]

at the [new principle](#), or at any rate at a [certainty](#) concerning its exist-

{ ^ [Foundation Rock](#) }

ence, without changing the conduct and usual plan of my life; with

this end in view I made many efforts, but in vain. (3:2) For the ordinary

surroundings of life which are esteemed by men (as their actions

testify) to be the highest good, may be classed under the three

[Spinoza's highest good](#)

[[Bk.VIII:83](#)—Aristotle "[Nicomachean Ethics](#)" Book I:4]

< riches, honour, and [sexual love](#)—[Bk.XV:286](#)183 >

heads—Riches, Fame, and the [Pleasures](#) of Sense: with these

[Idolatry](#)

^ [Bk.III:31](#); [Bk.XIV:2:236](#)2.

[[thought](#)]

three page 4 the mind is so absorbed that it has little [power](#) to reflect

on any different [good](#) {say the [Love of G-D](#), the most immutable love}.

[True Thoughts](#)

[4] (4:1) **By sensual pleasure the mind is enthralled to the extent of**

[at [peace](#)]

[quiescence](#), as if the supreme good were actually attained, so that

it is quite incapable of thinking of any other object; when such

{[irrational](#)} [pleasure](#) has been gratified it is followed by extreme

[[sadness](#)]

[melancholy](#), whereby the mind, though not enthralled, is [disturbed](#)

and dulled.

(4:2) The pursuit of [honors](#) and riches is likewise very absorbing,

[Bk.III:31](#).

especially if such objects be sought simply for their own sake [a],

[[assumed](#)]—{ [Religion](#), [Idolatry](#) }

inasmuch as they are then supposed to constitute the [highest good](#).

[5] (5:1) In the case of fame the mind is still more absorbed, for

fame is conceived as always good for its own *sake*, and as the ulti-

mate end to which all actions are directed. (5:2) Further, the attainment of riches and fame is not followed as in the case of sensual pleasures by [repentance](#), but, the more we acquire, the greater is our delight, and, consequently, the more are we incited to increase both the one and the other; on the other hand, if our hopes happen to be frustrated we are plunged into the deepest [sadness](#). (5:3) Fame has the further drawback that it compels its votaries to order their lives according to the [opinions](#) of their fellow-men, shunning what they usually shun, and seeking what they usually seek.

[6] (6:1) When I saw that all these ordinary objects of [desire](#) would be obstacles in the way of a search for something [different and new](#)—nay, that they were so opposed thereto, that either they or it would have to be abandoned, I was forced to inquire which would prove the most [useful](#) to me: for, as I say, I seemed to be willingly losing hold on a sure good for the sake of something uncertain.

(6:2) However, after I had reflected on the matter, I came in the first place to the conclusion that by abandoning the ordinary objects of pursuit, and betaking myself to a new quest, I should be leaving a good, uncertain by reason of its own nature, as may be gathered from what has been said, for the sake of a good not uncertain in its nature (for I sought for a fixed good [{knowledge of G-D}](#)), but only in the possibility of its attainment.

[7] (7:1) Further [reflection](#) convinced me that if I could really get to the [root of the matter](#) [^](#) I should be leaving certain evils for a certain [good](#). (7:2) I thus perceived that I was in a state of great peril, and I compelled myself to seek with all my page 5 strength for a [remedy](#), however uncertain it might be; as a sick man struggling with a deadly disease, when he sees that death will surely be upon him unless a remedy be found, is compelled to seek a remedy with all his strength, inasmuch as his whole hope lies therein. (7:3) All the objects pursued by the multitude not only bring no remedy that tends to [preserve](#) our being, but even act as hindrances, causing

[Bk.III:31.](#)

[Bk.III:32.](#)

[Bk.III:32.](#)

[Bk.XIB:18](#)³⁵.

[E4:Dijn:34](#)

the death not seldom of those who possess them [b] , and always of those who are possessed by them.

[8] (8:1) There are many examples of men who have suffered persecution even to death for the sake of their riches, and of men who in pursuit of wealth have exposed themselves to so many dangers, that they have paid away their life as a penalty for their folly.

(8:2) Examples are no less numerous of men, who have endured the utmost wretchedness for the sake of gaining or preserving their reputation. (8:3) Lastly, there are innumerable cases of men, who have hastened their death through over-indulgence in sensual pleasure. [Bk.XX:17663, 26254.](#)

[9] (9:1) All these evils seem to have arisen from the fact, that happiness or unhappiness is made wholly dependent on the quality of the { external } object which we love. (9:2) When a thing is not loved, no quarrels will arise concerning it—no sadness be felt if it perishes—no envy if it is possessed by another—no fear, no hatred, in short no disturbances of the mind {decrease in °PcM}. (9:3) All these arise from the love of what is perishable, such as the objects already mentioned. [Bk.XIB:22175.](#) { attachment }

[Short Treatise](#)

{ need } [Bk.III:32; Bk.XIX:29311.](#)
[10] (10:1) But love towards a thing {G-D} eternal and infinite feeds the mind {mystically} wholly with joy, and is itself unmingled with any sadness, wherefore it is greatly to be desired and sought for with all our strength. (10:2) Yet it was not at random that I used the words, "If I could go to the root of the matter," for, though what I have urged was perfectly clear to my mind, I could not forthwith lay aside all love of riches, sensual enjoyment, and fame. < on that account > [greed]

[True Thoughts](#)

[Durant:647\[6a\]160](#)

[Martin Buber](#)

[11] (11:1) One thing was evident, namely, that while my mind was employed with these thoughts it turned away from its former objects of desire, and seriously considered the search for a new principle; this state of things was a great comfort to me, for I perceived that the evils were not such as to resist all remedies. (11:2) Although these

[intervals](#) were at first rare, and ^{page 6} of very short duration, yet [\(highest good\)](#) afterwards, as the [true good](#) became more and more discernible to me, they became more frequent and more lasting; especially after I had recognized that the acquisition of wealth, sensual pleasure, or fame, is only a hindrance, so long as they are sought as ends not as means; if they be sought as means, they will [be under restraint](#), and, far from being hindrances, will further not a little the end for which they are sought, as I will show in due time.

[Simply Posit](#)

[Wolf](#)

[[have a limit](#),]

[Bk.III:31](#).

[12-13], [De Dijn's Commentary Page 33 - The Philosophical Perspective](#).

Of the true and final good. ^{page 6}

[Bk.III:33](#). [\(highest good\)](#)
 [12] ^(12:1) I will here only briefly state what I mean by [true](#) good, and also what is the nature of the [highest good](#). ^(12:2) In order that this may be rightly understood, we must bear in mind that the terms [Bk.III:33](#)—*but only from the perspective of man as inevitably striving to perseve himself.* < [good and evil](#) are only applied relatively ^, so that the [same thing](#) may [{ ^ are subjective terms }](#) [{reference point}](#) be called both good and bad according to the [relations in view](#), in the same way as it may be called [perfect](#) or [imperfect](#). ^(12:3) Nothing regarded in its own nature can be called perfect nor imperfect; especially when we are aware that all things which come to pass, [come to pass](#) according to the [eternal order and fixed laws of Nature](#).

[TEI:\[10\]:5](#)

[Ferguson](#)

[Pure nor impure](#)

[Chain of Natural Events](#)

[13] ^(13:1) However, human weakness cannot attain to this order in its own thoughts, but meanwhile man conceives a [human character](#) much more stable than his own, and sees that there is no reason why he should not himself acquire such a character. ^(13:2) Thus he is led to seek for means which will bring him to this [pitch of perfection](#), [{^P}](#), and calls everything which will serve as such means a [true good](#). ^(13:3) The chief good is that he should arrive, together with other individuals if possible, at the possession of the aforesaid character.

^(13:4) What that character is we shall show in [due time](#), namely, that it is the [knowledge](#) of the ^ [union](#) existing being the mind and the [whole](#) of [Nature](#) [{G-D}](#). [\[C\]](#).

[Ferguson](#)

[14-17], [De Dijn's Commentary Page 36 - The Program for Real Happiness.](#)

[Bk.III:36,142.](#)

[14] (14:1) This, then, is the end for which I strive, to attain to such [E4:Dijn:34](#)

a character myself, and to endeavor that [many](#) should attain to it

with me. (14:2) In other words, it is part of my happiness to lend a help-
ing hand, that many others may [understand](#) even as I do, so that

[Bk.XIB:44](#)¹⁸.

their understanding and [desire](#) may entirely agree with my own.

(14:3) In order to bring this about, it is necessary [\[first\]](#) to under-
stand as much of [nature](#) as will enable us to attain to the [aforesaid](#)

[\[Nature \]](#)

[Bk.III:173.](#)

character, and [\[next\]](#) also to form a [page 7 social order](#) such as is

most conducive to the attainment of this character by the greatest

[< as safely as possible >](#)

number [with the least difficulty and danger {by evolution, not revolution}](#) .

[< Bk.XV:286](#)¹⁸⁷— [E4:XXXVII:211, E4:Ap. VII, XII, and XIV:237,](#) >

[15] [\[Third,\]](#) (15:1) We must seek the assistance of Moral Philosophy

[\[d\]](#) and the Theory of Education; further, as health is no insignificant

[\[Fourthly \]](#)

means for attaining our end, we must also include the whole science

[Bk.XIV:2:265](#)² on [E5:Prf.4:244](#); [Bk.XIA:24](#)¹⁰⁹, [Bk.XIB:238](#)¹¹⁶. [>ingenuity<](#), [<useful arts>](#)

of Medicine, and, as many difficult things are by [contrivance](#)

rendered easy, and we can in this way gain much time and conven-

[\[Fifthly \]](#)

ience, the science of Mechanics must in no way be despised. [Technological Advancement](#)

[Bk.III:39.](#) [{G:Note 8, E3:GN\(2\)n}](#)

[16] (16:1) But before all things, a [means](#) must be devised for improv-

ing the [understanding](#) and purifying it, as far as may be at the out-

[Curley:7](#)

set, so that it may apprehend things without error, and in the [best](#)

[{Neff EL:L42\(37\):360}](#)

possible way. (16:2) Thus it is apparent to everyone that I wish to

direct [all science](#) to one end and aim [\[e\]](#), so that we may attain to

the supreme human [perfection](#) which we have named; and, there-

[Hampshire:110](#)

fore, whatsoever in the sciences does not serve to promote our

[Bk.III:173—E2:Prf:82.](#)

object will have to be [rejected as useless](#). (16:3) To sum up the

matter in a word, all our actions and thoughts must be directed to

this [one end](#).

Certain rules of life. [page 7](#)

[Bk.III:39—Neff TL:L42\(37\):360.](#)

[17] (17:1) Yet, as it is necessary that while we are endeavoring to

attain our purpose, and bring the [understanding](#) into the right path, [Fourth Noble Truth](#)

we should carry on our life, we are compelled first of all to lay down

certain rules of life as provisionally [good](#), to wit the following:—

[Bk.XIA:53](#)¹⁴³.

I. (17:2) To speak in a manner intelligible to the multitude, and to [comply](#) with every general custom that does not hinder the attainment of our [purpose](#). (17:3) For we can gain from the multitude no small advantages, provided that we strive to accommodate ourselves to its [understanding](#) as far as possible: moreover, we shall in this way gain a friendly audience for the reception of the truth.

[Enlightened Self-interest](#)

II. (17:4) To indulge ourselves with [pleasures](#) only in so far as they are necessary for preserving health. [Bk.XX:263](#)^{5a}.

III. (17:5) Lastly, to endeavor to obtain only sufficient money or other commodities to enable us to preserve our life and health, and to follow such general customs as are consistent with our [purpose](#).

< [Bk.XV:286](#)¹⁸⁹— [goal](#) >

A Short Survey of the Mind: The Means to Obtain the End.

[18-29] De Dijn's Commentary Page 50.

< Introduction. The Kinds of Knowledge and the Nature of [Method](#) >

< [Bk.XV:286](#)¹⁸¹ >

PAGE 8

< now prepare >

[18] (18:1) Having laid down these preliminary rules, I [will betake](#) myself to the first and most important task, namely, the amendment of [\[intellect\]](#) the [understanding](#), and the rendering it capable of [understanding](#)

[things](#) in the manner necessary for attaining our end. (18:2) In order

to bring this about, the natural order demands that I should here [Bk.XIV:2:131](#)².

recapitulate all the modes of [perception](#), which I have hitherto

employed for [affirming](#) or denying anything with [certainty](#), so that I

may choose the best, and at the same time begin to know my own

[Bk.III:50—Neff EL:L42\(37\):360](#).

[powers](#) and the nature which I wish to [perfect](#).

[Bk.III:50](#).

[knowledge](#)

Of the four modes of [perception](#). page 8

[\[persistent meditation\]](#) [

[19] (19:1) Reflection shows that all modes of perception or knowledge [E2:TEI\[19-24\]](#)

may be [reduced to four](#):— < [but of these four, the first two are clearly sub-forms of the first kind of knowledge in "The Ethics."](#) > [Bk.XV:286](#)¹⁹⁰—[E2:XL\(19\)n2:113](#) > { [1:2.1](#) ,[D:2.2b](#) }

[Bk.XIV:2:136](#)⁶.

I. (19:2) Perception arising from hearsay or from some sign which everyone may name as he please. [Bk.III:51](#).

[Bk.XIV:2:134](#)³—[vague](#). [Bk.XIX:289](#)¹²,a.

II. (19:3) Perception arising from [mere](#) experience—that is, from experience not yet classified by the intellect, and only so called because the given event has happened to take place, and we < [particular experience](#). [Bk.XV:286](#)¹⁹¹—[TE1:\[20\]:8](#) > have no [contradictory fact](#) to set against it, so that it therefore remains unassailed in our minds. [Bk.III:51](#), 52; [Bk.XIX:1574](#).
{ See [De Dijn's Commentary Page 52](#). }

[Bk.XIV:1:163](#)⁹] [E1:Bk.VII:60](#)⁹ [

III. (19:4) Perception arising when the [essence of one thing](#) is [inferred](#) from another thing, but not [adequately](#): [[f](#)], this comes when from some effect we gather its [cause](#) ([induction](#)), or when it is [inferred](#) from some general proposition ([deduction](#)) that some < [Bk.XV:287](#)¹⁹²—[Bk.XV:274](#)⁸⁹ on [E2:XXXIX:110](#) > ^ [Bk.XIV:2:125](#)¹.
[property](#) is always present. [Bk.III:53](#), 54, 57, 152; [Bk.XIX:292](#)⁹.
[Bk.XIV:2:140](#)².

IV. (19:5) Lastly, there is the [perception](#) arising when a thing is [perceived](#) solely through its [essence](#) {[by intuition](#), i.e. [knowing G-D](#) } or {[then through deduction](#); [by knowing G-D](#)} the [knowledge of its proximate cause](#). [Bk.III:150](#); [Bk.XIV:1:128](#)¹; [Bk.XIX:134](#)¹⁶; 154¹⁹; 160¹⁴.
{[Called the third kind of knowledge—intuition—in "The Ethics."](#)};
{ ^ [the knowledge that comes from a mystical experience](#). }
{[See De Dijn's Commentary Page 57](#).} {[Analogy: Organic Interdependence—knowing the body, so that you can understand an arm](#).}

[20] (20:1) All these kinds of [perception](#) I will illustrate by [examples](#).

(20:2) By hearsay I know the day of my birth, my parentage, and other matters about which I have never felt any [doubt](#). [Bk.III:51](#).

(20:3) By [mere](#)

experience I know that I shall die, for this I can [affirm](#) from having

seen that others like myself have died, though all did not live for the same period, or die by the same disease. [Bk.XIV:2:134](#)³—[vague](#).

page 9 (20:4) I know by mere

experience that oil has the property of feeding fire, and water of

extinguishing it. (20:5) In the same way I know that a dog is a barking

animal, man a rational animal, and in fact nearly all the practical

knowledge of life.

[Bk.III:54](#), 55. [[infer](#)]

[21] (21:1) We [deduce](#) one [thing](#) from another as follows: when we < [sense](#). [Bk.XV:287](#)¹⁹³—[TE1:\[35\]:13](#) > [[then](#)]
clearly perceive that we [feel](#) a certain body and no other, we thence

clearly infer that the mind is united to the body [[g](#)], and that their union is the cause of the given sensation; but we cannot thence

[Bk.III:152](#).

absolutely [understand](#) the nature of the sensation and the union [[h](#)].

(21:2) Or, after I have become acquainted with the nature of vision,

[Bk.XIX:134](#)¹⁶, 150¹⁵, 154²¹.

and know that it has the property of making one and the same thing

appear smaller when far off than when near, I can infer that [the sun](#) is larger than it appears, and can draw other conclusions of the same kind.

[22] (22:1) Lastly, a thing may be perceived solely through its [essence](#): when, from the fact of knowing something, I know what it is to know that thing, or when, from knowing the essence of the mind, I know that it is united to the body. (22:2) By the same [kind](#) of [knowledge](#) we know that two and three make five, or that two lines each parallel to a third, are parallel to one another, &c. (22:3) The things which I have [Bk.III:57, Bk.XIV:2:159](#) been able to know by this kind of knowledge are as [yet very few](#).

[23] (23:1) In order that the whole matter may be put in a clearer light, I will make use of a single illustration as follows. (23:2) Three numbers are given—it is required to find a fourth, which shall be to the third as the second is to the first. page 10 (23:3) Tradesmen will at once tell us that they know what is required to find the fourth number, for they have not yet forgotten the rule which was given to them arbitrarily [without proof](#) by their masters; others construct a universal axiom from their experience with simple numbers, where the fourth number is self-evident, as in the case of 2, 4, 3, 6; here it is evident that if the second number be multiplied by the third, and the product divided by the first, the quotient is 6; when they see that by this process the number is produced which they knew beforehand to be the proportional, they infer that the process always holds good for finding a fourth number proportional. [Bk.III:56, 57, 228](#).

[24] (24:1) Mathematicians, however, know by the proof of the nineteenth proposition of the seventh book of [Euclid](#), what numbers are proportionals, namely, from the nature and property of proportion it follows that the product of the first and fourth will be equal to the product of the second and third: still they do not see the adequate [< E2:Bk.XV:275% on E2:XL\(30\)N2:113. >](#) proportionality of the given numbers, or, if they do see it, they see it [\[or \]](#) not by [virtue](#) of Euclid's proposition, but [intuitively](#), without going [Bk.III:57](#) through any process.

[25-29], [De Dijn's Commentary Page 58 - Conclusion](#).

Of the best mode of perception. page 10

[25] In order that from [these modes](#) of [perception](#) the best may be selected, it is well that we should briefly enumerate the means necessary for [attaining our end](#).

- I. To have an exact [knowledge](#) of our [nature](#) which we [desire to perfect](#), and to know as much as is needful of nature in general. < Bk.XV:287¹⁹⁴ > [Bk.III:58—E1 & E2](#).
- [[infer rightly](#)]
- II. To [collect in this way](#) the differences, the agreements, and the oppositions of [things](#). [Bk.III:58—E2 & E3](#).
- III. To learn thus exactly how far they can or [cannot](#) be modified. [Bk.III:58—E3 & E4](#). { [AA Creed](#) }
- IV. To compare this result with the [nature](#) and [power](#) of man. We shall thus discern the [highest degree of perfection](#) { [°P](#) } to which man is capable of attaining. [Bk.III:58—E4 & E5](#).

[Calculus:3.2](#)

[26] (26:1) We shall then be in a position to see which mode of [perception](#) we ought to choose.

[Bk.III:51](#)

(26:2) As to [the first](#) mode, it is evident that from hearsay our [knowledge](#) must always be uncertain, and, moreover, can give us no < clear > [insight](#) into the [essence](#) of a [thing](#), as is [manifest](#) in our illustration; now one can only arrive at knowledge of a thing through knowledge of its essence, as will hereafter appear. (26:3) We may, therefore, clearly conclude page 11 that the [certainty](#) arising from hearsay cannot be scientific in its character. (26:4) For simple hearsay cannot > unless his own intellect has gone before. < affect anyone whose [understanding](#) does not, so to speak, meet it half way.

[27] (27:1) [The second](#) mode of perception [\[i\]](#) cannot be said to give us the [idea](#) of the proportion of which we are in search. (27:2) Moreover its results are very uncertain and [indefinite](#), for we shall never discover anything in natural phenomena by its means, except accidental properties, which are never clearly understood, unless the [essence](#) of the [things](#) in question be known first. (27:3) Wherefore

[Never Proved](#)

this mode also must be rejected.

[28] (28:1) Of [the third](#) mode of perception we may say in a manner that it gives us the [idea](#) of the [thing](#) sought, and that it enables us to draw conclusions without risk of error; yet it is not by itself sufficient to put us in possession of the [perfection](#) we aim at.

[Bk.III:59, 76.](#)

Example: [POSIT ONE—1D6](#)

[Simply Posit](#)

[29] (29:1) [The fourth](#) mode {Called the third kind of [knowledge—intuition](#) —1D6

[Importance of ONE](#)

{[Bk.XIV:2:101—TEI:L64\(60\):395.](#)}

—in "[The Ethics.](#)" } alone apprehends the [adequate essence](#) of a [thing](#) without danger of error. (29:2) This mode, therefore, must be the one

^ [Bk.III:150](#)

which we chiefly employ. (29:3) How, then, should we avail ourselves of it so as to gain the fourth kind of knowledge with the least delay concerning things previously unknown? (29:4) I will proceed to explain.

[The Way and the Method: Spinoza's Methodology.](#)

[30-37], [De Dijn's Commentary Page 76 - The Possibility of a Method.](#)

[30] (30:1) Now that we know what kind of [knowledge](#) is necessary for us, we must indicate the Way and the Method whereby we may gain the said knowledge concerning the things [needful](#) to be known.

[POSIT ONE—1D6](#)

[[teach](#)]

(30:2) In order to accomplish this, we must first take care not to commit ourselves to a search, going back to [infinity](#)—that is, in order to discover the best Method of finding [truth](#), there is no need of another Method to discover such Method; nor of a third Method for discovering the second, and so on to infinity. (30:3) By such proceedings, we should never arrive at the knowledge of the truth, or, indeed, at any knowledge at all.

[Bk.III:76](#)

[Bk.XIV:1:1392, 2:15304.](#)

(30:4) The matter stands on the same footing as the making of material tools, which might be argued about in a similar way. (30:5) For, in order to work iron, a hammer is needed, and the hammer cannot be forthcoming unless it has been made; but, in order to make it, there was need of another hammer and other tools, and so on to infinity. (30:6) We might thus vainly endeavor to prove that men have no power of working iron.

[31] ^(31:1) But as men at first made use of the instruments supplied by nature to accomplish very easy pieces of workmanship, laboriously and imperfectly, and then, when these were finished, wrought other things more difficult with less labour and greater perfection; and so gradually mounted from the simplest operations to the making of tools, and from the making of tools to the making of more complex tools, and fresh feats of workmanship, till they arrived at making, with small expenditure of labour, the vast number of complicated mechanisms which they now possess. ^(31:2) So, in like manner, the intellect, by its native strength, [k], makes for itself intellectual instruments, whereby it acquires strength for performing other intellectual operations, [l], and from these operations gets again fresh instruments, or the power of pushing its investigations further, and thus gradually proceeds till it reaches the summit of wisdom.

[Mark Twain](#)

[Root Sources](#)

[32] ^(32:1) That this is the path pursued by the [understanding](#) may be readily seen, when we understand the nature of the [Method](#) for finding out the truth, and of the [natural instruments](#) so necessary for the construction of more complex instruments, and for the progress of investigation. ^(32:1a) I thus proceed with my demonstration.

Of the instruments of the intellect, or [true ideas](#). page 12

> [TEI:Bk.III:129](#) < [Bk.III:77, 83; Bk.XIX:1319](#).
 [33] ^(33:1) A [true idea](#), [m], (for we possess a [true idea](#)) is something different from its correlate ([ideatum](#)); thus a circle is different from the [idea](#) of a circle. ^(33:2) The idea of a circle is not something having a circumference and a center, as a circle has; nor is the idea of a body that body itself. ^(33:3) Now, as it is something different from its correlate, it is capable of being understood through itself; in other words, the idea, in so far as its [actual essence](#) (*essentia formalis*) is concerned, may be the subject of another [subjective](#) essence < [TEI:Bk.XV:287](#)¹⁹⁶, [E1:Bk.XV:265](#)³¹ on [E1:XVII\(21\)n:61](#). > page 13 [\[33note1\]](#)

^(33:4) And, again, this second

[subjective](#) essence will, regarded in itself, be something real, and capable of being understood; and so on, indefinitely.

[34] (34:1) For instance, the man Peter is something real; the [true idea](#) [\[objective essence \]](#) [{ in modern terms ? }](#) of Peter is the [reality](#) of Peter [represented subjectively](#), and is in itself something real, and quite distinct from the actual Peter. (34:2) Now, [{idea of G-D}](#) [Bk.III:83](#). as this true idea of Peter is in itself something real, and has its own [\[essence \]](#) [something intelligible—Bk.XIV:2:932](#). individual existence, it will also be [capable of being understood—](#) [\[object \]](#) [\[in](#) that is, of being the subject of another idea, which will contain by [itself, objectively, \]](#) representation ([objective](#) [_____](#)), [\[33note1\]](#), all that the idea of Peter contains [\[formally \]](#) [Bk.XIX:126³⁰](#). actually ([formaliter](#) [_____](#)). (34:3) And, again, this idea of the idea of Peter has its own [\[essence \]](#) [\[object \]](#) [individuality](#), which may become the [subject](#) of yet another idea; and so on, indefinitely. (34:4) This everyone may make [\[can experience this \]](#) [< Bk.XV:287197—TEI:\[69\]:26, Bk.XV:27597 on E2:XLIII:114. >](#) trial of for himself, by reflecting [that he knows](#) what Peter is, and also knows that he knows, and further knows that he knows that he knows, &c. [{Cash Value—what you think an object is, is not necessarily true; be careful.}](#)

[\[essence of \]](#)
 (34:5) Hence it is plain that, in order to understand the [actual](#) Peter, it is not necessary first to understand the [idea](#) of Peter, and still less the idea of the idea of Peter. (34:6) This is the same as saying that, in order to know, there is no need to know that we know, much less to know that we know that we know. (34:7) This is no more necessary [\[essence \]](#) [\[essence \]](#) than to know the [nature](#) of a circle before knowing the [nature](#) of a [< Bk.XV:287198—Bk.XV:276101 on E2:XLIX:120. >](#) triangle. [\[n\]](#) (34:8) But, with these ideas, the contrary is the case: for, [^ Bk.III:83](#) [Bk.XIX:131a](#). in order to know that I know, I must first know.

[Bk.III:183](#). [< Bk.XV:288199—Bk.XV:277103 on E2:XLIX\(15\):121 >](#)
 [35] (35:1) Hence it is clear that [certainty](#) is nothing else than the [\[objective \]](#) [< Bk.XV:287193 on TEI:\[21\]:9 >](#) [Bk.III:83](#) [subjective essence](#) of a [thing](#): in other words, the [mode](#) in [\[formal essence \]](#) which we perceive an [actual reality](#) is certainty. (35:2) Further, it is also [Bk.III:127](#) evident that, for the certitude of [truth](#), no further sign is necessary [< Bk.XV:288200—E2:XLIII\(5\)n:114; Bk.XV:27597 on E2:XLIII:114 >](#) beyond the possession of a [true idea](#): for, as I have shown, it is not necessary to know that we know that we know. (35:3) Hence, again, it is clear that no one can know the nature of the highest certainty, [< Bk.XV:288201—E2:D.IV:82 >](#) [\[objective \]](#) unless he possesses an [adequate idea](#), or the [subjective](#) essence [^ Bk.III:79—TEI:L64\(60\):395](#). [\[objective \]](#) of a thing: for certainty is identical with such [page 14](#) [subjective](#)

essence. { GN2n }

[Bk.XIV:2:100z—mark.](#)

[36] (36:1) Thus, as the truth needs no sign—it being sufficient to
[objective]

possess the [subjective](#) essence of things, or, in other words, the
< [true](#). [Bk.XV:288202—TEI:\[34\]:13](#) >
[ideas](#) of them, in order that all [doubts](#) may be removed—it follows

that the true Method does not consist in seeking for the signs of
{ ONE—1D6 }

[truth](#) after the acquisition of the idea, but that the true [Method](#)
{ [First Posit ONE—1D6 and then test for cash values.](#) }

[Simply Posit](#)

teaches us the order in which we should seek for truth itself, [O],
[objective]

or the [subjective](#) essences of things, or ideas, for all these expres-

sions are synonymous.

[TEI:Endnote 37](#)

[37] (37:1) Again, [Method](#) must necessarily be concerned with reason-

^ [Bk.III:181—Neff EL:L42\(37\):360.](#) [Bk.III:153.](#)

ing or [understanding](#)—I mean, Method is not identical with reason-

ing in the search for [causes](#), still less is it the comprehension of the

[Bk.III:84](#) [Bk.III:173](#) { [Posit: ONE—1D6](#) }

[WHY?](#)

[causes](#) of things: it is the discernment of a [true](#) idea, by distinguish-

[Importance of ONE—1D6](#)

^ [Bk.XIX:129s.](#)

ing it from other perceptions, and by investigating its nature, in order

{ [Posit: ONE—1D6](#) }

[Simply Posit](#)

that we may so [train our mind](#) that it may, by a given [standard](#), com-

{ [as a working hypothesis](#) ^ }

prehend whatsoever is intelligible, by [laying down certain rules as](#)

[aids](#), and by avoiding useless mental exertion.

[38-42], [De Dijn's Commentary Page 85 - Further Confirmation and Elaboration.](#)

> [TEI:Bk.III:129](#) <

[Bk.III:173.](#)

[38] (38:1) Whence we may gather that [Method](#) is nothing else than

{ [meditative, G:Note 8, E3:GN\(2\)n](#) } [Bk.XIV:2:944;](#) [Bk.XIX:129s.](#)

[reflective](#) knowledge, or the [idea](#) of an idea; and that as there can

be no idea of an idea—unless an idea exists previously,—there

{ [an axiom—a foundation ONE—1D6](#) }

[Burden of TEI](#)

can be no [Method](#) without a [pre-existent idea](#). (38:2) Therefore,

that will be a good Method which shows us how the mind should be

{ [Posit: ONE—1D6](#) } [Idea of G-D](#)

directed, according to the [standard](#) of the given [true idea](#).

[Spinozistic Idea](#)

{ [as a working hypothesis](#) ^ }

(38:3) Again, seeing that the ratio existing between two ideas is the

[[formal essence](#)]

same as the ratio between the actual realities corresponding to

< [Bk.XV:288203—E2:VII:86](#) > { [meditative, G:Note 8, E3:GN\(2\)n](#) }

those [ideas](#), it follows that the [reflective](#) knowledge which has for

its object the most perfect [Being](#) is more excellent than reflective

[[ideas](#)]

knowledge concerning other objects—in other words, that [Method](#)

{Posit: ONE—1D6}

will be most perfect which affords the [standard](#) of the given idea of

[Bk.III:85](#) { [as a working hypothesis](#) ^ }

of ONE—1D6

the most [perfect](#) [Being](#) whereby we may direct our mind.

[Simply Posit](#)

[Importance](#)

[39] (39:1) We thus easily [understand](#) how, in proportion as it acquires

[[more things](#)]

[new](#) ideas, the mind simultaneously acquires fresh instruments for

pursuing its inquiries further. (39:2) For we may gather from what has

> [TEI:Bk.III:129](#) <; [Bk.XIX:129](#)1. [Bk.III:159](#)

been said, that a [true idea](#) must necessarily first of all exist in us as

{ ^ [posit: ONE—1D6](#) }

[Bk.XIV:2:1542](#)—innate.

[Bk.III:76](#)—inborn tool; [Bk.XIX:131](#)9.

a [natural instrument](#); and that page 15 when this idea is apprehended

{ ^ [a priori](#)—[Bk.XIV:2:155](#). }

by the mind, it enables us to understand the difference existing

between itself and all other [perceptions](#). (39:3) In this, one part of the

[Method](#) consists.

(39:4) Now it is clear that the mind apprehends itself better in propor-

tion as it understands a greater number of natural objects; it follows,

therefore, that this portion of the Method will be more perfect in pro-

portion as the mind attains to the comprehension of a greater num-

ber of objects, and that it will be absolutely perfect when the mind

gains a [knowledge](#) of the absolutely perfect [Being](#), or becomes

[conscious](#) thereof.

[40] (40:1) Again, the more things the mind knows, the [better](#) does it

[Bk.III:174](#) [[powers](#)] [Bk.XIV:2:128](#)1. [Bk.III:86](#)

[understand](#) its own [strength](#) and the order of [Nature](#); by increased

self-knowledge, it can direct itself more easily, and lay down [rules](#)

for its own guidance; and, by increased knowledge of [Nature](#), it can

[Deus](#)
[Bk.III:85](#), 87.

more easily avoid what is useless. (40:2) And this is the [sum total](#) of

[[the](#)]

[Method](#), as we have already stated. [Bk.XIX:140](#)31.

[41] (41:1) We may add that the [idea](#) in the world of [thought](#) is in the

[[object](#)] [Bk.III:80](#)

same case as its correlate in the world of [reality](#). (41:2) If, therefore,

[[interaction](#)]

there be anything in [Nature](#) which is without connection with any

[Idolatry](#)

[[objective](#)]

other [thing](#), and if we assign to it a [subjective](#) essence, which would

[Bk.III:86](#)—formal essence. [[objective](#)]

in every way correspond to the [objective reality](#), the subjective

essence would have no connection, [p], with any other ideas—in
 other words, we could not draw any conclusions with regard to it.

(41:3) On the other hand, those things which are connected with others
 —as all things that exist in Nature—will be understood by the mind,
 and their subjective essences will maintain the same mutual relations
 as their objective realities—that is to say, we shall infer from these
 ideas other ideas, which will in turn be connected with others, and
 thus our instruments for proceeding with our investigation will
 increase. (41:4) This is what we were endeavoring to prove.

[42] (42:1) Further, from what has just been said—namely, that an
 idea must, in all respects, correspond to its correlate in the world
 of reality,—it is evident that, in order to reproduce in every respect
 the faithful image of Nature, our mind must deduce all its ideas from
 the idea which represents the origin and source of the whole
 of Nature{/G-D}, so that it may itself become the source of other ideas.

[43-48], [De Dijn's Commentary Page 87 - Objections and Answers.](#)

Answers to objections. page 16

> [TEI:Bk.III:129](#) < [Bk.III:87](#)
 [43] (43:1) It may, perhaps, provoke astonishment that, after having
 said that the good Method is that which teaches us to direct our
 mind according to the standard of the given true idea, we should
 prove our point by reasoning, which would seem to indicate that it
 is not self-evident. (43:2) We may, therefore, be questioned as to the
 validity of our reasoning. (43:3) If our reasoning be sound, we must take
 as a starting-point a true idea. (43:4) Now, to be certain that our starting
 -point is really a true idea, we need proof. (43:5) This first course of
 reasoning must be supported by a second, the second by a third,
 and so on to infinity.

[Bk.III:88.](#)

[44] (44:1) To this I make answer that, if by some happy chance any-
 one had adopted this Method in his investigations of Nature—that is,
 if he had acquired new ideas in the proper order, according to the
 {Foundation Rock}

[Simply Posit](#)

standard of the original [true idea](#), he would never have [doubted \[q\]](#)
 { ^ [as a working hypothesis](#) }
 of the truth of his knowledge, inasmuch as [truth](#), as we have
[self-evident—Bk.XIV:2:1007.](#) < [present itself](#) >
 shown, makes itself manifest, and all [things](#) would [flow](#), as it were,
[\[of its own accord; Bk.VIII:2134—\[104\] \]](#)
 spontaneously towards him.
[Bk.XIV:2:1545—2P43.](#)

(44:2) But as this never, or rarely, happens, I have been forced so to
[\] persistent meditation \[](#)
 arrange my proceedings, that we may acquire by reflection and fore-
 thought what we cannot acquire by chance, and that it may at the
 same time appear that, for [proving the truth](#), and for [valid reasoning](#),
 we need no other means than the truth and valid reasoning them-
 selves: for by valid reasoning I have established valid reasoning,
 and, in like measure, I seek still to establish it.

[45] (45:1) Moreover, this is the order of thinking adopted by men in
 their inward meditations. (45:2) The reasons for its rare employment in
[Bk.XIA:3017.](#) <[Bk.XV:288206—Bk.XV:26849](#) on [E1:Ap.\(3\):75.](#) [prejudices](#)>
 investigations of [Nature](#) are to be found in current [misconceptions](#),
[< TEI:Bk.XV:288207 >](#)
 whereof we shall examine the causes hereafter in [our philosophy](#).
 (45:3) Moreover, it demands, as we shall show, a keen and accurate
 discernment. (4) Lastly, it is hindered by the conditions of human life,
 which are, as we have already pointed out, extremely [changeable](#).
 (45:5) There are also other obstacles, which we will not here inquire
 into.

< [TEI:Bk.XV:288208](#) >

[46] (46:1) If anyone asks [why I have not](#) at the starting-point set forth
[Bk.XIX:13624.](#)

all the truths of [Nature](#) in their due order, inasmuch page 17 as truth
[Bk.III:127; Bk.XIV:2:1001.](#)
 is self-evident, I reply by warning him not to reject as false any para-
 { [A seemingly contradictory or absurd statement that expresses a possible truth ^ .](#) }
 doxes he may find here, but to take the trouble to reflect on the
 chain of reasoning by which they are supported; he will then be no
 longer in [doubt](#) that we have attained to the truth. (46:2) This is why
 I have begun as above.

[Bk.III:89](#)

[47] (47:1) If there yet remains some sceptic, who doubts of our [primary](#) [world views](#)
 truth, and of all deductions we make, taking such [truth](#) as our [stand-](#)
[ard](#), he must either be arguing in bad faith, or we must confess that

there are men in complete mental blindness, either innate or due to [prejudices] [chance] misconceptions—that is, to some external influence. (47:2) Such persons are not conscious of themselves. (47:3) If they affirm or doubt anything, they know not that they affirm or doubt: they say that they know nothing, and they say that they are ignorant of the very fact of their knowing nothing. (47:4) Even this they do not affirm absolutely, they are afraid of confessing that they exist, so long as they know [speechless] nothing; in fact, they ought to remain dumb, for fear of haply supposing which should smack of truth.

[48] (48:1) Lastly, with such persons, one should not speak of sciences: [society] for, in what relates to life and conduct, they are compelled by necessity to suppose that they exist, and seek their own advantage, and often affirm and deny, even with an oath. (48:2) If they deny, grant, or gainsay, they know not that they deny, grant, or gainsay, so that they ought to be regarded as automata, utterly devoid of intelligence. Bk.III:128 [lacking in mind]

Mark Twain

[49], De Dijn's Commentary Page 90 - Conclusion.

[49] (49:1) Let us now return to our [highest good] proposition. (2) Up to the present, > 1-17 <, we have, first, defined the end to which we desire to direct all our thoughts; secondly, > 18-29 <, we have determined the mode of perception best adapted to aid us in attaining our perfection; < Bk.XV:288209 > thirdly, > 30-48 <, we have discovered the way which our mind should take, in order to make a good beginning—namely, that it should use (Posit: ONE-1D6) every true idea as a standard in pursuing its inquiries according { as a working hypothesis ^ } fixed rules.

Simply Posit

(49:3) Now, in order that it may thus proceed, our Method must furnish us, first, > 50-90 <, with a means of distinguishing a true idea from all other perceptions, and enabling the mind to avoid the latter; secondly, > 91-98 <, with rules for perceiving unknown things according to the < Bk.XV:288210-[40] > standard of the true idea; thirdly, > 99-110 <, with an order which Bk.III:172. enables us to avoid useless labor. page 18 (49:4) When we became < Bk.XV:288210-[38] > acquainted with this Method, > 38 <, we saw that, fourthly, it would be

{ E3:GN(2)n } ^ Bk.III:59.
perfect when we had attained to the idea of the absolutely perfect

Being. (49:5) This is an observation which should be made at the
{ First Posit ONE—1D6 and then test for cash values. Simply Posit }
outset, in order that we may arrive at the knowledge of such a Being
Bk.III:86—[105ff]
more quickly. { G:Note 8. }

First Part of the Method: The Separation between Intellect and Imagination. [50-90], De Dijn's Page 126.

< Part One—Truth, Fiction, Falsity, Doubt >
< Bk.XV:286181 > Bk.III:52.

Distinction of true ideas from fictitious ideas. page 18

[50] (50:1) Let us then make a beginning with the first part of the
Method, which is, as we have said, to distinguish and separate the
{ G-D }
true idea from other perceptions, and to keep the mind from confus-

ing with true ideas those which are false, fictitious, and doubtful.
{ Posit: ONE—1D6 }

Speculation

(50:2) I intend to dwell on this point at length, partly to keep a distinction
so necessary before the reader's mind, and also because there are
some who doubt of true ideas, through not having attended to the
distinction between a true perception and all others. (50:3) Such
persons are like men who, while they are awake, doubt not that they
are awake, but afterwards in a dream, as often happens, thinking
that they are surely awake, and then finding that they were in error,
become doubtful even of being awake. (50:4) This state of mind arises
through neglect of the distinction between sleeping and waking.

Cash Value

[51] (51:1) Meanwhile, I give warning that I shall not here give the
essence of every perception, and explain it through its proximate

Bk.III:126

cause. (51:2) Such work lies in the province of philosophy. (3) I shall
confine myself to what concerns Method—that is, to the character
of fictitious, false and doubtful perceptions, and the means of free-
ing ourselves therefrom. (51:4) Let us then first inquire into the nature
of a fictitious idea.

Bk.III:139

] TEI:Bk.VII:245* [

Bk.III:52. Bk.III:132

[52] (52:1) Every perception has for its object either a thing considered
Bk.III:81

as existing, or solely the [essence](#) of a [thing](#). (2) Now "fiction" is chiefly occupied with things considered as existing. (52:3) I will, therefore, consider these first—I mean cases where only the [existence](#) of an [object](#) is [feigned](#), and the thing thus feigned is understood, or assumed to be understood. (52:4) For instance, I [suppose](#) that Peter, whom I know to have gone home, is gone to see me, [\[r\]](#), or something of that kind. (52:5) With what is such an idea concerned? (52:6) It is concerned page 19 with things possible, and not with things [necessary](#) or [impossible](#).

Bk.III:132

[53] (53:1) I call a thing [impossible](#) when its [existence](#) would imply a [contradiction](#); [necessary](#), when its non-existence would imply a contradiction; [possible](#), when neither [its existence](#) nor its non-existence imply a contradiction, but when the necessity or impossibility of its nature [depends on causes unknown to us](#), while we [feign](#) that it exists. (53:2) If the necessity or impossibility of its existence depending on [external causes](#) were known to us, we could not form any [fictitious hypotheses](#) about it;

Bk.XIV:2:1156.

[54] (54:1) Whence it follows that if there be a [G-D](#), or [omniscient Being](#), ^ such an one cannot form [fictitious hypotheses](#). (2) For, as regards ourselves, when I know that I exist, [\[s\]](#) I cannot hypothesize that I exist or do not exist, any more than I can hypothesize an elephant that can go through the [eye of a needle](#); nor when I know the [nature](#) of [G-D](#), can I hypothesize that He exists or does not exist [\[t\]](#). (54:3) The same thing must be said of the Chimæra, whereof the nature implies a contradiction. (54:4) From these considerations, it is plain, as I have already stated, that fiction cannot be concerned with eternal truths [\[u\]](#). [\[I shall also show immediately that no fiction is concerned with eternal truths.\]](#) ^ [Bk.III:151](#)

[55] (55:1) But before proceeding further, I must remark, in passing, that the difference between the [essence](#) of one [thing](#) and the essence of another thing is the same as that which exists between [\[actuality\]](#) [\[actuality\]](#)

the [reality](#) or [existence](#) of one thing and the reality or existence of another; therefore, if we wished to conceive the existence, for example, of Adam, simply by means of existence in general, it would be the same as if, in order to conceive his existence, we went back to the Nature of [Being](#), so as to define Adam as a [being](#). ^(55:2) Thus, the more existence is conceived generally, the more is it conceived ^{page 20} [confusedly](#), and the more easily can it be ascribed to a given object. ^(55:3) Contrariwise, the more it is conceived particularly, the more is it [understood](#) clearly, and the less liable is it to be ascribed, through [negligence](#) of [Nature's order](#), to anything save its proper object. ^(55:4) This is worthy of remark.

[56] ^(56:1) We now proceed to consider those cases which are commonly called fictions, though we clearly understood that the thing is not as we imagine it. ^(56:2) For instance, I know that the earth is round, but nothing prevents my telling people that it is a hemisphere, and that it is like a half apple carved in relief on a dish; or, that the sun moves round the earth, and so on. ^(56:3) However, examination will show us that there is nothing here inconsistent with what has been said, provided we first admit that we may have made mistakes, and be now conscious of them; and, further, that we can hypothesize, or at least suppose, that others are under the same mistake as ourselves, or can, like us, fall under it. ^(56:4) We can, I repeat, thus [hypothesize](#) so long as we see no [impossibility](#). ^(56:5) Thus, when I tell anyone that the earth is not round, &c., I merely recall the error which I perhaps made myself, or which I might have fallen into, and afterwards I hypothesize that the person to whom I tell it, is still, or may still fall under the same mistake. ^(56:6) This I say, I can feign so long as I do not perceive any impossibility or necessity; if I truly understood either one or the other I should not be able to feign, and I should be reduced to saying that I had [made the attempt](#).

> [TEI:Bk.III:129](#) <

[57] ^(57:1) It remains for us to consider [hypotheses](#) made in problems, which sometimes involve impossibilities. ^(57:2) For instance, when we

say—let us assume that this burning candle is not burning, or, let us
 < Bk.XV:289²¹⁶ >
 assume that it burns in some [imaginary space](#), or where there are
 < Bk.XV:289²¹⁷—Bk.XV:264²³ on E1:XV(37)n:58 >
 no [physical objects](#). (3) Such assumptions are freely made, though the
 last is clearly seen to be impossible. (57:4) But, though this be so,
 there is no fiction in the case. (57:5) For, in the first case, I have merely
 recalled to memory, [\[x\]](#), another candle not burning, or page 21 con-
 ceived the candle before me as without a flame, and then I under-
 stand as applying to the latter, leaving its flame out of the question,
 all that I think of the former. (57:6) In the second case, I have merely
 to [abstract](#) my thoughts from the objects surrounding the candle, for
 the mind to devote itself to the contemplation of the candle singly
 looked at in itself only; I can then draw the conclusion that the
 candle contains in itself no [causes](#) for [its own destruction](#), so that if
 there were no physical objects the candle, and even the flame,
 would remain unchangeable, and so on. (57:7) Thus there is here no
 fiction, but, [\[y\]](#), true and bare assertions.

[58] (58:1) Let us now pass on to the fictions concerned with [essences](#)
[\[actuality \]](#)
 only, or with some [reality](#) or [existence](#) simultaneously. (58:2) Of these
 we must specially observe that in proportion as the mind's under-
 standing is smaller, and [the more it perceives](#) >
[its experience multiplex](#), so will its power of
[feigning](#) >
[coining fictions](#) be larger, whereas as its [understanding](#) increases,
[Bk.XIX:160¹⁵](#).
 its capacity for entertaining [fictitious ideas](#) becomes less. (58:3) For
 instance, in the same way as we are unable, while we are thinking,
 < Bk.XV:289²¹⁸ >
 to [feign](#) that we are thinking or [not thinking](#), so, also, when we know
 the nature of [body](#) we cannot imagine an [infinite fly](#); or, when we
 know the nature of the [soul](#), [\[z\]](#), we cannot imagine it as square,
 though anything may be expressed verbally. (58:4) But, as we said
[Bk.XIV:2:1157](#).
 above, the less men know of [Nature](#) the page 22 more easily can
 they coin fictitious ideas, such as trees speaking, men instantly
 < Bk.XV:289²¹⁹—E1:VIII(6)n2:48 >
[changed into stones](#), or into fountains, ghosts appearing in mirrors,
 something issuing from nothing, even [gods](#) changed into beasts
[\[Bk.VIII:27⁴⁵—creation, incarnation. E1:VIII\(6\)n2:48 \]](#)
 and men, and infinite other absurdities of the same kind.

> TEI:Bk.III:128 <

[59] (59:1) Some persons think, perhaps, that [fiction is limited by fiction](#), and not by understanding; in other words, after I have formed some [fictitious idea](#), and have [affirmed of my own free will](#) that it exists under a certain form in nature, I am thereby precluded from thinking of it under any other form. (59:2) For instance, when I have feigned (to repeat their argument) that the nature of body is of a certain kind, and have of my own [free will](#) desired to convince myself that it actually exists under this form, I am no longer able to hypothesize that a fly, for example, is infinite; so, when I have hypothesized the essence of the [soul](#), I am not able to think of it as square, &c. > [TEI:Bk.III:128](#) < { [59] lays the groundwork for what follows; especially; [61], [71:2]. }

[Mark Twain](#)

[60] (60:1) But these arguments demand further inquiry. (2) First, their upholders must either grant or deny that we can [understand](#) anything. (60:2A) If they grant it, then necessarily the same must be said of understanding, as [is said](#) of fiction. (60:3) If they deny it, let us, who know that we do know something, see what they mean. (60:4) They assert that the [soul](#) can be conscious of, and perceive in a variety of ways, not itself nor things which exist, but only things which are neither in itself nor anywhere else, in other words, that the soul can, by its unaided power, create sensations or ideas [unconnected with things](#). (60:5) In fact, they regard the [soul](#) as a sort of [god](#). [[Bk.VIII:2747—Bk.XIV:2:110-111](#)]

[Pineal Gland](#)

[Bk.XIV:2:1112—mind](#).

(60:6) Further, they assert that we or our soul have such freedom that we can constrain ourselves, or our soul, or even our soul's freedom. (60:7) For, after it has formed a fictitious idea, and has given its assent [thereto](#), it cannot think or feign it in any other manner, but is constrained by the first fictitious idea to keep all its other thoughts in harmony therewith. (60:8) Our opponents are thus driven to admit, in support of their fiction, the absurdities which I have just enumerated; and which are not worthy of rational refutation. [\[60a\]](#).

page 23

> [Rather](#), <

[61] (61:1) While leaving such persons in their error, we will take care to derive from our argument with them a truth serviceable for

[Bk.III:134](#)

our purpose, namely, that the mind, in paying attention to a [thing](#) hypothetical or false, so as to [meditate](#) upon it and understand it, and derive the proper conclusions in [due order](#) therefrom, will readily discover its falsity; and if the thing [hypothetical](#) be in its nature [true](#), and the mind pays attention to it, so as to understand it, and [deduce](#) the truths which are derivable from it, the mind will proceed with an uninterrupted series of [apt conclusions](#); in the same way as it would at once discover (as we showed just now) the absurdity of a false hypothesis, and of the conclusions drawn from it.

{ [D:2.8b](#) }

[62] (62:1) We need, therefore, be in no fear of forming [hypotheses](#), so long as we have a [clear and distinct](#) perception of what is involved.

[Clear and Distinct](#)

[<] [Bk.XV:289](#)²²¹—[E2:Parkinson:273](#)⁸³ on [E2:XXVIII:105](#) [>]

[^] [TEI:Dijn:142](#)¹⁶, [E2:Parkinson:274](#)⁸⁴

(62:2) For, if we were to assert, haply, that men are suddenly turned into beasts, the statement would be extremely general, so general that there would be no [conception](#), that is, no idea or connection of subject and predicate, in our mind. (62:3) If there were such a conception we should at the same time be aware of the means and the [Bk.III:135](#) causes whereby the event took place. (62:4) Moreover, we pay no attention to the nature of the subject and the predicate.

[Bk.III:152](#)

[63] (63:1) Now, if the [first idea](#) be not fictitious, and if all the other ideas be [deduced](#) therefrom, our hurry to form fictitious ideas will gradually subside. (63:2) Further, as a fictitious idea [cannot be clear](#)

[Bk.III:131,133.](#)

[and distinct](#), but is necessarily confused, and as all confusion arises from the fact that the mind has only [partial knowledge](#) of a thing

[Bk.III:135.](#)

either simple or complex, and does not distinguish between the known and the unknown, and, again, that it directs its attention promiscuously to all parts of an object at once without making distinctions, it follows, [first](#) _____, that if the idea be of something very simple,

[Bk.XIV:2:115a.](#)[[Bk.VIII:29](#)⁴⁸]

it must necessarily be [clear and distinct](#). (63:3) For a very simple object cannot be known in part, it must either be known altogether or not at all.

[Bk.XIV:2:1121; 2:1171.](#)[Bk.III:137.](#)

And from false ideas. page 24

[64] (64:1) [Secondly](#), it follows that if a complex object be divided by thought into a number of page 24 simple component parts, and if each be regarded separately, all confusion will disappear.

(64:2) [Thirdly](#), it follows that fiction cannot be simple, but is made up of the blending of several [confused ideas](#) of diverse objects or actions existent in nature, or rather is composed of attention, [\[64b\]](#), directed to all such ideas at once and unaccompanied by any mental assent. [Bk.XIV:2:838, 2:1152, 2:1604.](#)

(64:3) Now a fiction that was simple would be [clear and distinct](#), and therefore true, also a fiction composed only of distinct [ideas](#) would be clear and distinct, and therefore true. (64:4) For instance, when we know the nature of the circle and the square, it is impossible for us to blend together these two figures, and to hypothesize a square circle, any more than a square soul, or things of that kind. [Clear and Distinct](#)

[65] (65:1) Let us shortly come to our conclusion, and again repeat that we need have no fear of confusing with [true ideas](#) that which is only a fiction. (65:2) As for the first sort of fiction of which we have already spoken, when a [thing](#) is clearly conceived, we saw that if the [existence](#) of that thing is in itself an [eternal truth](#), fiction can have no part in it; but if the existence of the thing conceived be not an eternal truth, we have only to be careful that such existence be [> related <](#) [Bk.III:82,133,153.](#) compared to the thing's [essence](#), and to consider the [order of Nature](#).

(65:3) As for the second sort of fiction, which we stated to be the result of simultaneously directing the attention, without the assent of the intellect, to different confused ideas representing different things and actions existing in [Nature](#), we have seen that an absolutely simple [thing](#) cannot be feigned, but must be understood, and that a complex [thing](#) is in the same case if we regard separately the [simple parts](#) whereof it is composed; we shall not even be able to [hypothesize](#) any untrue action concerning such objects, for we shall be obliged to consider at the same time the [causes](#) and manner of such action. [{G-D}](#) [Analogy](#) [{Modes}](#)

[66] ^(66:1) These matters being thus understood, let us pass on to

page 25 consider the false idea, observing the objects with which it is

concerned, and the means of guarding ourselves from falling into

false [perceptions](#). ^(66:2) Neither of these tasks will present much difficul-

[Bk.XIV:2:1144.](#)

ty, after our inquiry concerning fictitious ideas. ^(66:3) The false idea

only differs from the fictitious idea in the fact of implying a mental

assent—that is, as we have already remarked, while the representa-

tions are occurring, there are no causes present to us, wherefrom,

as in fiction, we can conclude that such representations do not arise

from [external](#) objects: in fact, it is much the same as dreaming with

our eyes open, or while awake. ^(66:4) Thus, a false idea is concerned

[[related](#)]

with, or (to speak more correctly) is attributable to, the existence of a

thing whereof the [essence](#) is known, or the essence itself, in the

[[related](#)]

same way as a fictitious idea. ^(66:5) If attributable to the existence of

the [thing](#), it is corrected in the same way as a fictitious idea under

similar circumstances.

[Bk.III:79ff.](#)

[[The false idea](#)]

[[existence](#)]

[67] ^(67:1) If attributable to the essence, it is likewise corrected in the

same way as a fictitious idea. ^(67:2) For if the nature of the thing known

implies [necessary existence](#), we cannot possibly be in error with

regard to its existence; but if the nature of the thing be not an

{ [Neff](#) }

[[Bk.VIII:30so](#)]

[eternal truth](#), like its [essence](#), but contrariwise the necessity or

impossibility of its existence depends on [external causes](#), then we

[Mark Twain](#)

must follow the same course as we adopted in the case of fiction,

for it is corrected in the same manner.

[68] ^(68:1) As for false ideas concerned with [essences](#), or even with

actions, such [perceptions](#) are necessarily always confused, being

compounded of different confused perceptions of things existing in

nature, as, for instance, when men are persuaded that deities are

present in woods, in statues, in brute beasts, and the like; that there

are bodies which, by their composition alone, give rise to intellect;

that corpses reason, walk about, and speak; that [G-D](#) is deceived,

and so on. (68:2) But [ideas](#) which are [clear and distinct](#) can never be false: for ideas of things clearly and distinctly conceived are either very simple themselves, or are compounded from very [simple ideas](#), that is, are [deduced](#) therefrom. (68:3) The impossibility of a very simple [idea](#) being false is evident to everyone who [understands](#) the nature of truth or understanding and of falsehood.

[Parkinson:286180](#)

[69] (69:1) As regards that which [constitutes](#) the [reality](#) of [truth](#), it is certain that a [true idea](#) is distinguished from a false one, not so much by its [extrinsic object](#) as by its intrinsic [nature](#). (69:2) If an architect conceives a building properly constructed, though such a building may never have existed, and may never exist, nevertheless the idea is true; and the idea remains the same, whether it be put into execution or not. (69:3) On the other hand, if anyone asserts, for instance, that Peter exists, without knowing whether Peter really exists or not, the assertion, as far as its asserter is concerned, is false, or not true, even though Peter actually does exist. (69:4) The assertion that Peter exists is true only with regard to him who knows for certain that Peter does exist.

[E2:Parkinson:27597](#)

[70] (70:1) Whence it follows that there is in ideas something real, whereby the true are distinguished from the false. (70:2) This reality must be [inquired into](#) ^, if we are to find the best [standard](#) of [truth](#) (we have said that we ought to determine our thoughts by the given standard of a [true idea](#), and that [Method](#) is [reflective](#) knowledge), and to know the properties of our [understanding](#). (70:3) Neither must we say that the difference between true and false arises from the fact, that true knowledge consists in knowing [things](#) ^ through their primary [causes](#), wherein it is totally different from false knowledge, as I have just explained it: for thought is said to be true, if it involves [objectively](#) { objectively, in modern terms } the [essence](#) of any [principle](#) which has no [cause](#), and is [known through itself](#) and in itself.

[E2:Parkinson:27597](#)

[G-D](#)

> [TEI:Bk.III:129](#) < [form] [Bk.III:58](#); [Bk.XIX:140](#)³⁴.

[71] (71:1) Wherefore the [reality](#) (*forma*) of [true thought](#) must exist in

the thought itself, without reference to other thoughts; it does not

[recognize]
acknowledge the object as its cause, but must depend on the actual
[Bk.XIV:2:110](#). [intellect]

power and nature of the understanding. (71:2) For, if we suppose that

the understanding has perceived some new entity which has never

existed, as some conceive the understanding of [G-D](#) before He
{ immanently }

created [things](#) (a [perception](#) which certainly could not arise from any

object), and has legitimately [deduced](#) other thoughts from said per-

ception, all such thoughts would be true, without being determined

by any [external](#) object; they would depend solely on the power and

nature of the understanding. (71:3) Thus, that which constitutes the

[form] { [Posit: ONE—1D6](#) }
reality of a true thought must be sought in the [thought](#) itself, and

[deduced](#) from the nature of the [understanding](#).

> [TEI:Bk.III:129](#) <

[72] (72:1) In order to pursue our investigation page 27, let us confront

{ [ONE—1D6](#) }

ourselves with some [true](#) [idea](#), whose object we know for certain to

be dependent on our power of thinking, and to have nothing corres-
[has no object](#)—[Bk.XIV:2:105](#)²; [Bk.XIX:134](#)¹⁷.

[ponding to it](#) in nature. (72:2) With an idea of this kind before us, we

shall, as appears from what has just been said, be more easily able

to carry on the research we have in view. (72:3) For instance, in order

[Bk.III:57,128—feign](#) [Bk.XIX:21](#)²².

to form the conception of a sphere, I [invent](#) a cause at my pleasure

—namely, a semicircle revolving round its center, and thus produc-

[Bk.XIX:21](#)²³.
< [diameter?](#) >

ing a sphere. (72:4) This is indisputably a [true idea](#); and, although

we know that no sphere in nature has ever actually been so formed,

the [perception](#) remains true, and is the easiest manner of conceiv-

ing a sphere.

(72:5) We must observe that this perception asserts the rotation of a

semicircle—which assertion would be false, if it were not associated

with the conception of a sphere, or of a cause determining a motion

of the kind, or absolutely, if the assertion were isolated. (72:6) The

mind would then only tend to the [affirmation](#) of the sole motion of a

semicircle, which is not contained in the conception of a semicircle,

and does not arise from the conception of any cause capable of producing such motion. (72:7) Thus *falsity* consists only in this, that something is affirmed of a thing, which is not contained in the conception we have formed of that thing, as motion or rest of a semicircle.

(72:8) Whence it follows that simple ideas cannot be other than *true* —
[Bk.XIV:2:1154](#).
 e.g., the simple idea of a semicircle, of motion, of rest, of quantity, &c.

(72:9) Whatsoever affirmation such ideas contain is equal to the concept formed, and does not extend further. (72:10) Wherefore we may form as many [simple ideas](#) as we please, without any fear of error.

[73] (73:1) It only remains for us to inquire by what power our mind can form [true ideas](#), and how far such power extends. (2) It is certain that such power [cannot](#) extend itself infinitely. (73:3) For when we [affirm](#) somewhat of a thing, which is not contained in the concept we have formed of that thing, such an affirmation shows a defect of our perception, or that we have formed [fragmentary or mutilated ideas](#).
[Bk.XV:289225—Bk.XV:27484 on E2:XXVIII:105, E2:XXIX\(4\)C:106 >](#)
[Bk.XIV:2:1151](#). ^ [Bk.III:133,140](#).

(73:4) Thus we have seen that the motion of a semicircle is false when it is isolated in the mind, but true when it is associated with the concept of a sphere, or of some cause determining such a motion.

(73:5) But [page 28](#) if it be the nature of a thinking being, as seems, [\[Bk.VIII:3354—TEI:\[106\]:28 \]](#) [Bk.III:79](#).
prima facie, to be the case, to form [true](#) or [adequate](#) thoughts, it is [Bk.III:131](#). [Bk.III:186](#).
 plain that [inadequate](#) ideas arise in us only because we are [parts](#) of

a thinking [Being](#), whose thoughts—some in their entirety, others
[< Bk.XV:289226—Bk.XV:27382 on E2:XXIVff:104 >](#)
 in [fragments only](#)—[constitute](#) our mind.
[Bk.XIV:2:1173—form](#) ^ ^ [Bk.III:140](#).

[74] (74:1) But there is another point to be considered, which was not worth raising in the case of fiction, but which give rise to complete [Bk.III:128](#).
 deception—namely, that certain things presented to the [imagination](#) also exist in the understanding—in other words, are conceived [clearly](#) and [distinctly](#). (74:2) Hence, so long as we do not separate that which is [distinct](#) from that which is confused, [certainty](#), or the true [Bk.III:127](#).
 idea, becomes mixed with indistinct ideas.

(74:3) For instance, certain [Stoics](#) heard, perhaps, the term "[soul](#)," and also that the soul is immortal, yet imagined it only confusedly; they imaged, also, and understood that very subtle bodies penetrate all others, and are penetrated by none. (74:4) By combining these ideas, and being at the same time certain of the [truth](#) of the [axiom](#), they [was those most] forthwith became convinced that the mind [consists of very subtle](#) bodies; that these very subtle bodies cannot be divided &c.

[Pineal Gland](#)

[75] (75:1) But we are freed from mistakes of this kind, so long as we endeavor to examine all our [perceptions](#) by the [standard](#) of the given [true idea](#). (2) We must take care, as has been said, to separate such perceptions from all those which arise from hearsay or unclassified experience. (75:3) Moreover, such mistakes arise from things being conceived too much in the [abstract](#); for it is sufficiently self-evident { [G-D/Nature](#) } that what I conceive as in its true object I cannot apply to anything else. (75:4) Lastly, they arise from a want of understanding of the [primary elements of Nature](#) as a whole; whence we proceed without due order, and confound Nature with [abstract](#) rules, which, although they be true enough in their sphere, yet, when misapplied, confound themselves, and pervert the [order of Nature](#). (75:5) However, if we proceed with as little abstraction as possible, and begin from [primary elements](#)—that is, from the source and origin of Nature, as far back as we can reach,—we need not fear any deceptions of this kind.

[Simply Posit](#)

[76] (76:1) As far as the [knowledge](#) of the origin of [Nature](#) is concerned, there is no danger of our page 29 confounding it with [abstractions](#). (76:2) For when a thing is conceived in the abstract, as are all [universal notions](#), the said universal notions are always more extensive in [[than their particulars can have in nature.](#)] the mind than the number of individuals forming their contents really existing in nature. (76:3) Again, there are many things in nature, the difference between which is so slight as to be hardly perceptible to the understanding; so that it may readily happen that such things are confounded together, if they be conceived abstractedly. (76:4) But

since the [first principle](#) of [Nature](#) cannot (as we shall see hereafter)

be conceived [abstractedly](#) or [universally](#), and cannot extend further

in the understanding than it does in [reality](#), and has no likeness to

[[changeable](#)]

mutable things, no confusion need be feared in respect to the [idea](#)

([Posit: ONE—1D6](#))

of it, provided (as before shown) that we possess a [standard](#) of

{ [as a working hypothesis](#) ^ }

[truth](#). (76:5) This is, in fact, a Being [single](#) and [infinite](#) [76z]; in other

[Bk.III:158](#).

words, it is the [sum total](#) of [Being](#), beyond which there is no being

[Bk.XIV:2:1621](#).

found [76a].

Of doubt. page 29

[77] (77:1) Thus far we have treated of the false idea. (1a) We have now

[Bk.XIV:2:1136](#).

> lead <

to investigate the [doubtful](#) idea—that is, to inquire what can cause

us to doubt, and how doubt may be removed. (77:2) I speak of real

doubt existing in the mind, not of such doubt as we see exemplified

when a man says that he doubts, though his mind does not really

> [doubt](#) <

hesitate. (77:3) The cure of the latter does not fall within the province

[[the](#)]

[Bk.III:89—stubbornness](#).

of Method, it belongs rather to inquiries concerning obstinacy and

> [emendation](#) <

its cure.

[Bk.XIV:2:1141](#).

[Bk.XIV:2:1622](#).

[78] (78:1) Real [doubt](#) is never produced in the mind by the [thing](#)

doubted of. (78:2) In other words, if there were only [one idea in the](#)

{ [with respect to one reference point](#) }

[mind](#), ^ whether that idea were true or false, there would be no doubt

or [certainty](#) present, only a certain sensation. (78:3) For an [idea](#) is in

[Damasio—biological](#)

itself nothing else than a certain sensation.

[Bk.III:90,131](#).

(78:4) But doubt will arise through another idea, not [clear](#) and [distinct](#)

enough for us to be able to draw any certain conclusions with regard

to the matter under consideration; that is, the idea which causes

us to doubt is not [clear and distinct](#). (78:5) To take an example.

(78:6) Supposing that a man has never [reflected](#), taught by experience

or by any other means, that our senses sometimes deceive us, he

will never doubt whether [the sun](#) be greater or less than it appears.

(78:7) Thus rustics are generally astonished when they hear that the

] [persistent meditation](#) [

sun is much larger than the earth. (78:8) But from [reflection](#) on the

< [deception](#) >; [Bk.XIV:2:794](#).

deceitfulness of the senses [\[78a\]](#) doubt arises, and if, after doubting, we acquire a true knowledge of the senses, and how things at a distance are represented [\[by their means, \]](#) through their instrumentality, doubt is [Bk.XIV:2:801](#). again removed.

[79] (79:1) Hence we cannot cast [doubt](#) on [true ideas](#) by the supposition that there is a deceitful [Deity](#), who [leads us astray](#) even in what [Bk.III:130—misleader](#) [^ Bk.XV:289228 >](#) is most certain. (79:2) We can only hold such an [hypothesis](#) so long as we have no [clear and distinct](#) idea—in other words, until we reflect on the [knowledge](#) which we have of the [first principle](#) of all things, and find that which teaches us that [G-D](#) is not a deceiver, and until we know this with the same certainty as we know from reflecting on [Bk.III:137](#). the nature of a triangle that its three angles are equal to two right angles. (79:3) But if we have a [knowledge of G-D](#) equal to that which we have of a triangle, all [doubt](#) is removed. (79:4) In the same way as we can arrive at the said knowledge of a triangle, though not absolutely sure that there is not some arch-deceiver leading us astray, so can we come to a like knowledge of [G-D](#) under the like condition, and when we have attained to it, it is sufficient, as I said before, to remove every doubt which we can possess concerning clear and distinct ideas.

[80] (80:1) Thus, if a man proceeded with our investigations in due order, inquiring first into those [things](#) which should first be inquired into, never passing over a [link in the chain](#) of association, and with [Bk.III:191a](#). knowledge how to [define](#) his questions before seeking to answer them, he will never have any [ideas](#) save such as are very certain, [Bk.III:138; Bk.XX:17965](#). or, in other words, [clear](#) and [distinct](#); for [doubt](#) is only a suspension [\[mind \]](#) [{computer crashes}](#) of the [spirit](#) concerning some [affirmation or negation](#) which it would pronounce upon unhesitatingly if it were not in [ignorance](#) of some- [{ G-D }](#) [thing](#), without which the knowledge of the matter in hand must needs [< Bk.XV:289230 >](#) be imperfect. (80:2) We may, [page 31](#) therefore, conclude that doubt [Bk.III:130—without](#) always proceeds [from want of](#) due order in investigation.

Of memory and forgetfulness. page 31

[81] (81:1) These are the points I promised to discuss in the [first part](#) of my treatise on [Method](#). (81:2) However, in order not to omit anything which can conduce to the knowledge of the understanding and its faculties, I will add a few words on the subject of memory and forgetfulness. (81:3) The point most worthy of attention is, that memory is strengthened both with and without the aid of the understanding. (81:4) For the more intelligible a thing is, the more easily is it remembered, and the less intelligible it is, the more easily do we forget it. (81:5) For instance, a number of unconnected words is much more difficult to remember than the same number in the form of a narration.

[82] (82:1) The memory is also strengthened without the aid of the understanding by means of the power wherewith the [imagination](#) [Bk.XIV:2:831, 844](#), or the [sense called common](#), [\[CRS2\]](#), is affected by some particular [< Bk.XV:290231—Bk.XV:27061 on E2:De.VII:83 >](#) physical object. (82:2) I say [particular](#), for the imagination is only affected by particular objects. (82:3) If we read, for instance, a single romantic comedy, we shall remember it very well, so long as we do not read many others of the same kind, for it will reign alone in the memory. (82:4) If, however, we read several others of the same kind, we shall think of them altogether, and easily confuse one with another. (82:5) I say also, *physical*. (82:6) For the imagination is only affected by physical objects. (82:7) As, then, the memory is strengthened both with and without the aid of the understanding, we may conclude that it is different from the understanding, and that in the latter considered in itself there is neither memory nor forgetfulness.

[Bk.XIV:1:xxi, 2:884, 2:892.](#)

[83] (83:1) What, then, is [memory](#)? (2) It is nothing else than the actual sensation of impressions on the brain, accompanied with the thought [Bk.XIV:2:851](#), of a definite duration, [\[83d\]](#), of the sensation. (83:3) This is also shown [Bk.XIV:2:884](#), by reminiscence. (83:4) For then we think of the sensation, but without the notion of continuous [duration](#); page 32 thus the idea of that sensation is not the actual duration of the sensation or actual memory.

(83:5) Whether ideas are or are not subject to corruption will be seen in my [philosophy](#).

(83:6) If this seems too absurd to anyone, it will be sufficient for our purpose, if he reflect on the fact that a thing is more easily remembered in proportion to its singularity, as appears from the example of the comedy just cited. (83:7) Further, a thing is remembered more easily in proportion to its intelligibility; therefore we cannot help remember that which is extremely singular and sufficiently intelligible.

[84] (84:1) Thus, then, we have [distinguished](#) between a [true idea](#) and other [perceptions](#), and shown that [ideas](#) fictitious, false, and the rest, originate in the [imagination](#)—that is, in certain [sensations fortuitous](#) (so to speak) and disconnected, arising not from the power of the mind, but from [external causes](#), according as the body, sleeping or waking, receives various motions.

(84:2) But one may take any view one likes of the imagination so long as one acknowledges that it is different from the understanding, and that the [soul](#) is [passive](#) with regard to it. (84:3) The view taken is immaterial, if we know that the imagination is something indefinite, with regard to which the [soul](#) is passive, and that we can by some means or other free ourselves therefrom with the [help of the understanding](#).

(84:4) Let no one then be astonished that before proving the existence of body, and other necessary things, I speak of imagination of body, and of its composition. (84:5) The view taken is, I repeat, immaterial, so long as we know that [imagination](#) is something indefinite, &c.

[85] (85:1) As regards a [true idea](#), we have shown that it is simple or compounded of [simple ideas](#); that it shows how and why something is or has been [made](#); and that its [subjective](#) effects in the [soul](#) correspond to the actual reality of its object. (85:2) This conclusion is identical with the saying of the [ancients](#), that [true science](#) proceeds from [cause to effect](#); though the ancients, so far as I know, never formed the [conception](#) put forward here that the [soul](#) acts [according to fixed](#)

[Bk.III:82, 85, 89, 138, 186—spiritual](#); [Bk.XIX:115](#)5; [140](#)33; [160](#)15.

[laws](#), and is as it were an immaterial automaton.

[Mark Twain](#)

[Bk.XIV:2:154](#)3—spiritual.

Mental hindrances from words—and from the popular confusion of ready imagination with distinct understanding.

page 33

[86] (86:1) [Hence](#), as far as is possible at the outset, we have acquired

{ [Posit: ONE—1D6](#) }

a knowledge of our [understanding](#), and such a [standard](#) of a [true](#) [idea](#) that we need no longer fear confounding truth with falsehood

[Simply Posit](#)

{ [as a working hypothesis](#) ^ }

and [fiction](#). (86:2) Neither shall we wonder why we understand

some things which in nowise fall within the scope of the imagination,

while other things are in the imagination but wholly opposed to the

[Bk.III:52](#).

[Bk.III:127](#).

understanding, or others, again, which agree therewith. (86:3) We now

know that the operations, whereby the [effects of imagination](#) are pro-

duced, take place under other laws quite different from the laws of

[Bk.III:131,140—acted on](#).

the understanding, and that the [mind](#) is entirely [passive](#) with regard

to them.

[87] (87:1) Whence we may also see how easily men may fall into

grave errors through not distinguishing accurately between the

[Bk.XIV:1:263](#)5.

[imagination](#) and the understanding; such as believing that extension

[[in a place](#)]

must be localized, that it must be [finite](#), that its [parts](#) are really

[Idolatry](#)

< [distinguished](#). [Bk.XV:290](#)234—[Bk.XV:261](#)5 on [E1:De.V:45](#); [E1:X\(2\)N:51](#) >

[distinct](#) one from the other, that it is the primary and single foundation

[Bk.III:184,185—Neff E5:L29\(12\):319](#).

of all [things](#), that it occupies [more space](#) at one time than at another,

and other similar doctrines, all entirely opposed to truth, as we shall

[duly show](#).

[Bk.III:51](#).

[Bk.III:131](#).

[88] (88:1) Again, since [words](#) are a part of the [imagination](#)—that is,

[[random](#)]

since we form many [conceptions](#) in accordance with [confused](#)

[composition](#)]

arrangements of words in the [memory](#), dependent on particular

bodily conditions,—there is no [doubt](#) that words may, equally with

[Bk.III:134](#).

the imagination, be the cause of many and great errors, unless we

[Bk.III:127](#).

keep strictly on our guard.

[Bk.III:51](#), [Bk.XIV:2:174](#)2.

[89] (89:1) Moreover, [words](#) are formed according to popular fancy and [[power of understanding](#)] intelligence, and are, therefore, signs of things as existing in the imagination, not as existing in the understanding. (89:2) This is evident from the fact that to all such things as exist only in the understanding, not in the imagination, [negative](#) names are often given, such as incorporeal, [infinite](#), &c. (89:3) So, also, many conceptions really [affirmative](#) are expressed negatively, and *vice versa*, as uncreate, inde-

such

pendent, infinite, immortal, &c., inasmuch as their contraries are [Bk.III:185](#). much more easily imagined, and, therefore, occurred first to men, and usurped positive names. (89:4) Many things we affirm and deny, because the nature of words allows us to do so, though the [nature](#) of [things](#) does not. (89:5) While we remain unaware of this fact, we may easily mistake falsehood for [truth](#).

[90] (90:1) Let us also beware of another great cause of confusion, which prevents the understanding from reflecting on itself. (90:2) Sometimes, while making no distinction between the imagination page 34 and the intellect, we think that what we more readily imagine is clearer to us; and also we think that what we imagine we understand. (90:3) Thus, we put first that which should be last: the true order of [Bk.III:138](#). progression is reversed, and no legitimate conclusion is drawn.

End of [First Part of the Method](#).

From [Bk.III:138](#)—In the previous paragraphs, we have encountered many elements that will play an important role in the [rest](#) of the [Method](#):

{ [posit: ONE—1D6](#) }

[Simply Posit](#)

1. We must start from a given, [true idea](#), in which we actively think an objective essence on the basis of its constitutive parts or "[intrinsic denominations](#)."
2. This will give us an idea of this idea, or [reflexive](#) understanding of the intellect as power of thinking, allowing us to actively separate the intellect from the imagination: "From [all] this we have acquired as much knowledge of our intellect *as was possible in the beginning* , and such a [standard](#) of the [true idea](#) that now we do not fear confusing true ideas with false or fictitious [or dubitable] ones" ([\[86\]](#); emphasis added).
3. As soon as possible we must link this [reflexive knowledge](#) of the intellect with the ideas concerning the origin of [Nature](#).

- 4. From there, knowing how to proceed in the right order (of [causes and effects](#)), we must come to know other things as far as this is necessary in order to obtain our final aim.

Second Part of the Method:

[91-98], De Dijn's Commentary Page 150.

< [Definition](#) and the Order of Investigation >
< [Bk.XV:286](#)¹⁸¹ >

Its object, the acquisition of [clear and distinct](#) ideas. page 34

• [Bk.III:150](#).
 [91] [\[91e\]](#) (91:1) Now, in order at length to pass on to the second part of this Method, I shall first set forth the [object aimed at](#), and next the means for its attainment. (91:2) The object aimed at is the acquisition of [Bk.III:58](#). [clear](#) and [distinct](#) ideas, such as are produced by the pure intellect, [Bk.XIV:2:1552—fortuitous body; {waves}](#). and not by [chance physical](#) motions. (91:3) In order that all [ideas](#) may [\[led back to one \]](#) > [strive to connect and order—Bk.III:174](#) < be [reduced to unity](#), we shall [endeavor so to associate and arrange](#) [\[objectively \]](#) them that our mind may, as far as possible, reflect [subjectively](#) the [formality](#). [Bk.XV:290](#)²³⁵—[E1:Bk.XV:287](#)¹⁹⁶ >; [Bk.XX:179](#)⁶⁶. [reality](#) of [Nature](#), both as a [whole](#) and as [parts](#).

[Bk.III:150,183](#).
[92-93], [De Dijn's Commentary Page 150 - Knowledge of Real Things](#).

[92] (92:1) As for the first point, it is necessary (as we have said) for our purpose that everything should be conceived, either *solely*

[Bk.](#)

[III:136; Bk.XIV:1:128](#)¹.

through
its [essence](#) _____, or *through*
its proximate [cause](#) _____.

(92:2) If the thing

< [Bk.XV:290](#)²³⁶—[E1:De.1:45](#); [E1:Bk.XV:260](#)²; [E1:De.III:45](#) >

be self-existent, or, as is commonly said, the [cause](#) [^ of itself](#), it must [Bk.XIV:2:142](#)^{1&4}.

be understood through its essence only; if it be not self-existent, but requires a cause for its existence, it must be understood through its [Bk.XIV:1:128](#)¹. [Bk.III:151,152; Bk.XIX:133](#)¹⁴. proximate cause. (92:3) For, in reality, the [knowledge](#), [\[92f\]](#), of an effect

[Bk.XV:290](#)²³⁷—[Bk.XV:262](#)¹⁰ on [E1:Ax.1:46](#); [Bk.XIX:157](#)⁷.

is nothing else than the [acquisition](#) of more perfect knowledge of its [Understanding](#)

[cause](#). {Examples: [Joy](#), [Love](#).}

[93] (93:1) Therefore, we may never, while we are concerned with [Bk.III:154](#).

inquiries into actual things, draw any conclusion from [abstractions](#);

[Bk.III:81—Neff TL:L27\(09\):313.](#)

we shall be extremely careful not to [confound that which](#) is only in

< [intellect](#). [Bk.XV:290](#)²³⁸—[TEI:\[95\]:35](#); [Bk.XV:269](#)⁵⁵ on [E1:Ap\(61\):80](#) >

the [understanding](#) with that which is [in the thing itself](#). ^(93:2) The best

[^][real](#)—[Bk.III:152](#).

basis for drawing a conclusion will be either some particular [affirm-](#)

< [E1:Bk.XV:260](#)¹ >

ative [essence](#), or a [true](#) and legitimate [definition](#). ^(93:3) For the under-

standing cannot descend from universal axioms by themselves to

particular things, since [axioms](#) are of [infinite](#) extent, and do not

> [singular](#)—[Bk.III:158](#) <

determine the understanding to contemplate one [particular thing](#).

{ [Example: I:Table 1](#) , "EMOTION" , "FAITH" }

more than another { [unless there be a change caused](#) }.

[Bk.III:150](#).

[94-97], [De Dijn's Commentary Page 153 - Theory of Definition](#). { [G:Note 1 & 2](#) }

Its means, [good definitions](#). [Conditions of definition](#). page 35

[Bk.III:153](#).

[94] ^(94:1) Thus the true [Method](#) page 35 of discovery is to form

[Bk.III:154,155,182](#); [Bk.XIX:160](#)⁵.

thoughts from some given [definition](#). ^(94:2) This process will be the more

fruitful and easy in proportion as the thing given be [better defined](#).

^(94:3) Wherefore, the cardinal point of all this [second part of Method](#)

[Bk.III:159](#); [Bk.XIX:135](#)²².

consists in the [knowledge](#) of the conditions of [good definition](#), and

the [means](#) of finding them. ^(94:4) I will first treat of the conditions of

definition.

< [E1:Bk.XV:260](#)¹ >

[Bk.XIV:1:384](#)⁵.

[95] ⁽¹⁾ A [definition](#), if it is to be called perfect, must explain the inmost

[Bk.III:57,136,155](#); [Bk.XIX:133](#)¹³.

[essence of a thing](#), and must take care not to substitute for this any

{ [synonyms](#) }

of its [properties](#). ^(95:2) In order to illustrate my meaning, without taking

{ [G-D](#) }

[Bk.XIV:1:581](#).

an example which would seem to show a desire to expose other

{ [anthropomorphic conceptions of G-D](#) }

people's [errors](#), I will choose the case of something [abstract](#), the defi-

{ [Neff TL:L72\(83\):409](#) }

nition of which is of little moment. ^(95:3) Such is a circle. ⁽⁴⁾ If a circle

[Bk.XIX:134](#)¹⁸.

be defined as a figure, such that all straight lines drawn from the

center to the circumference are equal, every one can see that such a

[Bk.XIX:212](#)²².

definition does not in the least explain the essence of a circle, but

{ [proximate cause](#) ^ }

solely one of its properties. ^(95:5) Though, as I have said, this is of

< [entities of reason](#) >

no importance in the case of figures and other [abstractions](#), it is of

[Bk.XIV:2:144](#)¹—[entities](#).

great importance in the case of physical beings and [realities](#): for the [Bk.XIX:1611](#).
 properties of things are not understood so long as their [essences](#)
 are unknown. ^(95:6) If the latter be passed over, there is necessarily
 a perversion of the succession of [ideas](#) which should reflect the
 [[connection](#)]
[succession](#) of [Nature](#), and we go far astray from our object.

[96] In order to be free from this fault, the following rules should be
 < [E1:Bk.XV:2601](#) >
 observed in [definition](#):—

[Bk.XIV:1:3835](#); [Bk.XIV:2:1421&2](#).

[Bk.III:151,155](#); [A mode](#).

I. ^(96:1) If the thing in question be [created](#), the definition must (as we
 have said) comprehend the [proximate cause](#). ⁽²⁾ For instance, a circle
 ^ [Bk.XIV:1:3842](#); [2:1432](#);
 should, according to this rule, be defined as follows: the figure
[Bk.XIV:2:1432](#)—[movable](#).
 described by any line whereof one end is fixed and the other free.
 <[includes](#)> {[immediately before](#)}

^(96:3) This definition clearly comprehends the [proximate cause](#).

[CRS3]

II. ^(96:4) A [conception](#) or [definition](#) of a thing should be such that all
 the properties of that thing, in so far as it is considered by itself, and
 not in conjunction with other [things](#), can be [deduced](#) from it, as may
 be seen in the definition given of a circle: for from that it clearly fol-
 lows that all straight lines drawn from the center to the circumference
 are equal. ^(96:5) That this is a necessary characteristic of a page 36
 definition is so clear to anyone, who reflects on the matter, that there
 is no need to spend time in proving it, or in showing that, owing
[Bk.XIX:6014](#).
 to this second condition, every definition should be [affirmative](#).

^(96:6) I speak of intellectual affirmation, giving little thought to verbal
 affirmations which, owing to the poverty of language, must some-
 times, perhaps, be expressed [negatively](#), though the idea contained
 is affirmative.

< [E1:Bk.XV:2601](#) > [Bk.III:81,156,157](#).

[97] The rules for the [definition](#) of an [uncreated](#) thing are as follows:—
 {[G-D](#)}

I. The exclusion of all idea of [cause](#)—that is, the thing must not
 need explanation by anything [outside itself](#). {[Conceived through itself](#)}
 [[Bk.VIII:4064](#)—[E1:De.VI:45](#), [TEI:L64\(60\):395](#)]

II. When the definition of the thing has been given, there must be
 no room for [doubt](#) as to whether the thing exists or not. [Bk.III:151](#).

[Bk.XIV:1:384b.](#)

III. It must contain, as far as the mind is concerned, no substantives which could be put into an adjectival form; in other words, the object defined must not be explained through [abstractions](#).
{ A substantive adjective such as *realistic* . }

IV. Lastly, though this is not absolutely necessary, it should be possible to [deduce](#) from the [definition](#) all the properties of the thing defined. [posit: ONE—1D6](#)

(97:5) All these rules become obvious to anyone giving strict attention to the matter.

[98], [De Dijn's Commentary Page 158 - Conclusion](#).

[98] (98:1) I have also stated that the best basis for drawing a conclusion is a particular [affirmative](#) essence. (2) The more specialized the [idea](#) is, the more it is [distinct](#), and therefore [clear](#). (98:3) Wherefore a knowledge of [particular things](#) should be sought for as diligently as possible.

The Order of Thinking.

[99-103], [De Dijn's Commentary Page 174 - The Order of Our Intellectual Perceptions](#).
[Bk.III:172,173](#).

> [TEI:Bk.III:129](#) <

[99] (99:1) As regards the order of our [perceptions](#), and the manner in which they should be arranged and united, it is necessary that, as soon as is possible and [rational](#), we should inquire whether there be any [being](#) (and, if so, [what being](#)), that is the [cause](#) of all [things](#), so that its [essence](#), represented in thought, may be the cause of all our

<, as we have said, [Bk.XV:290242—TEI:\[42\]:15](#) >

[ideas](#), and then our [mind](#) ^ will to the utmost possible extent reflect
{ [will be objective](#) ^ } ^ [Bk.VIII:4167—TEI:\[42\] , \[91\] , \[95\]](#).
[[objectively](#)] [Bk.III:172,174](#).

[Nature](#). (99:2) For it will possess, [subjectively](#), [Nature's](#) essence, order, and [union](#).
^ [Bk.XX:17966](#).

(99:3) Thus we can see that it is before all things necessary for us to [deduce](#) all our ideas from physical things—that is, from real entities, proceeding, as far as may be, according to the [series](#) of [causes](#), from one real entity to another real entity, never passing to universals and [abstractions](#),
[Bk.III:174](#). [Bk.III:82](#).
[Bk.XIV:2:1443](#).

page 37 either for the purpose of deducing some real entity from them, or deducing them from some real entity.

(99:4) Either of these processes interrupts the true progress of the understanding.

> noted—[Bk.III:174](#). <

[100] (100:1) But it must be observed that, by the [series of causes](#) and [Bk.XIV:1:249](#)⁹,[1:250](#). real entities, I do not here mean the series of [particular and mutable](#) < [Bk.XV:290](#)²⁴³—[Bk.XV:266](#)³³ on [E1:XXI:63](#) > things, but only the series of fixed and [eternal things](#). (100:2) It would be impossible for human infirmity to follow up the series of particular mutable things, both on account of their multitude, surpassing all calculation, and on account of the infinitely diverse circumstances surrounding one and the same thing, any one of which may be the cause of its existence or non-existence. (100:3) Indeed, their [existence](#) has no connection with their [essence](#), or (as we have said already) { [Neff](#) } is not an [eternal truth](#). [Durant:638\[5a\]](#)

[101] (101:1) Neither is there any need that we should [understand](#) their series, for the essences of particular mutable things are not to be gathered from their series or order of existence, which would furnish us with nothing beyond their [extrinsic denominations](#), their relations, or, at most, their circumstances, all of which are very different from [Bk.III:175](#). their inmost essence. (101:2) This inmost essence must be sought [Durant:638\[5a\]](#)⁷⁴ solely from fixed and [eternal things](#), and from the laws, inscribed [Bk.III:177](#)—[Neff TL:L66](#)([64](#)):[400](#). [Bk.III:180](#); [Bk.XIV:1:250](#)³; [Bk.XIX:211](#)¹⁸. (so to speak) in those things as in their [true](#) codes, according to > [ordered](#)—[Bk.III:175,198](#) < which all [particular things](#) take place and are arranged; nay, these [Bk.XIV:1:251](#)¹. mutable particular things depend so intimately and essentially (so to phrase it) upon the fixed things, that they cannot either be [Bk.III:175](#). [Importance of 1D6](#) conceived without them.

(101:3) Whence these fixed and [eternal things](#), though they are themselves particular, will nevertheless, owing to their presence and [Bk.III:203](#). power everywhere, be to us as universals, or genera of [definitions](#). [Bk.XIV:2:161](#)¹. of particular mutable things, and as the proximate [causes](#) of all things.

[102] (102:1) But, though this be so, there seems to be no small difficulty in arriving at the [knowledge](#) of these [particular things](#), for to < [Bk.XV:290](#)²⁴⁶—[TEI:\[100\]:37](#) >

conceive them all at once would far surpass the powers of the
[Bk.XIV:2:1614—intellect.](#) [Bk.III:53.](#)
 human understanding. (102:2) The arrangement whereby one thing is
 < [Bk.XV:290247—TEI:\[42\] , \[99\] & \[100\]](#) >
 understood before another, [as we have stated](#), should not be
 sought from their series of existence, nor from eternal things.
[Bk.XIX:29210.](#)
 (102:3) For the latter are all by nature simultaneous. (102:4) Other aids
 are therefore needed besides those employed for understanding
[Bk.III:178, 230.](#)
[eternal things](#) page 38 and their laws.

(102:5) However, this is not the place to recount such aids, nor is there
[Bk.III:185.](#)
 any need to do so, until we have acquired a sufficient knowledge of
 eternal things and their infallible laws, and until the nature of our
 senses has become plain to us.

[103] (103:1) Before betaking ourselves to seek knowledge of particu-
 lar things, it will be seasonable to speak of such aids, as all tend to
 teach us the mode of employing our senses, and to make certain
 [laws] [, the experiments,]
 experiments under fixed rules and arrangements which may suffice
 ^ [Bk.III:153, 230.](#)
 to determine the object of our inquiry, so that we may therefrom infer
[Bk.III:180.](#)
 what laws of [eternal thing](#) it has been produced under, and may
[Bk.III:178.](#)
 gain an [insight](#) into its inmost nature, as I will duly show. (103:2) Here,
 to return to my purpose, I will only endeavor to set forth what seems
 necessary for enabling us to attain to [knowledge](#) of eternal things,
 and to define them under the conditions laid down above.

[104-105], [De Dijn's Commentary Page 180 - The Problem of the Foundation.](#)

[104] (104:1) With this end, we must bear in mind what has already
 < [Bk.XV:290248—TEI:\[61\]:23](#) >
 been stated, namely, that when the mind devotes itself to any
 [^ [Bk.VIII:4269—TEI:\[70\]:26](#)] [Bk.III:138.](#)
 thought, so as to examine it, and to [deduce](#) therefrom in due order
 all the legitimate conclusions possible, any falsehood which may
 lurk in the thought will be detected; but if the thought be true, the
 [[Bk.VIII:2134 on \[44\]](#)] [Bk.XIV:2:1292.](#)
 mind will readily [proceed without interruption](#) to deduce [truths](#) from
 ^ [Bk.III:186.](#)
 it. (104:2) This, I say, is necessary for our purpose, for our thoughts
 [[Bk.VIII:4270—cannot be determined](#)] [Bk.III:181—Neff EL:L42\(37\):360.](#)
[may be brought to a close](#) by the absence of a [foundation](#).

[105] (105:1) If, therefore, we wish to investigate the first thing of all,

{ ONE—1D6 }

it will be necessary to supply some [foundation](#) which may direct our

[the] { meditative }

thoughts thither. (105:2) Further, since [Method](#) is [reflective](#) knowledge,

the foundation which must direct our thoughts can be nothing else

[Bk.III:86.](#) { PcM }; [Bk.XIX:1306.a.](#)

than the [knowledge](#) of that which constitutes [the reality of truth](#), and

the knowledge of the understanding, its properties, and powers.

(105:3) When this has been acquired we shall possess a foundation

wherefrom we can [deduce](#) our thoughts, and a path whereby the

intellect, according to its capacity, may attain the knowledge of

[eternal things](#), allowance being made for the extent of the intellect-

[Bk.III:182.](#)

ual powers.

[G:Note 8](#)

[Working Hypothesis](#)

[106 -110], De Dijn's Commentary Page 182 - From Foundation to Principle.

[Bk.III:182.](#)

How to [define the understanding](#), page 38

[[Bk.VIII:3354—TEI:\[73\]:38](#)]

[106] (106:1) If, as I stated in the [first part](#), it belongs to the nature of

[Bk.XIX:1291.](#)

thought to form [true ideas](#), we must here inquire what is meant by

[intellect]

the faculties and power of the understanding. page 39 (106:2) The chief

part of our Method is to understand as well as possible the powers

[Bk.XIX:1294.](#)

of the intellect, and its nature; we are, therefore, compelled (by the

[Bk.III:172.](#)

considerations advanced in the [second part](#) of the Method) neces-

[Bk.III:182.](#)

sarily to [draw](#) these conclusions from the [definition](#) itself of thought

[intellect]

and [understanding](#).

> [Bk.III:159,182—discovering.](#) <

< [establish](#) >

[107] (107:1) But, so far as we have not got any rules for finding defini-

tions, and, as we cannot [set forth](#) such rules without a previous

< intellect >

knowledge of Nature, that is without a definition of the understanding

and its power, it follows either that the definition of the understanding

must be clear in itself, or that we can [understand](#) nothing.

(107:2) Nevertheless this definition is not absolutely clear in itself;

however, since its properties, like all things that we possess through

the understanding, cannot be known [clearly and distinctly](#), unless its

nature be known previously, the definition of the understanding makes itself manifest, if we pay attention to its properties, which we know clearly and distinctly. (107:3) Let us, then, enumerate here the properties of the understanding, let us examine them, and begin by discussing the instruments for research which we [find innate](#) in us.

[Bk.XIX:13418.](#) [[intellect](#)]
[108] (108:1) The properties of the understanding which I have chiefly remarked, and which I clearly understand, are the following:—

[Bk.XIV:2:1024, 2:1544.](#)
I. (108:2) It involves [certainty](#)—in other words, it knows that a [thing](#) exists in [reality](#) as it is [reflected subjectively](#).
{ [thought of](#) } [[objectively](#)]
^ [contained in it objectively](#)—[Bk.XIV:2:1031.](#)

[Bk.XIV:2:1302.](#)
II. (108:3) That it perceives certain things, or forms some ideas absolutely, some ideas from others. (108:4) Thus it forms the idea of quantity absolutely, without reference to any other thoughts; but ideas of motion it only forms after taking into consideration the idea of quantity.

III. (108:5) Those [ideas](#) which the understanding forms [absolutely](#) express [infinity](#); [determinate](#) ideas are derived from other ideas.

(108:6) Thus in the idea of quantity, perceived by means of a [cause](#), the quantity is determined, as when a body is perceived to be formed by the motion of a plane, a plane by the motion of a line, or, again, a line by the motion of a point. (108:7) All these are [perceptions](#) which do not serve towards understanding quantity, but only towards determining it. (108:8) This is proved by the fact that we conceive them as formed as it were by motion, yet this motion is page 40 not perceived unless the quantity be perceived also; we can even prolong the motion to form an infinite line, which we certainly could not do unless we had an idea of infinite quantity.

IV. (108:9) The understanding forms positive ideas before forming negative ideas.

V. (108:10) It perceives things not so much under the condition of [dura-](#)
< [Bk.XV:290249](#)—[Bk.XV:27698](#) on [E2:XLIV\(1\)C2:117](#) >

[tion](#) as under a certain [form of eternity](#), and in an infinite number; or rather in perceiving things it does not consider either their number or duration, whereas, in imagining them, it perceives them in a determinate number, duration, and quantity.

[VI.](#) (108:11) The [ideas](#) which we form as [clear](#) and [distinct](#), seem to follow from the sole necessity of our [nature](#), that they appear to depend absolutely on our sole power; with [confused ideas](#) the contrary is the case. (108:12) They are often formed against our will.

[conceive](#)—[Bk.III:179](#).

[VII.](#) (108:13) The mind can determine in many ways the ideas of things, which the understanding forms from other ideas: thus, for instance, in order to define the plane of an ellipse, it supposes a point adhering to a cord to be moved around two centers, or, again, it conceives an infinity of points, always in the same fixed relation to a given straight line, angle of the vertex of the cone, or in an infinity of other ways.

[VIII.](#) (108:14) The more ideas express perfection of any object, the more perfect are they themselves; for we do not admire the architect who has planned a chapel so much as the architect who has planned a splendid temple.

[109] (109:1) I do not stop to consider the rest of what is referred to thought, such as [joy](#), [love](#), &c. (109:2) They are nothing to our present purpose, and cannot even be conceived unless the understanding [{ 1:Table 1, D:1.10a }](#) [{of ° PERPETUATION}](#) be perceived previously. (109:3) When perception is removed, all these go with it.

[110] (110:1) [False](#) and [fictitious ideas](#) have nothing positive about them (as we have abundantly shown), which causes them to be [< Bk.XV:290250—E2:XXXV:108; E2:XLIX\(13\)N:121; Bk.XV:27597 on E2:XLIII:114 >](#) called [false](#) or [fictitious](#); they are only considered as such through the defectiveness of [knowledge](#). (110:2) Therefore, false and fictitious [ideas](#) as such can teach us nothing concerning the [essence](#) of

thought; this must be sought from [page 41](#) the positive properties
> [establish—TEI:Bk.III:187](#) < [Simply Posit:](#)

[ONE—1D6](#)
just enumerated; in other words, we must [lay down](#) some common
[Bk.XIX:292](#)¹⁰. ^

basis from which these properties necessarily follow, so that when
[Bk.XIX:135](#)²¹.

this is given, the properties are [necessarily](#) given also, and when it

is removed, they too vanish with it.

< [Bk.XV:290](#)²⁵¹—Cf. the definition of 'essence' [E2:De.II:82](#) >

[[Bk.VIII:5—TEI:\[46\]:16](#)]

The rest of the
treatise [is wanting](#) _____.

[Shalizi](#) Note—In the Latin text,

"*Reliqua defiderantur*" ; a note

added by the original editors of the [Opera](#) to indicate the fact
that Spinoza left the work unfinished. [[Bk.VIII:6](#)]

End of TEI.

Spinoza's Footnotes:

Footnotes marked as per [Curley:6](#) and as given in De Dijn's [Book III](#).

Page numbers as per [Book 1](#).

Bk.I:41 on (4:2)

[a] "*The pursuit
of honors and
riches is*

*likewise very absorbing,
especially
if such objects
be sought simply
for their own sake.*"

(1) This might be explained more at large and more clearly: I mean by distinguishing riches according as they are pursued for their own sake, in or furtherance of fame, or sensual pleasure, or the advancement of science and art. (2) But this subject is reserved to its own place, for it is not here proper to investigate the matter more accurately.

Bk.I:51 on (7:3)

[b] "... *causing the
death not seldom
of those who possess them*"

These considerations should be set forth more precisely.

Bk.I:61 on (13:4)

[c] "... *namely, that it
is the knowledge of*

*the union existing being
the mind
and the whole of Nature.*

These matters are explained more at length [elsewhere](#).

Bk.I:71 on (15:1)

[d] *"We must seek
the assistance of
Moral Philosophy,*

N.B. I do no more here than enumerate the sciences necessary
for our purpose; I lay no stress on their order.

Bk.I:72 on (16:2)

[e] *"... I wish to
direct all science
to one end, and aim,*

There is for the sciences but one end, to which they should all
be directed **{to improving the understanding}**.

Bk.I:81 on (19:4)

[f] *"essence of one thing
is inferred from
another thing, but not
adequately;*

(1) In this case we do not **understand** anything of the **cause** from
the consideration of it in the **effect**. (2) This is sufficiently evident
from the fact that the cause is only spoken of in very general
terms, such as—there exists then something; there exists then
some power, &c.; or from the fact that we only express it in a
negative manner—it is not this or that, &c. (3) In the second case
something is ascribed to the cause because of the effect, as we
shall show in an example, but only a property, never an **essence**.

Bk.III:54.

Bk.I:91 on (21:1)

[g] *"we
thence
clearly infer that the mind
is united*

to the body,

(1) From this example may be clearly seen what I have just drawn
attention to. (2) For through this union we understand nothing
beyond the sensation, the effect, to wit, from which we inferred
the **cause** of which we **understand** nothing. **D:2.5a—gravity.**

Bk.I:92 on (21:1)

[h] *"but we cannot
thence
absolutely understand
the nature of the
sensation
and the union,*

Bk.III:54.

Bk.XIV:2:140¹.

(1) A conclusion of this sort, though it be certain, is yet not to be
relied on without great caution; for unless we are exceedingly
careful we shall forthwith fall into error. (2) When things are con-
ceived thus **abstractedly**, and not through their true essence,
they are apt to be confused by the imagination. (3) For that
which is in itself **one**, men imagine to be **multiplex**. (4) To those
things which are conceived abstractedly, apart, and confusedly,
terms are applied which are apt to become wrested from their
strict meaning, and bestowed on things more familiar; whence it
results that these latter are imagined in the same way as the
former to which the terms were originally given.

Bk.I:111 on (27:1)

[j] "The second mode

of perception,

I shall here treat a little more in detail of experience, and shall examine the Method adopted by the Empirics {1. a person who is guided primarily by experience. 2. a quack; charlatan.}, and by recent Philosophers. [Bk.III:178](#).

Bk.I:121 on (31:2)

[k] "So, in like manner,

the

intellect, by its native strength,

[Bk.III:77](#), 56—inborn power.

By native strength, I mean that not bestowed on us by external

{ ^ a priori }

causes, as I shall afterwards explain in [my philosophy](#).

[l]

"whereby it

acquires strength for

performing

other intellectual

operations,

[Bk.III:76](#)—inborn tool.

Here I term them operations: I shall explain their nature in

[my philosophy](#). { ^ a priori }

Bk.I:123 on (33:1)

[m] "A true idea,

I shall take care not only to demonstrate what I have just advanced, but also that we have hitherto proceeded rightly, and other things needful to be known.

[TEI:Endnote 33:3](#)— (*essentia*

formalis,

essentia objectiva)

[Bk.I:131](#)—In modern language, "the [idea](#)

may become the subject

of another presentation." *Objectivus*

generally corresponds to the

modern "[subjective](#)," *formalis*

to the modern "[objective](#)."

] [Bk.VII:240](#)* [

[TEI:Endnote 33:3](#)— (*essentia*

formalis,

essentia objectiva)

From [Bk.VII:2617](#)—These are difficult terms not only to translate

but to understand. Here Spinoza takes over a [Cartesian](#) distinc-

tion, which in turn is rooted in [Scholastic](#) philosophy. Consider

some existing thing, say the planet Saturn. As an existing thing

revolving around the sun Saturn has formal [essence](#) or [reality](#)

(*essentia formalis*,

esse formale)

. The formal essence, or being,

of something is its very existence. But in considering this planet

we have made it an object of our thought. As such it has objective

essence or reality (*essentia*

objectiva,

esse objectivum)

. Clearly,

Saturn in the sky and Saturn in our mind are different things,

although the latter is supposed to represent to us the former.

What makes this terminology confusing is that in our current

usage the term '[subjective](#)' is often employed to express what the [Scholastics](#) meant by 'objective.' But the reader of [Descartes](#) and Spinoza should realize that when the philosophers use the term 'objective' they are talking about a mental representation of a thing, the thing as an [object](#) of thought.

] [Bk.VII:240](#)* [

[TEI:Endnote 33:3](#)— (*essentia formalis, essentia objectiva*)

From [Bk.XV:287](#)¹⁹⁶—Spinoza is here using the [scholastic](#) terminology that [Descartes](#) had employed when expounding his theory of the idea in Meditations III (PWD ii, 28: cf. [E1:Bk.XV:265](#)³¹). The terms that Descartes uses are 'formal reality' and 'objective reality'. These are explained most clearly in the Reply to the First Objections (PWD ii, 74-5), from which it emerges that 'formal reality' is what would now be called 'objective reality'. Descartes goes on to explain that by 'objective being in the intellect' he means 'the object's being in the intellect in the way in which its objects are normally there. By this I mean that the idea of the sun is the sun itself existing in the intellect—not of course formally existing, as it does in the heavens, but objectively existing, i.e. in the way in which objects normally are in the intellect'. Spinoza uses 'the terms 'formal' and 'objective' in the same way, but it is important to note that his questions are not Descartes' questions. Spinoza is concerned, not with objective existence, but with objective essence. That is, he is not concerned (as Descartes was) with the nature of ideas as such; his concern is with the nature of true ideas. (See the first sentence of [TEI:\[34\]:13](#): the true idea of Peter is the objective essence of Peter.)

[Bk.I:132](#) on (34:7)

[n] *"to know the nature of a circle before knowing the nature of a triangle.*

(1) Observe that we are not here inquiring how the first [subjective](#) essence is [innate](#) in us. (2) This belongs to an investigation into [nature](#), [where](#) all these matters are amply explained, and it is shown that without [ideas](#) neither [affirmation](#), nor negation, nor [volition](#) are possible. < [Bk.XV:287](#)¹⁹⁸—[Bk.XV:276](#)¹⁰¹ on [E2:XLIX:120](#). >

[Bk.I:141](#) on (36:1)

[o] *"the order in which we should seek for truth itself,*

The nature of mental search is explained in [my philosophy](#).

[Bk.I:151](#) on (41:2)

[p] *"the subjective essence would have no connection,*

To be connected with other [things](#) is to be produced by them, or to produce them.

[Bk.I:161](#) on (44:1)

[q] *"he would never have doubted the truth of his own knowledge,*

In the same way as we have here no [doubt](#) of the [truth](#) of our [knowledge](#).

Bk.I:181 on (52:4)

[r] *"I feign that Peter, whom I know to have gone home, is gone to see me,* "

See below the [note](#) on [hypotheses](#), whereof we have a clear understanding; the fiction consists in saying that such hypotheses exist in heavenly bodies.

Bk.I:191 on (54:2)

[s] *"For, as regards ourselves, when I know that I exist,* "

[Bk.III:132.](#)

(1) As a [thing](#), when once it is understood, manifests itself, we have need only of an example without further proof. (2) In the same way the contrary has only to be presented to our minds to be recognized as false, as will forthwith appear when we come to discuss fiction concerning [essences](#).

Bk.I:192 on (54:2)

[t] *"nor when I know the nature of G-D _____, can I hypothesize that He exists or does not exist.* "

Observe, that although many assert that they [doubt](#) whether [G-D](#) exists, they have nought but his name in their minds, or else some fiction which they call [God](#): this fiction is not in harmony with G-D's real [Nature](#), as we will duly show. [Bk.XIV:1:1622](#)

Bk.I:193 on (54:4)

[u] *"From these considerations, it is plain, as I have already stated, that fiction cannot be concerned with eternal truths.* "

(1) I shall presently show that no fiction can concern eternal truths. (2) By an [eternal truth](#), I mean that which being positive could never become negative. (3) Thus it is a primary and eternal truth that [G-D](#) exists, but it is not an eternal truth that Adam thinks. (4) That the Chimæra does not exist is an eternal truth, that Adam does not think is not so. { [E1-D.VI Expl.45](#), [E1-D.VIII Expl.:46](#). }
{ [Neff TL:L28\(10\):316](#), [EL:\[39\]:xxiii](#); [Bk.XIV:1:xxi](#). }

[Cash Value](#)

Bk.I:201 on (57:5)

[x] *"For, in the first case, I have merely recalled to memory* "

(1) Afterwards, when we come to speak of [fiction](#) that is concerned with [essences](#), it will be evident that fiction never creates or furnishes the mind with anything new; only such things as are already in the brain or imagination are recalled to the memory, when the attention is directed to them confusedly and all at once. (2) For instance, we have remembrance of spoken words and of a

tree; when the mind directs itself to them confusedly, it forms the notion of a tree speaking. (3) The same may be said of existence, especially when it is conceived quite generally as an entity; it is then readily applied to all things occurring together in the memory. (4) This is specially worthy of remark. [Bk.III:133.](#)

Bk.I:211 on (57:7)

[y] *"Thus there is here no fiction, but true and bare assertions.*"

We must understand as much in the case of [hypotheses](#) put forward to explain certain movements accompanying celestial phenomena; but from these, when applied to the celestial motions, we may draw conclusions as to the nature of the heavens, whereas this last may be quite different, especially as many other [causes](#) are conceivable which would account for such motions. [Bk.III:81; Bk.XIX:22.](#)

Bk.I:212 on (58:3)

[z] *"when we know the nature of the*

soul

(1) It often happens that a man recalls to mind this word soul, and forms at the same time some corporeal image: as the two representations are simultaneous, he easily thinks that he imagines and [feigns](#) a corporeal soul: thus confusing the name with the [thing](#) itself. (2) I here beg that my readers will not be in a hurry to refute this proposition; they will, I hope, have no mind to do so, if they pay close attention to the examples given and to what follows. [Bk.III:133.](#)

Bk.I:221 on (60:8)

[60a] *"and which are not worthy of rational refutation.*"

- (1) Though I seem to deduce this from experience, some may deny its cogency because I have given no formal proof.
- (2) I therefore append the following for those who may desire it.
- (3) As there can be nothing in [nature](#) contrary to nature's laws, since all things come to pass by fixed laws, so that each thing must irrefragably produce its own proper effect, it follows that the [soul](#), as soon as it possesses the true conception of a thing, proceeds to reproduce in thought that thing's effects [\[objectively\]](#).
- (4) See [\[64\]](#), where I speak of the false [idea](#).

Bk.I:241 on (64:2)

[64b] *"or rather is composed of attention,*"

- (1) Observe that fiction regarded in itself, only differs from dreams in that in the latter we do not perceive the [external causes](#) which we perceive through the senses while awake.
- (2) It has hence been inferred that representations occurring in sleep have no connection with objects external to us. (3) We shall presently see that: error is the dreaming of a waking man; if it reaches a certain pitch it becomes delirium. [Bk.XIV:2:1144.](#)
[Bk.III:126—madness.](#)

Bk.I:291 on (76:5)

[76z] *"This is, in fact, a being single and infinite*"

[Bk.XIX:15](#)¹⁰.

These are not [attributes](#) of [G-D](#) displaying His [essence](#), as I will show in [my philosophy](#).

Bk. I:292 on (76:5)

[76a] *"it is the sum total of being, beyond which there is no being found"*

(1) This has been shown already. (2) For if such a being did not exist it would never be produced; therefore the mind would be able to understand more than [Nature](#) could furnish; and this has been shown [above](#) to be false. [Bk.XIX:87](#)⁹.

From Wolfson's [Bk.XIV:2:162](#)—[Sum total of Being](#):

As for the subject-matter of the third kind of [knowledge](#), it is the [knowledge of G-D](#). Such a knowledge is immediate, clear, and distinct, for we could have no true knowledge at all unless we possessed a "[standard of truth](#)," which is, "in fact, a [Being](#) single and infinite, in other words, it is the [sum total of Being](#) ([mysticism](#)), beyond which there is no being found." We know that such a Being exists by [proofs](#) generally called [ontological](#), which really means that we know Him immediately and directly and on the principle that "if such a Being did not exist, it could never be produced" in our mind. Hence Proposition [2P47](#): "The human mind possesses an adequate knowledge of the eternal and infinite essence of [G-D](#)." This is the subject-matter of the third kind of knowledge.

Bk. I:301 on (78:8)

[78a] *"But from reflection on the deceitfulness of the senses"*

(1) That is, it is known that the senses sometimes deceive us.
 (2) But it is only known confusedly, for it is not known how they deceive us.

Bk. I:31

[CRS2] [Shalizi](#) Note— By this Spinoza does not intend "common sense" in its modern meaning of sound but unsophisticated and unreflective judgment, but the (supposed) part of the mind where all the senses come together; it would perhaps be better rendered as "the common sensorium," or even just "the senses."

Bk. I:311 on (83:1)

[83d] *"accompanied with the thought of a definite duration,"*

(1) If the [duration](#) be indefinite, the recollection is imperfect; this everyone seems to have learnt from [nature](#). (2) For we often ask, to strengthen our [belief](#) in something we hear of, when and where it happened; though [ideas](#) themselves have their own duration in the mind, yet, as we are wont to determine duration by the aid of some measure of motion which, again, takes place by aid of the [imagination](#), we preserve no memory connected with pure intellect. [\[observe \]](#)

[\[mind \]](#)

Bk. I:341 on (91:1)

[{Cash Value}](#)

[91e] The chief rule of this part is, as appears from the first part, to review all the [ideas](#) coming to us through pure intellect, so as

to distinguish them from such as we imagine: the distinction will be shown through the properties of each, namely, of the imagination and of the understanding.

Bk. I:342 on (92:3)

[92f] "For, in reality, the knowledge of an effect is nothing else than the acquisition of more perfect knowledge of its cause."

Observe that it is thereby manifest that we cannot understand anything of Nature without at the same time increasing our knowledge of the first cause, or G-D. [Bk.XIV:2:1444](#). [WHY?](#)

Bk. I:353 on (96:1)

[CRS3] [Shalizi](#) Note— At this point, I cannot resist calling the reader's attention to the circles formed by expanding waves, whether of radio, or air, or even of water, as when a pebble is dropped into a still pond; by the projection of light through a circular aperture onto a surface; by the section of spheres, cylinders, and the like; by bodies subject to a force perpendicular to their momentum; and ask whether these examples, which could be multiplied indefinitely, are formed by lines "whereof one end is fixed and the other free." - Even if it is objected that by "proximate causes" Spinoza did not, in fact, mean proximate causes, what of the circle formed by adding sides to regular polygons without limit?

JBY's Endnotes:

From Paul Wienpahl's "The Radical Spinoza"; ISBN 0814791867; pp 104-106—[Understanding](#).

[1] [Early in 1662](#) BdS {[Spinoza](#)} wrote to Oldenburg that he had "composed an integral little work concerning this and also concerning the emendation of understanding," with the copying and emendation of which he had been occupied ([Letter 6](#)). "This" refers to a question from Oldenburg ([Letter 5](#)) about the nexus by which things depend on the first cause. That portion of the "little work" may have been the "Metaphysical Thoughts" which became the Appendix to *Descartes' Principles*. The rest was what we know today as "[A Treatise concerning the Emendation of Understanding {TEI}](#) ." In it BdS frequently refers to another work he was writing, his "Philosophy." There is little doubt that this came to be called "[ETHIC](#)." Only the author of the ETHIC could have produced the work on the emendation of understanding.

[2] The EU ([TEI](#)) is short, only thirty-five pages, and unfinished. It is nevertheless probably the most important and revolutionary philosophical document of modern times. This is immediately apparent in an examination of its title: *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione* . If we follow its word order, and its grammar allows for this since *intellectus* is in the genitive {[a construction expressing a relationship](#)} case, it reads: "Treatise concerning Understanding's Emendation." A. Boyle rendered it: "Treatise on the Correction of the Understanding;" Elwes: "[On the Improvement of](#)

[the Understanding](#)." We have: "A Treatise concerning the Emendation of Understanding." The little work's revolutionary character hinges here on the small matter of the definite article: "the." When we understand page 105 BdS **it is understanding that is to be emended** **{to edit or change}**, **not the understanding or some faculty of the mind**. [2P48n](#) in the ETHIC: "In this same mode it is demonstrated that in a Mind there is given no absolute faculty of understanding, desiring, loving, &c." The notion that there are faculties in the mind corresponds to the notion that there are substances. Given Sp's insight into unity, it follows that there is understanding, but no [thing](#) that understands.

[3] I interject here another admonition about reading BdS in existing translations. Great care must be taken with the articles: **a**, **an**, and **the**. BdS was a complete and thoroughgoing nominalist **{the philosophical doctrine that general or abstract words do not stand for objectively existing entities and that universals are no more than names assigned to them}**. That is, he believed that there are only Individuals, or singular things. Universals or universal things are only words, or if you like, names. For his account of this see [2P40n1](#) where he calls them "universal notions." If care is not taken with the articles, we easily miss Sp's **{Spinoza's}** nominalism, or what comes to the same thing: his complete reliance on observation and experience for what he believes. Since **there are no articles in Latin**, those you read in translations have been provided by the translators. This means that all translations from the Latin have been influenced philosophically by the translators. For there is an enormous philosophical difference between referring, say, to **the** human mind, and referring to **a** human mind.

[4] A further step must be taken with "[understanding](#)." The Latin word in the [title](#) of the EU is *intellectus* . This is the past participle **{understood}** of the verb *intelligere* (to understand), which is also used as a noun. In the line quoted above from [2P48n](#) the word in the Latin is *intelligendi* which is a gerund **{'understanding' when functioning as a noun}** of *intelligere* , that is, another verbal form. Possibly for this reason Boyle, Elwes, and others often translate *intellectus* with "intellect," though neither of the first two did in the title of the EU. In omitting the definite article, "**the**," before "understanding," I make the word even more strongly verbal than it is in the phrase "the understanding." I may be urged that, when it occurs as a noun, *intellectus* must be preceded by an article. That, however, is to be a slave to grammar and to ignore the fact that page 106 becomes increasingly clear in reading BdS; his thinking requires basic changes in the grammar we inherited from Aristotle. He himself wrote Oldenburg that he misunderstood a passage in the [Gospel of John](#) because he measured "the phrases of oriental languages by European modes of speaking" (Letter [EL:L23\(75\)](#), toward the end), which makes it apparent that Sp's thinking not only required a different grammar, but that it was based on a different one.

[5] I apologize for these details, but BdS is not to be understood without attention to them. The last line of the ETHIC reads: "[But all very clear things are both difficult and rare](#)."

[TEI: Title Endnote](#) - From Curley's [Bk.VIII:7](#)—Emendation of the Intellect.

2. The translation of this title is disputed. The Latin for the main title is *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione* , the Dutch *Handeling van de Verbetering van't Verstant* . Joachim (2, 1) argued that no English term could reproduce the *exact* implications of the Latin, but recommended "Purification of the Intellect" as rightly suggesting a project of restoring the intellect to its "natural perfection, by eliminating from it . . . ideas which are not its *own* but have come to it from an external source." DeDeugd's criticism of Joachim (1, 50-57), while rightly pointing out that the Dutch version cannot plausibly bear that meaning, gives insufficient weight to [\[16\]](#). Eisenberg (3) argues that no term can reproduce the exact implications of the Latin, since Spinoza's phrase has no *exact* implications. At the time of writing this work Spinoza inconsistently conceived of the intellect both as inherently pure and as needing purification. He did not clearly distinguish between the mind,

which cannot be entirely freed of external influences, and the intellect, which has no need to be. No translation will solve such difficulties.

The subtitle in the NS (*Nagelate Schriften*) reads: "and at the same time of the means of making it perfect."

TEI: [Title Endnote](#) - From Parkinson's [Bk.XV:286](#)¹⁸⁰—Correction of the Intellect.

180. The [title](#) of this work poses a problem. In the course of the treatise, Spinoza identifies the intellect with the truth, speaking of 'truth, or, the intellect' [68]. That being so, the intellect can hardly be *corrected*.

Spinoza's treatise is rather an attempt to give guidance to the person who wants to think properly, by distinguishing between the intellect, which provides us with understanding, and [inferior kinds](#) of thought, which do not.

TEI: [Endnote Note 2](#) - From Parkinson's [Bk.XV:286](#)¹⁸¹—Paragraph Numbers.

181. The [Treatise on the Correction of the Intellect](#) is printed in Spinoza's [posthumous](#) works as one piece of continuous prose. However, there are clear divisions within the work, and for the reader's convenience I distinguish these by means of sub-headings, placed within square brackets to indicate that they are editorial additions.

I have followed the paragraphing of the original Latin text, but for convenience of reference I have inserted, in square brackets, the section numbers provided by the nineteenth-century editor [Bruder](#). Spinoza's notes are indicated by letters, to distinguish them from those of the editor.

E4: [Title Endnote](#) - From Hampshire's [Book 32:11-18](#)—Philosophical Background:

[1] 'I do not presume to have discovered the best philosophy', Spinoza wrote ([EL:L74 \(76\):414](#)[Bk.1](#)), 'but I know that I [understand](#) the true one.' Spinoza is the most ambitious and uncompromising of all modern philosophers, and it is partly for this reason that he is supremely worth studying. He exhibits the [metaphysical](#) mind and temperament at its purest and most intense; he is the perfect example of the pure philosopher. No other modern philosopher of equal stature has made such exalted claims for philosophy, or had such a clear vision of the scope and range of pure philosophical thinking. He conceived it to be the function of the philosopher to render the universe as a whole intelligible ([simply posit ONE—1D6](#)) and to explain [man's place](#) within the universe; he devoted his whole life to the execution of this design, and he was confident that he had finally succeeded, at least in general outline. The only instrument which he allowed himself, or thought necessary to his purpose, was his own power of logical reasoning; at no point does he appeal to authority or revelation or common consent; nor does he anywhere rely on literary artifice or try to reinforce rational argument by indirect appeals to emotion. No one, however sceptical of the value of [metaphysical](#) systems, can fail to be impressed by the magnitude of his design; and in [page 12](#) proportion as one is rationally and not dogmatically sceptical about the limits of human reason, one cannot neglect to probe into the execution of his design. Spinoza is the test case for those who reject [deductive](#) metaphysics; he makes almost every claim which has ever been made for philosophy and for the power of pure reason, and within his system tries to substantiate these claims. Those who are concerned to delimit the scope of pure philosophical thinking cannot anywhere in western philosophy, at least since Plato, find all the traditional pretensions of metaphysics more clearly exemplified than they are in Spinoza.

[2] A philosopher has always been thought of as someone who tries to achieve a complete view of the universe [as a whole](#), and of man's place in the universe; he has traditionally been expected to answer those questions about the [design](#) and [purpose](#) of the universe, and of human life, which the various special sciences do not claim to answer; philosophers have generally been conceived as unusually wise or all-comprehending men whose systems are answers to those large, vague questions about the purpose of human existence which present themselves to most people at some period of their lives. Spinoza fulfils all

these expectations. Within his system almost every major and recurring metaphysical and moral issue is answered, and is answered definitely and without evasion. For Spinoza philosophy was not merely one [useful](#) or necessary intellectual discipline among others, or somehow ancillary to the special sciences; it was the only complete and essential form of knowledge, in relation to which all other inquiries [page 13](#) are partial and subordinate. Like Plato and most other great metaphysicians, he thought of philosophy as the pursuit of wisdom and of the knowledge of the [right way of life](#); only in so far as we understand true philosophy can we know how we ought to live, and know also what kind of scientific and other knowledge is useful and attainable. It follows that philosophy must be the essential foundation of all other inquiries, none of which are to be thought of as being on the same level as the master-inquiry. He begins his fragment [On the Correction of the Understanding](#), which is an essay on the theory of knowledge, with a magnificent personal statement, which summarizes the classical approach to philosophy, descending ultimately from Plato.

[3] 'After experience had taught me that all things which are ordinarily encountered in common life are vain and futile, and when I saw that all things which were the occasions and objects of my fears had in themselves nothing of good or evil except in so far as the mind was moved by them; I at length determined to inquire if there were anything which was a true good, capable of imparting itself, by which alone the mind could be affected to the exclusion of all else; whether indeed anything existed by the discovery and acquisition of which I might be put in possession of a joy continuous and supreme to all eternity.' ... [{TEI11}](#)

[4] True philosophy is the discovery of the 'true good', and without knowledge of the true good human happiness is impossible. So philosophy is a matter of supreme practical urgency, not simply the gratification of an intellectual [page 14](#) or theoretical interest. The order of Spinoza's thought and the whole structure of his philosophy cannot be understood unless they are seen as culminating in his doctrine of [human freedom](#) and happiness [{better is peace-of-mind}](#) and in his prescription of the [right way of life](#). [{Micah:6:8}](#)

[5] Such an exalted and extensive conception of the scope of philosophy has only gradually within the last hundred years come to seem unfamiliar and in need of special explanation; among Spinoza's philosophical contemporaries in the seventeenth century such claims were normal, although not unchallenged. With the growth of modern science and the consequent increasing specialization of knowledge, the word 'philosophy' has gradually changed its meaning. In this century philosophy is no longer generally thought of as a kind of super-science to which all the special sciences - are subordinate and contributory; as the experimental methods of the modern scientist are progressively extended and applied to new fields, the scope of pure philosophical speculation is progressively narrowed. In the seventeenth century the scientist and the philosopher were not definitely and clearly distinguished as they are to-day; what we call physical science was by Newton and his predecessors called 'natural philosophy'. Most of the great philosophers of the century - Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz - were philosopher- mathematicians or philosopher-scientists; philosophical speculation and experimental science were not yet disentangled. In what A. N. Whitehead described as 'the century of genius', modern experimental science was in its infancy, and it was largely by the philosophers, [page 15](#) or rather the philosopher-mathematicians, that it was taught to speak. Their speculations about Matter, Motion, Space, Energy, Ultimate Particles, and Infinitesimal Magnitudes supplied the ideas with the aid of which modern physics was gradually built; these very abstract speculations about the Universe, which we are now apt to reject as unscientific and worthless because they were not properly based on experiment, did in fact supply the indispensable background for experiment; for (to adapt a phrase from Kant) if ideas without experiment are empty, so experiment without ideas is blind; experimental science must generally arise out of speculation, because experiment does not generally lead to a body of organized knowledge unless the experimenter has been supplied with some framework of ideas into which his results are to be fitted, and which will guide him in his experiments; he generally starts with some suggested programme which prescribes the terms to be used in describing what he observes. Certainly the frame-work of ideas used in the early (or even in the later) phases of any modern science is not rigid, but is adapted and radically altered as experiment proceeds; some or all of the old concepts of Matter or Space or Energy, which emerged from early speculation by philosopher-scientists, are subsequently discarded as no longer useful, and the

work of speculation or concept-forming is largely left to experimental scientists to perform in the light of their own discoveries. As knowledge based on experiment grows, there is no further need or even possibility of purely abstract speculation; so the philosopher-scientist or [page 16](#) metaphysician, with his system of ideas designed to explain the workings of the Universe, is gradually superseded by an army of experimenters, each working in a specialized field on specific and defined problems.

[6] Spinoza was a speculative metaphysician in the heroic age of modern speculation, the age in which the foundations of modern physical knowledge were being laid. In histories of modern philosophy he is generally classified with Descartes and Leibniz as a 'rationalist'; at least one justification of the use of this label is that each of these three philosophers sought in their systems to prescribe how the world could be made intelligible to human reason; each of them in effect provided a model or programme of a possible perfect scientific knowledge of the order of Nature. Their ideals and programmes of natural knowledge were widely different, and they set different limits to the possible range of human knowledge, and of the understanding of Nature. But they agreed in the reasoned optimism with which they laid down the outlines of a rational method by the use of which the world might be made intelligible; their greatness was in the exaltation of the powers of reason and of rational methods at the expense of blind faith, supernatural revelation and theological mystery.

[7] Their pattern of rational method, of clear and consecutive thinking by means of which the truth in any inquiry could infallibly be obtained and recognized, was mathematics; for only in mathematics is pure reason recognized as the sole arbiter, and allowed to operate by itself and [page 17](#) without restrictions; it seemed that the mathematician's proofs are so designed that they cannot be doubted or disputed; it seemed that within mathematics error can infallibly be detected, and that there is no possibility of the conflicting opinions and undecidable disputes which are typical of traditional philosophy and of all other forms of human knowledge. When Descartes, an original mathematician himself, writes of the ideal form of knowledge and method of inquiry as involving only 'clear and distinct ideas', his example of the reasoning which involves only clear and distinct ideas is mathematical reasoning; similarly when Spinoza gives an example to illustrate what he means by genuine knowledge, the example is a proposition of mathematics. The programme of the rationalist philosophers in the [seventeenth century](#), that is, of those philosophers who tried to prescribe how the human intellect could achieve clear and certain knowledge of the world, was to generalize the mathematical method of reasoning, and to apply it without restriction to all the problems of philosophy and science. The arguments of Euclid lead to conclusions which are for ever certain and indubitable; their truth is evident in the 'natural light' of reason; if we apply this mathematical method of starting from clear and distinctly defined ideas, and of advancing from them by a succession of logical steps each of which involves only clear and distinct ideas, we cannot go wrong, whatever be the subject-matter of our inquiry; since the premise and every subsequent step in the argument will commend itself to the natural light of reason as self-evident, [page 18](#) the conclusion must be finally accepted as self-evident and as undeniably true by all men capable of thinking clearly and distinctly. Outside mathematics, and most conspicuously in attempts to answer philosophical problems about Mind and Matter and [G-D](#), argument had for centuries been confused and inconclusive, only because philosophers had failed to purge their minds of all ideas which are not [clear and distinct {objective}](#); they had failed to follow the mathematicians' example in taking as their starting-point propositions which are immediately self-evident, and which consist solely of ideas which are clearly and distinctly conceived. For centuries the schoolmen had floundered among apparently undecidable disputes, because they had not clarified their ideas or defined their terms in the sense in which the mathematician clarifies his ideas and [defines his terms](#). They had been hopelessly confused, because, unlike mathematicians, they did not rely in their arguments solely on the natural light of pure reason, but in part at least on imagination; and imagination, according to both Descartes and Spinoza, is the prime source of confusion of thought and so the prime source of error.

[TEI:Endnote 10:1](#) - From Parkinson's [Bk.XV:xii—Religion](#) and [Moral Agent](#)

Scholars often refer to this sentence, [10:1](#), when they consider Spinoza's motives

for philosophising. They point out that Spinoza, unlike Descartes, did not have as his primary question, "What do I know?" Certainly, he is concerned with the nature of knowledge; but the question matters to him because the answer to it bears on another question, namely **'What is a genuinely good life for a human being?'** This often leads people to say that Spinoza's chief motives for philosophising were [ethical](#), and indeed this is true as far as it goes. But one can go further and say that what Spinoza describes in the passage just quoted is a religious quest. This does not mean that it is not an ethical inquiry as well; but the use of phrases such as 'love towards a [thing](#) which is eternal and infinite' suggests that it is more than this.

[TEI:Endnote 11:1](#) - From De Dijn's [Bk.III:12—Anti-anthropomorphic](#).

[G-D](#)

For [Descartes](#), ethical security is secondary to the problem of [epistemic](#) certainty, which, in his philosophy, seems to depend on an anthropomorphic idea of [God](#). For [Blaise Pascal](#), this security can only be found in faith in an inscrutable G-D, which reveals the limited nature of scientific certainty. For Spinoza, [real](#) certainty seems connected with a kind of knowledge that not just provides unshakable scientific evidence but also [transforms one's life](#). The very possessing of it constitutes security and [peace of mind](#), even though it seems to contain a "picture" of [G-D](#) that is fundamentally anti-anthropomorphic, and even though it seems to contain a "picture" of ourselves that [denies](#) our most cherished ideas, such as anthropocentric ideas of [freedom](#) and special election by God. This explains why the method of "moral doubt" will lead to the search for a method of thinking properly, a [method](#) for "the emendation of the intellect" that tells us the truth about ourselves and the world in which we live. It is this search that gives this introduction to philosophy its proper [title](#).

[A Little Story](#)

[ONE—1D6](#)

[Religion](#)

[TEI:Endnote 11:1A](#) - From De Dijn's [Bk.III:14—Peace of Mind, Salvation](#).

[Britannica](#)

.... This coming into one's own will give real peace of mind ([acquiescentia in ser ipso](#)). This removal and homecoming is guided by the philosopher, who has already succeeded in performing this move and in reaching real peace and security.

This understanding of Spinoza's philosophy as a whole shows it to consist of a huge circular movement, determined by the [alpha and omega](#) of his philosophizing—the obtaining of real [peace of mind](#). The beginning of the philosophical endeavor is the existential quest for real salvation. Paradoxically, this quest leads to the development of a logic or [purification](#) of the intellect, which itself becomes philosophy proper as soon as possible. This philosophy contains a [metaphysics](#) and a theory of man as necessary steps toward an ethics that shows us how to obtain [salvation](#), real peace of mind. If we really consist, [deep inside](#), in intellect, this whole movement is not as paradoxical as it seems. The ethical quest is ultimately a quest to "[know thyself](#)."

[Religion](#)

[TEI:Endnote 12:6](#) - From [Wayne Ferguson—Subjective](#) terms.

In TEI: [12], Spinoza reiterates the subjective nature of "[good](#)" and "[bad](#)" and says that the same applies to "[perfect](#)" and "[imperfect](#)": {[E1:Endnote AP:47](#)}

For nothing,

considered in
its own nature,
will be
called perfect
or
imperfect,
especially after we have
recognized
that everything
that
happens,
happens
according to
the eternal
order, and
according to
certain laws of Nature

[Chain of Natural Events](#)

[TEI:\[12\]](#).

It is in the following [paragraph](#), then, that Spinoza makes good on the promise in [\[12\]](#) to "say briefly what [he understands] by the true good, and at the same time what the [highest good](#) is." He relates both of these to the "[eternal order](#)" and "[laws of Nature](#)" spoken of above:

..... he is spurred to
seek means that
will lead him to
such a
perfection.
Whatever can
a means to his
attaining it is called
a [true good](#) ; but
the [highest](#)
[good](#) [TEI:\[10\]:5](#)
is to arrive
— together with
other
individuals if
possible — at
the enjoyment
of such a
nature. What
that nature is we
shall show in its
[proper place](#) : that it
is the knowledge
of the union that
the mind has with
the whole of [Nature](#) [TEI:\[13\]](#).

[TEI:L62\(58\):395](#). Taken with kind permission from [Terry M. Neff](#).

Spinoza to Tschirnhausen.
The Hague, Oct., 1674.]

[This letter is addressed to G. H. Schaller, who had sent on [L61:389](#) to Spinoza.]

[Spinoza gives his opinions on [Liberty and necessity](#).] [{Bk.XX:328}](#)

[1] Sir,—Our friend, J. R. [[John Rieuwerts](#), a bookseller of Amsterdam.] has sent me the letter which you have been kind enough to write to me, and also the judgment of your friend [[Tschirnhausen](#); the "judgment" is [L61:389](#).] as to the opinions of [Descartes](#) and

myself regarding [free will](#) ([Mark Twain](#)). Both enclosures were very welcome to me. Though I am, at present, much occupied with other matters, not to mention my delicate health, your singular courtesy, or, to name the chief motive, your love of truth, impels me to satisfy your inquiries, as far as my poor abilities will permit. What your friend wishes to imply by his remark before he appeals to experience, I know not. What he adds, that when one of two disputants affirms something which the other denies, both may be right, is true, if he means that the two, though using the same terms, are thinking of different things. I once sent several examples of this to our friend J. R., [\[John Rieuwerts\]](#) and am now writing to tell him to communicate them to you.

[2] I, therefore, pass on to that definition of liberty, which he says is my own; but I know not whence he has taken it. I say that a thing is [free](#), which exists and acts solely by the [necessity](#) of its own nature. Thus also [G-D](#) understands Himself and all things freely, because it follows solely from the necessity of His nature, that He should understand all [things](#). You see I do not place freedom in free decision, but in free necessity. However, let us descend to created things, which are all determined by external [causes](#) to exist and operate in a given determinate manner. In order that this may be clearly understood, let us conceive a very simple thing. For instance, a [stone](#) receives from the [impulsion](#) of an external [cause](#), a certain quantity of motion, by virtue of which it continues to move after the impulsion given by the external cause has ceased. The permanence of the stone's motion is constrained ([compelled; obliged.](#)), [not necessary](#), because it must be defined by the impulsion of an external cause. What is true of the stone is true of any individual, however complicated its nature, or varied its functions, inasmuch as every [individual thing](#) is necessarily [determined](#) by some external cause to exist and operate in a [fixed](#) and [determinate](#) manner.

[3] Further conceive, I beg, that a [stone](#), while continuing in motion, should be capable of thinking and knowing, that it is endeavouring, as far as it can, to continue to move. Such a stone, being conscious merely of its own endeavour and not at all indifferent, would believe itself to be completely free, and would think that it continued in motion solely because of its own wish. This is that human freedom, which all boast that they possess, and which consists solely in the fact, that men are conscious of their own desire, but are ignorant of the causes whereby that desire has been determined. Thus an infant believes that it desires milk freely; an angry child thinks he wishes freely for vengeance, a timid child thinks he wishes freely to run away. Again, a drunken man thinks, that from the free decision of his mind he speaks words, which afterwards, when sober, he would like to have left unsaid. So the delirious, the garrulous, and others of the same sort think that they act from the free decision of their mind, not that they are carried away by impulse. As this misconception is innate in all men, it is not easily conquered. For, although experience abundantly shows, that men can do anything rather than check their [desires](#), and that very often, when a prey to conflicting [emotions](#), they see the better course and follow the worse, they yet believe themselves to be free; because in some cases their desire for a thing is slight, and can easily be overruled by the recollection of something else, which is frequently present in the mind. {[See Mark Twain's "Man is a Machine](#) _____."}

[4] I have thus, if I mistake not, sufficiently explained my opinion regarding [free](#) and constrained necessity, and also regarding so-called [human freedom](#): from what I have said you will easily be able to reply to your friend's objections. For when he says, with Descartes, that he who is constrained by no external cause is free, if by being constrained he means acting against one's will, I grant that we are in some cases quite unrestrained, and in this respect possess free will. But if by constrained he means acting necessarily, although not against one's will (as I have explained above), I deny that we are in any instance free.

[5] But your friend, on the contrary, asserts that we may employ our reason absolutely, that is, in complete freedom; and is, I think, a little too confident on the point. For who, he says, could deny, without contradicting his own [consciousness](#), that I can think with my thoughts, that I wish or do not wish to write? I should like to know what consciousness he is talking of, over and

above that which I have illustrated by the example of the [stone](#).

[6] As a matter of fact I, without, I hope, contradicting my consciousness, that is my reason and experience, and without cherishing ignorance and misconception, deny that I can by any absolute power of thought think, that I wish or do not wish to write ([Mark Twain](#)). I appeal to the [consciousness](#), which he has doubtless experienced, that in dreams he has not the power of thinking that he wishes, or does not wish to write; and that, when he dreams that he wishes to write, he has not the power not to dream that he wishes to write. I think he must also have experienced, that the mind is not always equally capable of thinking of the same object, but according as the body is more capable for the image of this or that object being excited in it, so is the mind more capable of thinking of the same object.

[7] When he further adds, that the causes for his applying his mind to writing have led him, but not constrained him to write, he merely means (if he will look at the question impartially), that his disposition was then in a state, in which it could be easily acted on by [causes](#), which would have been powerless under other circumstances, as for instance when he was under a violent [emotion](#). That is, causes, which at other times would not have constrained him, have constrained him in this case, not to write against his will but necessarily to wish to write.

[8] As for his statement, that if we were constrained ([compelled](#)) by external causes, no one could acquire the habit of [virtue](#), I know not what is his authority for saying, that firmness and constancy of disposition cannot arise from predestined necessity, but only from free will.

[9] What he finally adds, that if this were granted, all [wickedness](#) would be [excusable](#), I meet with the question, What then? Wicked men are not [less to be feared](#), and are not less harmful, when they are wicked from necessity. However, on this point I would ask you to refer to my Principles of Cartesian Philosophy, Part II., chap. viii.

[10] In a word, I should like your friend, who makes these objections, to tell me, how he reconciles the human virtue, which he says arises from the free decision of the mind, with [G-D's pre-ordination](#) of the universe. If, with Descartes, he confesses his inability to do so, he is endeavouring to direct against me the weapon which has already pierced himself. But in vain. For if you examine my opinion attentively, you will see that it is quite consistent, &c.

[End of [Letter 62](#)]

{ [TEI:Endnote 29:1](#) }

[TEI:L64\(60\):395](#). Taken with kind permission from [Terry M. Neff](#).

Spinoza to Tschirnhausen.

[*The difference between
a true and an
adequate idea
is merely*
&c. *The Hague,*
Jan., 1675.

[extrinsic](#) _____,

]

[Bk.XVIII:1762d4](#)

[1] Honoured Sir.—Between a [true](#) and an [adequate](#) idea, I recognize no difference, except that the epithet true only has regard to the the agreement between the idea and its object, whereas the epithet [Bk.XIII:290296—E2:Def.4:82](#).

adequate has regard to the nature of the [idea](#) in itself; so that in reality there is no difference between a true and an adequate idea beyond this extrinsic relation. However, in order that I may know, from which idea out of many all the properties of its object may be deduced, I pay attention to one point only, namely, that the [idea](#) or [definition](#) should

[Bk.XIII:290](#)²⁹⁷; [Bk.XIX:133](#)¹³.

express the [efficient cause](#) of its object. For instance, in inquiring into the properties of a circle, I ask, whether from the idea of a circle, that it consists of infinite right angles, I can deduce all its properties. I ask, I repeat, whether this idea involves the efficient cause of a circle. If it does not, I look for another, namely, that a circle is the space described by a line, of which one point is fixed, and the other movable. As this definition explains the efficient [cause](#), I know that I can [deduce](#) from it all the properties of a circle. So, also, when I [define G-D](#) as a [Bk.XIII:290](#)²⁹⁸—[E1.VIII\(S\)n2:48](#).

supremely [perfect Being](#), then, since that [definition](#) does not express the [efficient cause](#) (I mean the efficient cause internal as well as external) I shall not be able to infer therefrom all the properties of G-D; as I can, when I define G-D as a Being, &c. (see [E1.D.VI:45](#)). As for your other inquiries, namely, that concerning motion, and those pertaining to method, my observations on them are not yet written out in due order, so I will reserve them for another occasion.

[Why?](#)

[TEI:L64\(60\)](#)-[2]. Continue with [Terry M. Neff](#) or [Bk.1:395](#).

[Bk.XVIII:176](#)^{2d4}; [Bk.XIX:3520](#), [74](#)¹³, [81](#)²⁶.

[TEI:Endnote 37](#) - From De Dijn's [Bk.III:85](#)—[Method in a Nutshell](#). [Bk.III:181](#)—[Neff EL:L42\(37\):360](#).

[\] persistent meditation \[](#)

What then is [Method](#) itself?. It is [reflexive knowledge](#); "it is understanding what a [true idea](#) is by distinguishing it from the rest of the + [perceptions](#); by investigating its nature, so that from it we may come to know our [power](#) of [understanding](#) and so restrain the mind that it understands, according to that [standard](#), everything that is to be understood; and finally by teaching and constructing certain rules as aids, so that the mind does not weary itself in useless things" [\[37\]](#). In a word, it is an emendation of the intellect,

{Standard:

[Simply Posit ONE—1D6:](#)

the [Foundation Rock](#)}

both negatively (separating it from the [imaginatio](#) _____), and positively, by *self-consciously* organizing our [knowledge](#), which is its regulative [function](#). Here is the reason that, as [Rousset](#) puts it, before any *Traite du monde a Discours de la methode* is necessary?

The peculiar relationship between [idea](#) and [ideatum](#) _____ (between [essentia objectiva](#)

and [essentia formalis](#) _____), and between idea and

the idea of this idea, makes method possible both as [reflexive](#) knowledge of the [standard](#) of true, intellectual thinking and as a self-conscious, [rule-guided](#) process in which ideas are linked together according to the real order of things. All this is further elaborated and confirmed in the next paragraphs. As [Rousset](#) puts it, the method is the expression of the autonomy of our intellectual thinking and [reflectivity](#)? On the other hand, it is in methodical thinking that this autonomy is [fully conquered](#), that we become self-conscious about our own activity as being the thinking of reality as it is. It is this self-conscious activity that will constitute our [happiness](#) { [better PcM](#) }.

[TEI:Endnote 45:2](#) - From Parkinson's [Bk.XV:288](#)²⁰⁷—Our philosophy.

It is evident from this (and that from [51], [83] and Notes j{k}, k{l}, m{n}, n{o}, z{76z}) that Spinoza intended the Treatise { TEI } to be the first part of a two-part work, the second part of which was to have been a treatise on metaphysics. This explains the lengthy preface to the Treatise [1] - [17], which deals with matters which are ethical, and perhaps even religious (cf. Parkinson's Introduction, Bk.XV:xii and xviii). {But see Bk.III:195 which claims that "The Ethics" is such philosophy.}

E1 & E2

TEI:Endnote 46:1—Why I have not. [Bk.VIII:2135] Bk.III:88.

From Bk.XV:288208—I follow most editors in supplying the word 'non' here. Gebhardt (G ii, 326-7) argues for the retention of the original text, but his arguments are not convincing. He takes Spinoza to be defending the writing of his proposed 'philosophy' (cf. TEI:Bk.XV:288207), and to be meeting the objection, "Why trouble to write a book about metaphysics, when things must be clear for everybody?" Against this one may argue that if Spinoza were referring to his projected work here, one would expect him to say so. Further, the passage as a whole seems to concern what Spinoza has done—or rather, has not done—and not what he will do in some future work. The question that he is answering is, "Why did you not begin (as you said in [42] that one must begin) with the idea of G-D, and deduce all other ideas from that?"

TEI:Endnote 51:4—Fiction and fictitious idea.

From Bk.VII:245*—The reader needs to be warned that these terms are not really adequate to Spinoza's meaning, but I can devise no better. The Latin verb *'fingo'* and its derivatives, which Spinoza here uses so frequently, means basically 'to make up, to fashion.' I have avoided translating it by 'to feign' because of the latter's suggestion of deliberate deceit. But 'fiction' is not free from this association, and it must be emphasized that in Spinoza a fictitious idea may turn out to be true or false (paragraph 52, 61). As Spinoza says, it is concerned with the possible, but is not warranted by evidence. It is not deceit or falsity that *'fictio'* conveys, but the lack of basis for a supposition.

' mainly

TEI:Endnote 59:1—Fiction is limited by fiction.

From Bk.III:128—Anticipating Freud, Spinoza tries to show that the life of dreaming, especially in the form of fictitious ideas, is not creative but rather is fundamentally passive. In imagination the mind is acted upon, it undergoes things [86]. Fiction never produces anything new. What looks new is, in fact, nothing but the remains of "things which are in the brain or the imagination," recalled to memory and confusedly associated together [x]. Spinoza even claims that "the less the mind understands and the more things it perceives, the greater its power of feigning is; and the more things it understands, the more that power is diminished" [58]. This is because, once things are understood "clearly and distinctly" (according to their internal constitution and relations), it is impossible to produce fictions (to think confusedly and without

order about them). So fiction is limited also by the intellect, and not only, as some claim, by fiction itself [59]. The self-limitation of fiction by fiction is supposed to follow from the fact that the mind, although free in its fiction, has to operate in a consistent way. But, says Spinoza, if people claiming this accept that we can also understand [clearly and distinctly](#), why would self-consistency not imply a limitation of fiction through the intellect? The idea of freedom that they use leads to [absurdities](#) [59 & 60]. [Continued](#).

[TEI:Endnote 62—clear and distinct.](#)

From [Bk.III:142](#) on [Bk.III:135](#)—Rousset repeats here the Cartesian definition of clearness and distinctness (from the *Principes* 1:45): "I call clear [\[the idea\]](#) that is present and manifest to an attentive mind" and "distinct that which is so precise and different from all the others that it comprehends in itself only what manifestly appears to everybody considering it in the proper way."

{manifest: readily perceived by the eye or the [understanding](#); evident.}

From Descartes' *"Meditations and Selections from the Principles of Philosophy"*

Translated by John Veitch, 1968. Open Court Publishing Company, Page 152.

{objective}

Part 1, XLV. What constitutes [clear and distinct](#) perception.

[Amy Howell](#)

"There are indeed a great many persons who, through their whole lifetime, never perceive anything in a way necessary for judging it properly; for the knowledge upon which we can establish a certain and indubitable judgment must be not only clear, but also distinct.

[Example 1D6](#)

I call that clear which is present and manifest to the mind giving attention to it, just as we are said clearly to [see objects](#) when, being present to the eye looking on, they stimulate it with sufficient force, and it is disposed to regard them; but the distinct is that which is so precise and different from all other objects as to [comprehend in itself](#) only what is clear". **{A flying horse is a clear idea; but if you analyze the size and strength of the wings and the innate power of the [mathematical reasoning](#)**

horse and see that it could not possibly fly, it fails to be distinct—a failure to be [comprehensive in itself](#).}

[Clear and distinct](#) paraphrased:

From Dr. Squadrito and Amy K Howell <amyhowell333@hotmail.com>

{Example: G-D/Nature}

{attentive}

Clear is defined as recognizable, present to the ^ mind, and when **{Intuition}**

Intuition—knowing

the [idea](#) we have includes its [essence](#).

by it's essence.

{Objective}

Reason—knowing

Distinct simply refers to the ability to separate the idea from other **Modes—maximal interpretability of**

by it's properties.

ideas or objects that surround it, and if nothing contradictory to the

[Example 1D6](#)

essence of [the object](#) is included in the idea. **{A flying horse is a clear idea; [Hampshire:99-100](#)**

but if you analyze the size and strength of the wings and the innate power of the horse [mathematical reasoning](#)

and see that it could not possibly fly, it fails to be distinct (objective)—a contradiction.}

{objective}

From [How the Rationalists Construe "Clear and Distinct Ideas"](#).

[Amy Howell](#)

5. Spinoza has a more active notion of ideas in general (they are for the most part coextensive with judgments, and are therefore not so much things the mind has as things the mind does); he rejects the [cartesian](#) tendency to think of ideas as maps or pictures of objects. Spinoza would have us [ideate](#) clearly and distinctly rather than acquire a collection of clear and distinct ideas; accordingly, clarity and distinctness are, for him, the virtues of good reasoning: the terms index [deductive](#) rigor rather than true belief. {A flying horse is a clear idea; but if you analyze the size and strength of the wings and the innate mathematical reasoning power of the horse and see that it could not possibly fly, it fails to be distinct (objective)—could not pass [deductive](#) rigor.}

[Hampshire:22](#)

[2P24-32](#)

[TEI:Endnote 69:1](#)—constitutes the [reality](#) of [truth](#).

From [Bk.III:129](#)—In our [reflection](#) upon some given [true idea](#) [[33](#), [38](#), [39](#), [43](#)], we discover what constitutes real intellectual thinking: the formation of objective essences, with their intrinsic characteristic of truth [[69-72](#)]. It is a form of thinking that contains in itself something distinguishing it from imaginative thinking [[70](#)], from fiction and falsehood. It is the intellect that is the truly creative activity. One could almost say that it forms a purified "fictional" activity, a kind of "[spiritual automaton](#)": "For if we should suppose that the intellect had perceived some new being, which has never existed (as some conceive God's intellect, before he created things--for that perception, of course, could not have arisen from any object), and that from such perception it deduced others legitimately, all those thoughts would be true, and determined by no external object, but would depend only on the power and nature of the intellect" [[71](#)]. Of course, this conception of [God](#) is wrong, and the creativity of the intellect should correspond to "external objects." Yet it is clear that Spinoza is stressing the autonomous, constructive power of the intellect, as opposed to the passivity of the imagination. This constructive activity is observable not only in geometry but also in the formation of hypotheses [[57](#)] and [[y](#)], thought experiments [[57](#)], and philosophy. Constructive thought about reality must not only be constructive but also provide a proof of the existence of what is thought (see the next section of the commentary and [[99ff.](#)]. But this does not contradict the insight into the fundamental character of intellectual thinking stressed so strongly here by Spinoza: its constructivity.

[Mark Twain](#)

[Bk.XIX:22.](#)

[Speculation](#)

[TEI:Endnote 75:5](#)—[Primary Elements](#)

From [Bk.VIII:33₅₆](#)—Guerout identifies the "first elements of the whole of Nature," which constitute the source and origin of [Nature](#), with the [attributes](#) that constitute [G-D](#) or [substance](#). I agree (Curley 3, 42) and infer that G-D is not to be identified with the whole of Nature, but only with

Natura naturans

{I maintain that G-D is to be identified with both *Natura*

naturans

(G-

D) and

[Blake McBride](#)

natura

naturata

(G-d). All things are in

[TEI:Endnote 110:2](#)—Establish "something common":

From [Bk.III:187](#)—As Rousset rightly notes, it is remarkable how many ideas in [Ethics II](#) are anticipated here." Yet they are not derived systematically from an insight into the essence of the human mind, as they are in [Ethics II](#) ; on the contrary, they are set forth to establish "something common" from which all these properties follow ([Simply Posit: ONE—1D6](#)). This "something" can be nothing other than the essence of the intellect itself. Somehow, in our [reflexive](#) thinking on given, true ideas, especially in geometry, we are capable of clearly and distinctly thinking fundamental properties of the intellect (in separation from the imagination). It is clear that Spinoza does not doubt any of this. On the other hand, it is necessary to penetrate the internal nature of the intellect, on the basis of the "something common" present in the properties. This presents an additional problem, since such a [definition](#) presupposes [understanding of the fixed and eternal things](#), without which the intellect—the mind as having intellectual ideas—cannot be properly understood.

How can we solve this problem? Somehow, we must already possess the necessary "[innate tools](#)" to do this. In our knowledge of the properties, we must, as Spinoza says, somehow already know the essence of the intellect (this is particularly clear from properties 1 and 6 in [§108](#)): an autonomous power to think [things](#) as they are. In our knowledge of the properties of the intellect, gathered in our [reflection](#), we must also find the tools to define the first cause and to come, on this basis, to a genetic definition of the intellect, which completes our logical search and positions us to arrive at our final aim (the ethical problematic with which we started).

In other words, a solution to the problem with which the logic ends can be found only if we succeed in beginning the [Philosophia](#), or investigation of [Nature](#), in the proper order ([Ethics I](#)) and if, reflexively guiding this investigation toward a theory of the human mind, we discover the cause for the properties of the intellect as real essence ([Ethics II](#)). This means that the enumeration of the properties of the intellect not only contains all sorts of elements to be explained in a "geometrical" order in [Ethics II](#) ; it also must provide us with the essential elements or tools to establish an [ontology](#) and/or metaphysics.

End of Endnotes for TEI.

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