

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott  
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel  
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen  
Weber Freiligrath Frey  
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel  
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas  
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach  
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil  
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London  
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer  
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup  
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff  
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt  
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier  
Garschin Defoe Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder  
Damaschke Descartes Schopenhauer George  
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Grimm Jerome Rilke Bebel Proust  
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot  
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy  
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius  
Chamberlain Langbein Lafontaine Iffland Sokrates  
Brentano Claudius Schiller Bellamy Schilling Kralik Raabe Gibbon Tschchow  
Katharina II. von Rußland Gerstäcker Raabe Gleim Vulpius  
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Morgenstern Goedicke  
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Kleist  
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Mörike Musil  
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kraus  
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus  
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo Moltke  
Nestroy Marie de France  
Nietzsche Nansen Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht  
Marx Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz Ringelntz  
von Ossietzky May vom Stein Lawrence Irving  
Petalozzi Platon Pückler Michelangelo Knigge Kock Kafka  
Sachs Poe Liebermann Kock Korolenko  
de Sade Praetorius Mistral Zetkin



---

The publishing house **tredition** has created the series **TREDITION CLASSICS**. It contains classical literature works from over two thousand years. Most of these titles have been out of print and off the bookstore shelves for decades.

The book series is intended to preserve the cultural legacy and to promote the timeless works of classical literature. As a reader of a **TREDITION CLASSICS** book, the reader supports the mission to save many of the amazing works of world literature from oblivion.

The symbol of **TREDITION CLASSICS** is Johannes Gutenberg (1400 – 1468), the inventor of movable type printing.

With the series, **tredition** intends to make thousands of international literature classics available in printed format again – worldwide.

All books are available at book retailers worldwide in paperback and in hardcover. For more information please visit: [www.tredition.com](http://www.tredition.com)



**tredition** was established in 2006 by Sandra Latusseck and Soenke Schulz. Based in Hamburg, Germany, **tredition** offers publishing solutions to authors and publishing houses, combined with worldwide distribution of printed and digital book content. **tredition** is uniquely positioned to enable authors and publishing houses to create books on their own terms and without conventional manufacturing risks.

For more information please visit: [www.tredition.com](http://www.tredition.com)

# **Ethics –Part 4**

Benedictus de Spinoza

# Imprint

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series.

Author: Benedictus de Spinoza  
Cover design: toepferschumann, Berlin (Germany)

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg (Germany)  
ISBN: 978-3-8495-0494-6

[www.tredition.com](http://www.tredition.com)  
[www.tredition.de](http://www.tredition.de)

Copyright:  
The content of this book is sourced from the public domain.

The intention of the TREDITION CLASSICS series is to make world literature in the public domain available in printed format. Literary enthusiasts and organizations worldwide have scanned and digitally edited the original texts. tredition has subsequently formatted and redesigned the content into a modern reading layout. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the exact reproduction of the original format of a particular historic edition. Please also note that no modifications have been made to the spelling, therefore it may differ from the orthography used today.

## **PART IV: Of Human Bondage, or the Strength of the Emotions**

### **PREFACE**

Human infirmity in moderating and checking the emotions I name bondage: for, when a man is a prey to his emotions, he is not his own master, but lies at the mercy of fortune: so much so, that he is often compelled, while seeing that which is better for him, to follow that which is worse. Why this is so, and what is good or evil in the emotions, I propose to show in this part of my treatise. But, before I begin, it would be well to make a few prefatory observations on perfection and imperfection, good and evil.

When a man has purposed to make a given thing, and has brought it to perfection, his work will be pronounced perfect, not only by himself, but by everyone who rightly knows, or thinks that he knows, the intention and aim of its author. For instance, suppose anyone sees a work (which I assume to be not yet completed), and knows that the aim of the author of that work is to build a house, he will call the work imperfect; he will, on the other hand, call it perfect, as soon as he sees that it is carried through to the end, which its author had purposed for it. But if a man sees a work, the like whereof he has never seen before, and if he knows not the intention of the artificer, he plainly cannot know, whether that work be perfect or imperfect. Such seems to be the primary meaning of these terms.

But, after men began to form general ideas, to think out types of houses, buildings, towers, &c., and to prefer certain types to others, it came about, that each man called perfect that which he saw agree with the general idea he had formed of the thing in question, and called imperfect that which he saw agree less with his own precon-

ceived type, even though it had evidently been completed in accordance with the idea of its artificer. This seems to be the only reason for calling natural phenomena, which, indeed, are not made with human hands, perfect or imperfect: for men are wont to form general ideas of things natural, no less than of things artificial, and such ideas they hold as types, believing that Nature (who they think does nothing without an object) has them in view, and has set them as types before herself. Therefore, when they behold something in Nature, which does not wholly conform to the preconceived type which they have formed of the thing in question, they say that Nature has fallen short or has blundered, and has left her work incomplete. Thus we see that men are wont to style natural phenomena perfect or imperfect rather from their own prejudices, than from true knowledge of what they pronounce upon.

Now we showed in the Appendix to Part I., that Nature does not work with an end in view. For the eternal and infinite Being, which we call God or Nature, acts by the same necessity as that whereby it exists. For we have shown, that by the same necessity of its nature, whereby it exists, it likewise works (I:xvi.). The reason or cause why God or Nature exists, and the reason why he acts, are one and the same. Therefore, as he does not exist for the sake of an end, so neither does he act for the sake of an end; of his existence and of his action there is neither origin nor end. Wherefore, a cause which is called final is nothing else but human desire, in so far as it is considered as the origin or cause of anything. For example, when we say that to be inhabited is the final cause of this or that house, we mean nothing more than that a man, conceiving the conveniences of household life, had a desire to build a house. Wherefore, the being inhabited, in so far as it is regarded as a final cause, is nothing else but this particular desire, which is really the efficient cause; it is regarded as the primary cause, because men are generally ignorant of the causes of their desires. They are, as I have often said already, conscious of their own actions and appetites, but ignorant of the causes whereby they are determined to any particular desire. Therefore, the common saying that Nature sometimes falls short, or blunders, and produces things which are imperfect, I set down among the glosses treated of in the Appendix to Part 1. Perfection and imperfection, then, are in reality merely modes of thinking, or notions

which we form from a comparison among one another of individuals of the same species; hence I said above (II:Def.vi.), that by reality and perfection I mean the same thing. For we are wont to refer all the individual things in nature to one genus, which is called the highest genus, namely, to the category of Being, whereto absolutely all individuals in nature belong. Thus, in so far as we refer the individuals in nature to this category, and comparing them one with another, find that some possess more of being or reality than others, we, to this extent, say that some are more perfect than others. Again, in so far as we attribute to them anything implying negation - as term, end, infirmity, etc., we, to this extent, call them imperfect, because they do not affect our mind so much as the things which we call perfect, not because they have any intrinsic deficiency, or because Nature has blundered. For nothing lies within the scope of a thing's nature, save that which follows from the necessity of the nature of its efficient cause, and whatsoever follows from the necessity of the nature of its efficient cause necessarily comes to pass.

As for the terms good and bad, they indicate no positive quality in things regarded in themselves, but are merely modes of thinking, or notions which we form from the comparison of things one with another. Thus one and the same thing can be at the same time good, bad, and indifferent. For instance, music is good for him that is melancholy, bad for him that mourns; for him that is deaf, it is neither good nor bad.

Nevertheless, though this be so, the terms should still be retained. For, inasmuch as we desire to form an idea of man as a type of human nature which we may hold in view, it will be useful for us to retain the terms in question, in the sense I have indicated.

In what follows, then, I shall mean by, "good" that, which we certainly know to be a means of approaching more nearly to the type of human nature, which we have set before ourselves; by "bad," that which we certainly know to be a hindrance to us in approaching the said type. Again, we shall that men are more perfect, or more imperfect, in proportion as they approach more or less nearly to the said type. For it must be specially remarked that, when I say that a man passes from a lesser to a greater perfection, or vice versa, I do not mean that he is changed from one essence or reality to another;

for instance, a horse would be as completely destroyed by being changed into a man, as by being changed into an insect. What I mean is, that we conceive the thing's power of action, in so far as this is understood by its nature, to be increased or diminished. Lastly, by perfection in general I shall, as I have said, mean reality in other words, each thing's essence, in so far as it exists, and operates in a particular manner, and without paying any regard to its duration. For no given thing can be said to be more perfect, because it has passed a longer time in existence. The duration of things cannot be determined by their essence, for the essence of things involves no fixed and definite period of existence; but everything, whether it be more perfect or less perfect, will always be able to persist in existence with the same force wherewith it began to exist; wherefore, in this respect, all things are equal.

## DEFINITIONS.

I. By good I mean that which we certainly know to be useful to us.

II. By evil I mean that which we certainly know to be a hindrance to us in the attainment of any good. (Concerning these terms see the foregoing preface towards the end.)

III. Particular things I call contingent in so far as, while regarding their essence only, we find nothing therein, which necessarily asserts their existence or excludes it.

IV. Particular things I call possible in so far as, while regarding the causes whereby they must be produced, we know not, whether such causes be determined for producing them.

(In I:xxxiii.note.i., I drew no distinction between possible and contingent, because there was in that place no need to distinguish them accurately.)

V. By conflicting emotions I mean those which draw a man in different directions, though they are of the same kind, such as luxury and avarice, which are both species of love, and are contraries, not by nature, but by accident.

VI. What I mean by emotion felt towards a thing, future, present, and past, I explained in III:xviii.,notes.i.,&ii., which see.

(But I should here also remark, that we can only distinctly conceive distance of space or time up to a certain definite limit; that is, all objects distant from us more than two hundred feet, or whose distance from the place where we are exceeds that which we can distinctly conceive, seem to be an equal distance from us, and all in the same plane; so also objects, whose time of existing is conceived as removed from the present by a longer interval than we can distinctly conceive, seem to be all equally distant from the present, and are set down, as it were, to the same moment of time.)

VII. By an end, for the sake of which we do something, I mean a desire.

VIII. By virtue (*virtus*) and power I mean the same thing; that is (III:vii.), virtue, in so far as it is referred to man, is a man's nature or essence, in so far as it has the power of effecting what can only be understood by the laws of that nature.

## AXIOM.

There is no individual thing in nature, than which there is not another more powerful and strong. Whatsoever thing be given, there is something stronger whereby it can be destroyed.

PROPOSITIONS. Prop. I. No positive quality possessed by a false idea is removed by the presence of what is true, in virtue of its being true.

Proof.- Falsity consists solely in the privation of knowledge which inadequate ideas involve (II:xxxv.), nor have they any positive quality on account of which they are called false (II:xxxiii.); contrariwise, in so far as they are referred to God, they are true (II:xxxii.). Wherefore, if the positive quality possessed by a false idea were removed by the presence of what is true, in virtue of its being true, a true idea would then be removed by itself, which (IV:iii.) is absurd. Therefore, no positive quality possessed by a false idea, &c. Q.E.D.

Note.- This proposition is more clearly understood from II:xvi. Coroll. ii. For imagination is an idea, which indicates rather the present disposition of the human body than the nature of the external body; not indeed distinctly, but confusedly; whence it comes to pass, that the mind is said to err. For instance, when we look at the sun, we conceive that it is distant from us about two hundred feet; in this judgment we err, so long as we are in ignorance of its true distance; when its true distance is known, the error is removed, but not the imagination; or, in other words, the idea of the sun, which only explains the nature of that luminary, in so far as the body is affected thereby: wherefore, though we know the real distance, we shall still nevertheless imagine the sun to be near us. For, as we said in III:xxxv. note, we do not imagine the sun to be so near us, because we are ignorant of its true distance, but because the mind conceives the magnitude of the sun to the extent that the body is affected thereby. Thus, when the rays of the sun falling on the surface of water are reflected into our eyes, we imagine the sun as if it were in

the water, though we are aware of its real position; and similarly other imaginations, wherein the mind is deceived whether they indicate the natural disposition of the body, or that its power of activity is increased or diminished, are not contrary to the truth, and do not vanish at its presence. It happens indeed that, when we mistakenly fear an evil, the fear vanishes when we hear the true tidings; but the contrary also happens, namely, that we fear an evil which will certainly come, and our fear vanishes when we hear false tidings; thus imaginations do not vanish at the presence of the truth, in virtue of its being true, but because other imaginations, stronger than the first, supervene and exclude the present existence of that which we imagined, as I have shown in II:.xvii.

Prop. II. We are only passive, in so far as we are a part of Nature, which cannot be conceived by itself without other parts.

Proof.- We are said to be passive, when something arises in us, whereof we are only a partial cause (III:Def.ii.), that is (III:Def.i.), something which cannot be deduced solely from the laws of our nature. We are passive therefore in so far as we are a part of Nature, which cannot be conceived by itself without other parts. Q.E.D.

Prop. III. The force whereby a man persists in existing is limited, and is infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes.

Proof.-This is evident from the axiom of this part. For, when man is given, there is something else - say A - more powerful; when A is given, there is something else - say B - more powerful than A, and so on to infinity; thus the power of man is limited by the power of some other thing, and is infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes. Q.E.D.

Prop. IV. It is impossible, that man should not be a part of Nature, or that he should be capable of undergoing no changes, save such as can be understood through his nature only as their adequate cause.

Proof.- The power, whereby each particular thing, and consequently man, preserves his being, is the power of God or of Nature (I:xxiv.Coroll.); not in so far as it is infinite, but in so far as it can be explained by the actual human essence (III:vii.). Thus the power of man, in so far as it is explained through his own actual essence, is a part of the infinite power of God or Nature, in other words, of the essence thereof (I:xxxiv.). This was our first point. Again, if it were possible, that man should undergo no changes save such as can be understood solely through the nature of man, it would follow that he would not be able to die, but would always necessarily exist; this would be the necessary consequence of a cause whose power was either finite or infinite; namely, either of man's power only, inasmuch as he would be capable of removing from himself all changes which could spring from external causes; or of the infinite power of Nature, whereby all individual things would be so ordered, that man should be incapable of undergoing any changes save such as tended towards his own preservation. But the first alternative is absurd (by the last Prop., the proof of which is universal, and can be applied to all individual things). Therefore, if it be possible, that man should not be capable of undergoing any changes, save such as can be explained solely through his own nature, and consequently that he must always (as we have shown) necessarily exist; such a result must follow from the infinite power of God, and consequently (I:xvi.) from the necessity of the divine nature, in so far as it is regarded as affected by the idea of any given man, the whole order of nature as conceived under the attributes of extension and thought must be deducible. It would therefore follow (I:xxi.) that man is infinite, which (by the first part of this proof) is absurd. It is, therefore, impossible, that man should not undergo any changes save those whereof he is the adequate cause. Q.E.D.

Corollary.- Hence it follows, that man is necessarily always a prey to his passions, that he follows and obeys the general order of nature, and that he accommodates himself thereto, as much as the nature of things demands.

Prop. V. The power and increase of every passion, and its persistence in existing are not defined by the power, whereby we ourselves endeavour to persist in existing, but by the power of an external cause compared with our own.

Proof.- The essence of a passion cannot be explained through our essence alone (III:Def.i.&.ii.), that is (III:vii.), the power of a passion cannot be defined by the power, whereby we ourselves endeavour to persist in existing, but (as is shown in II:xvi.) must necessarily be defined by the power of an external cause compared with our own. Q.E.D.

Prop. VI. The force of any passion or emotion can overcome the rest of a man's activities or power, so that the emotion becomes obstinately fixed to him.

Proof.- The force and increase of any passion and its persistence in existing are defined by the power of an external cause compared with our own (by the foregoing Prop.); therefore (IV:iii.) it can overcome a man's power, &c. Q.E.D.

Prop. VII. An emotion can only be controlled or destroyed by another emotion contrary thereto, and with more power for controlling emotion.

Proof.- Emotion, in so far as it is referred to the mind, is an idea, whereby the mind affirms of its body a greater or less force of existence than before (cf. the general Definition of the Emotions at the end of Part III.) When, therefore, the mind is assailed by any emotion, the body is at the same time affected with a modification whereby its power of activity is increased or diminished. Now this modification of the body (IV:v.) receives from its cause the force for persistence in its being; which force can only be checked or destroyed by a bodily cause (II:vi.), in virtue of the body being affected with a modification contrary to (III:v.) and stronger than itself (IV.Ax.); wherefore (II:xii.) the mind is affected by the idea of a

modification contrary to, and stronger than the former modification, in other words, (by the general definition of the emotions) the mind will be affected by an emotion contrary to and stronger than the former emotion, which will exclude or destroy the existence of the former emotion; thus an emotion cannot be destroyed nor controlled except by a contrary and stronger emotion. Q.E.D.

Corollary.- An emotion, in so far as it is referred to the mind, can only be controlled or destroyed through an idea of a modification of the body contrary to, and stronger than, that which we are undergoing. For the emotion which we undergo can only be checked or destroyed by an emotion contrary to, and stronger than, itself, in other words, (by the general Definition of the Emotions) only by an idea of a modification of the body contrary to, and stronger than, the modification which we undergo.

Prop. VIII. The knowledge of good and evil is nothing else but the emotions of pleasure or pain, in so far as we are conscious thereof.

Proof.- We call a thing good or evil, when it is of service or the reverse in preserving our being (IV:Def.i.&.ii.), that is (III:vii.), when it increases or diminishes, helps or hinders, our power of activity. Thus, in so far as we perceive that a thing affects us with pleasure or pain, we call it good or evil; wherefore the knowledge of good and evil is nothing else but the idea of the pleasure or pain, which necessarily follows from that pleasurable or painful emotion (II:xxii.). But this idea is united to the emotion in the same way as mind is united to body (II:xxi.); that is, there is no real distinction between this idea and the emotion or idea of the modification of the body, save in conception only. Therefore the knowledge of good and evil is nothing else but the emotion, in so far as we are conscious thereof. Q.E.D.

Prop. IX. An emotion, whereof we conceive the cause to be with us at the present time, is stronger than if we did not conceive the cause to be with us.

Proof.- Imagination or conception is the idea, by which the mind regards a thing as present (II:xvii.note), but which indicates the disposition of the mind rather than the nature of the external thing (II:xvi.Coroll.ii). An emotion is therefore a conception, in so far as it indicates the disposition of the body. But a conception (by II:xvii.) is stronger, so long as we conceive nothing which excludes the present existence of the external object; wherefore an emotion is also stronger or more intense, when we conceive the cause to be with us at the present time, than when we do not conceive the cause to be with us. Q.E.D.

Note.- When I said above in III:xviii. that we are affected by the image of what is past or future with the same emotion as if the thing conceived were present, I expressly stated, that this is only true in so far as we look solely to the image of the thing in question itself ; for the thing's nature is unchanged, whether we have conceived it or not; I did not deny that the image becomes weaker, when we regard as present to us other things which exclude the present existence of the future object: I did not expressly call attention to the fact, because I purposed to treat of the strength of the emotions in this part of my work.

Corollary.- The image of something past or future, that is, of a thing which we regard as in relation to time past or time future, to the exclusion of time present, is, when other conditions are equal, weaker than the image of something present; consequently an emotion felt towards what is past or future is less intense, other conditions being equal, than an emotion felt towards something present.

Prop. X. Towards something future, which we conceive as close at hand, we are affected more intensely, than if we conceive that its time for existence is separated from the present by a longer interval; so too by the remembrance of what we conceive to have not long passed away we are affected more intensely, than if we conceive that it has long passed away.

Proof.- In so far as we conceive a thing as close at hand, or not long passed away, we conceive that which excludes the presence of

the object less, than if its period of future existence were more distant from the present, or if it had long passed away (this is obvious) therefore (by the foregoing Prop.) we are, so far, more intensely affected towards it. Q.E.D.

Corollary.- From the remarks made in IV:Def.vi. of this part it follows that, if objects are separated from the present by a longer period than we can define in conception, though their dates of occurrence be widely separated one from the other, they all affect us equally faintly.

Prop. XI. An emotion towards that which we conceive as necessary is, when other conditions are equal, more intense than an emotion towards that which impossible, or contingent, or non-necessary.

Proof.- In so far as we conceive a thing to be necessary, we, to that extent, affirm its existence; on the other hand we deny a thing's existence, in so far as we conceive it not to be necessary :xxxiii.note.i.); wherefore (IV.ix.) an emotion towards that which is necessary is, other conditions being equal, more intense than an emotion that which is non-necessary. Q.E.D.

Prop. XII. An emotion towards a thing, which we know not to exist at the present time, and which we conceive as possible, is more intense, other conditions being equal, than an emotion towards a thing contingent.

Proof.- In so far as we conceive a thing as contingent, we are affected by the conception of some further thing, which would assert the existence of the former (IV:Def.iii.); but, on the other hand, we (by hypothesis) conceive certain things, which exclude its present existence. But, in so far as we conceive a thing to be possible in the future, we there by conceive things which assert its existence (IV:iv.), that is (III:xviii.), things which promote hope or fear: where-

fore an emotion towards something possible is more vehement. Q.E.D.

Corollary.- An emotion towards a thing, which we know not to exist in the present, and which we conceive as contingent, is far fainter, than if we conceive the thing to be present with us.

Proof.- Emotion towards a thing, which we conceive to exist, is more intense than it would be, if we conceived the thing as future (V:ix.Coroll.), and is much more vehement, than if the future time be conceived as far distant from the present (IV:x.). Therefore an emotion towards a thing, whose period of existence we conceive to be far distant from the present, is far fainter, than if we conceive the thing as present; it is, nevertheless, more intense, than if we conceived the thing as contingent, wherefore an emotion towards a thing, which we regard as contingent, will be far fainter, than if we conceived the thing to be present with us. Q.E.D.

Prop. XIII. Emotion towards a thing contingent, which we know not to exist in the present, is, other conditions being equal, fainter than an emotion towards a thing past.

Proof.- In so far as we conceive a thing as contingent, we are not affected by the image of any other thing, which asserts the existence of the said thing (IV:Def.iii.), but, on the other hand (by hypothesis), we conceive certain things excluding its present existence. But, in so far as we conceive it in relation to time past, we are assumed to conceive something, which recalls the thing to memory, or excites the image thereof (II:xviii.&Note), which is so far the same as regarding it as present (II:xvii.Coroll.). Therefore (IV:ix.) an emotion towards a thing contingent, which we know does not exist in the present, is fainter, other conditions being equal, than an emotion towards a thing past. Q.E.D.

Prop. XIV. A true knowledge of good and evil cannot check any emotion by virtue of being true, but only in so far as it is considered as an emotion.

Proof.- An emotion is an idea, whereby the mind affirms of its body a greater or less force of existing than before (by the general Definition of the Emotions); therefore it has no positive quality, which can be destroyed by the presence of what is true; consequently the knowledge of good and evil cannot, by virtue of being true, restrain any emotion. But, in so far as such knowledge is an emotion (IV:viii.) if it have more strength for restraining emotion, it will to that extent be able to restrain the given emotion. Q.E.D.

Prop. XV. Desire arising from the knowledge of good and bad can be quenched or checked by many of the other desires arising from the emotions whereby we are assailed.

Proof.- From the true knowledge of good and evil, in so far as it is an emotion, necessarily arises desire (Def. of the Emotions, i.), the strength of which is proportioned to the strength of the emotion wherefrom it arises (III:xxxvii.). But, inasmuch as this desire arises (by hypothesis) from the fact of our truly understanding anything, it follows that it is also present with us, in so far as we are active (III:i.), and must therefore be understood through our essence only (III:Def.ii.); consequently (III:vii.) its force and increase can be defined solely by human power. Again, the desires arising from the emotions whereby we are assailed are stronger, in proportion as the said emotions are more vehement; wherefore their force and increase must be defined solely by the power of external causes, which, when compared with our own power, indefinitely surpass it (IV:iii.); hence the desires arising from like emotions may be more vehement, than the desire which arises from a true knowledge of good and evil, and may, consequently, control or quench it. Q.E.D.

Prop. XVI. Desire arising from the knowledge of good and evil, in so far as such knowledge regards what is future, may be more easily

controlled or quenched, than the desire for what is agreeable at the present moment.

Proof.- Emotion towards a thing, which we conceive as future, is fainter than emotion towards a thing that is present (IV:ix.Coroll.). But desire, which arises from the true knowledge of good and evil, though it be concerned with things which are good at the moment, can be quenched or controlled by any headstrong desire (by the last Prop., the proof whereof is of universal application). Wherefore desire arising from such knowledge, when concerned with the future, can be more easily controlled or quenched, &c. Q.E.D.

Prop. XVII. Desire arising from the true knowledge of good and evil, in so far as such knowledge is concerned with what is contingent, can be controlled far more easily still, than desire for things that are present.

Proof.- This Prop. is proved in the same way as the last Prop. from IV:xii.Coroll.

Note.- I think I have now shown the reason, why men are moved by opinion more readily than by true reason, why it is that the true knowledge of good and evil stirs up conflicts in the soul, and often yields to every kind of passion. This state of things gave rise to the exclamation of the poet: (Ov. Met. vii.20, "Video meliora proboque, Deteriora sequor.")

The better path I gaze at and approve,

The worse - I follow." Ecclesiastes seems to have had the same thought in his mind, when he says, "He who increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." I have not written the above with the object of drawing the conclusion, that ignorance is more excellent than knowledge, or that a wise man is on a par with a fool in controlling his emotions, but because it is necessary to know the power and the infirmity of our nature, before we can determine what reason can do in restraining the emotions, and what is beyond her power. I have said, that in the present part I shall merely treat of human