

Essay  
on the Maladies of the Head

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The simplicity and frugality of nature demands and forms only common concepts and a clumsy sincerity in human beings; artificial constraint and the luxury of a civil constitution hatches punsters and subtle reasoners, occasionally, however, also fools and swindlers, and gives birth to the wise or decent semblance by means of which one can dispense with understanding as well as integrity, if only the beautiful veil which decency spreads over the secret frailties of the head or the heart is woven close enough. Proportionately as art advances, reason and virtue will finally become the universal watchword, yet in such a way that the eagerness to speak of both can well dispense instructed and polite persons from bothering with their possession. The universal esteem which both praised properties are accorded nevertheless shows this noticeable difference that everyone is far more jealous of the advantages of the understanding than of the good properties of the will, and that in the comparison between stupidity and roguery no one would hesitate a moment to declare his preference for the latter; which is certainly well thought out because, if everything in general depends on art, fine cleverness cannot be dispensed with, but sincerity, which in such relations is only obstructive, can well be done without. I live among wise and well-mannered citizens, that is to say, among those who are skilled at appearing so, and I flatter myself that one would be so fair as to credit me with as much finesse that even if I were presently in possession of the most proven remedies for dislodging the maladies of the head and the heart, I would still hesitate to lay this old-fashioned rubbish in the path of public business, well aware that

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the beloved fashionable cure for the understanding and the heart has already made desirable progress and that particularly the doctors of the understanding, who call themselves logicians, satisfy the general demand very well since they made the important discovery: that the human head is actually a drum which only sounds because it is empty. Accordingly, I see nothing better for me than to imitate the method of the physicians, who believe they have been very helpful to their patient when they give his malady a name, and will sketch a small onomastic<sup>1</sup> of the frailties of the head, from its paralysis in *imbecility* to its raptures in *madness*; but in order to recognize these loathsome maladies in their gradual origination, I find it first necessary to elucidate their milder degrees from *idiocy* to *foolishness*, because these properties are more widespread in civil relations and lead nonetheless to the former ones.

The *dull head* lacks wit; the *idiot* lacks understanding. The agility in grasping something and remembering it, likewise the facility in expressing it properly, very much depend on wit; for that reason he who is not stupid can nevertheless be very dull, in so far as hardly anything gets into his head, even though afterward he may be able to understand it with a greater maturity of judgment; and the difficulty of being able to express oneself proves nothing less than the capacity of the understanding, it only proves that wit is not performing enough assistance in dressing up the thought with all kinds of signs of which several fit it most aptly. The celebrated Jesuit *Clavius*<sup>2</sup> was run out of school as incapable (because according to the testing procedure of the understanding employed by tyrannical schoolmasters,<sup>3</sup> a boy is useful for nothing at all if he can write neither verses nor essays<sup>4</sup>). Later he came upon mathematics, the tables turned, and his previous teachers were idiots compared to him. The practical judgment concerning matters, such as the farmer, the artist, or the seafarer, etc., need it, is very different from judgment one possesses about the techniques with which human beings deal with one another. The latter is not so much understanding as craftiness, and the lovable

<sup>1</sup> From the Greek for "study of proper names."

<sup>2</sup> Latinized name of Christoph Schlüssel (1537–1612), a famous mathematician who was involved in the institution of the Gregorian calendar.

<sup>3</sup> *Orbile*; word coined after the name of Horace's teacher, Orbilius Pupillus, to designate a school tyrant.

<sup>4</sup> *Schulchrien*; a *chreia* (Greek) is a collection of useful sayings; the term was also used for expository writing according to a rhetorical model taught in school.

lack of this highly praised capacity is called *simplicity*. If the cause of this is to be sought in the weakness of the power of judgment, then such a human being is called a *ninny*,<sup>5</sup> *simpleton*, etc. Since intrigue and false devices have gradually become customary maxims in civil society and have very much complicated the play of human actions, it is no wonder when an otherwise sensible and sincere man for whom all this cunning is either too contemptible to occupy himself with it or who cannot move his honest and benevolent heart to make himself such a hated concept of human nature were to get caught everywhere by swindlers and give them much to laugh about – so that in the end the expression “a good man” designates a simpleton no longer in a figurative manner but directly, and occasionally even designates a cuckold.<sup>6</sup> For in the language of rogues no one is a sensible man but the one who holds everyone else for no better than what he himself is, namely a swindler. [2:261]

The drives of human nature, which are called passions when they are of a high degree, are the moving forces of the will; the understanding only comes in to assess both the entire result of the satisfaction of all inclinations taken together from the end represented and to find the means to this end. If, e.g., a passion is especially powerful, the capacity of the understanding is of little help against it; for the enchanted human being sees very well indeed the reasons against his favorite inclination, but he feels powerless to give them active emphasis. If this inclination is good in itself and the person is otherwise reasonable, except for the overweighing penchant obstructing the view of the bad consequences, then this state of fettered reason is *folly*. A *foolish person* can have a good deal of understanding even in the judgment concerning those actions in which he is foolish; he must even possess a good deal of understanding and a good heart before being entitled to this milder appellation for his excesses. The *foolish person* can even be an excellent adviser for others, although his advice has no effect on himself. He will become shrewd only through damage or through age, which however only displaces one folly to make room for another one. The amorous passion or a great degree of ambition have always made foolish persons of many reasonable people. A young girl compels the formidable *Alcides*<sup>7</sup> to pull the thread on the

<sup>5</sup> *Tropf*

<sup>6</sup> *H-*; the translation assumes that Kant's elliptic designation is a discrete abbreviation for *Hahnrei*.

<sup>7</sup> Nickname of *Heracles*; the reference is to Heracles' stay with the Lydian princess Omphale, who made him wear women's clothes.

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distaff, and Athen's idle citizens send *Alexander* with their silly praise to the end of the world. There are also inclinations of lesser vehemence and generality which nevertheless do not lack in generating folly: the building demon, the inclination to collect pictures, book mania. The degenerate human being has left his natural place and is attracted by everything and supported by everything. To the foolish person there is opposed the *shrewd man*; but he who is without folly is a *wise man*. This *wise man* can perhaps be sought for on the moon; possibly there one is without passion and has infinitely much reason. The insensitive person is safe from folly through his stupidity; to ordinary eyes, however, he has the mien of a wise person. *Pyrrho* saw a pig eating calmly from his trough on a ship in a storm while everyone was anxiously concerned and said pointing to it: "Such ought to be the calm of a wise person."<sup>8</sup> The insensitive one is *Pyrrho's* wise person.

If the predominant passion is odious in itself and at the same time insipid enough to take for the satisfaction of the passion precisely that which is contrary to the natural intention of the passion, then this state of reversed reason is *foolishness*. The foolish person understands the true intention of his passion very well, even if he grants it a strength that is able of fettering reason. The *fool*, however, is at the same time rendered so stupid by his passion that he believes only then to be in possession of the thing desired when he actually deprives himself of it. *Pyrrhus*<sup>9</sup> knew very well that bravery and power earn universal admiration; he followed the drive for ambition and was nothing more than for what *Kineas* held him, namely a foolish person. However, when *Nero*<sup>10</sup> exposes himself to public mockery by reciting wretched verses to obtain the poet's prize and still says at the end of his life: *quantus artifex morior!*,<sup>11</sup> then I see in this feared and scorned ruler of Rome nothing better than a fool. I hold that every offensive folly is properly grafted on to two passions, arrogance and greediness. Both inclinations are unjust and are therefore hated, both are insipid in their nature, and their end destroys itself. The arrogant person expresses an unconcealed presumption of his advantage over others by a clear disdain for them. He believes that he is honored when he is

<sup>8</sup> Pyrrho of Elis (c. 365–360 to c. 275–270 BC), founder of Greek skepticism. The anecdote can be found in Diogenes Laertius, *Lives and Doctrines of the Eminent Philosophers*, ix, 68.

<sup>9</sup> Pyrrhus (319–272 BC), king of Epirus, who campaigned extensively but never won a lasting victory.

<sup>10</sup> Nero Claudius Caesar (37–68), Roman Emperor. <sup>11</sup> Latin for "What an artist dies with me!"

hissed at, because there is nothing clearer than that his disrespect for others stirs up their vanity against the presumptuous person. The greedy person believes that he needs a great deal and cannot possibly do without the least of his goods; however, he actually does without all of them by sequestering them through parsimony. The delusion of arrogance makes in part *silly*, in part *inflated fools*, according to whether silly inconstancy or rigid stupidity has taken possession of the empty head. Stingy avarice has from time immemorial given occasion for many ridiculous stories which could hardly be more strangely concocted than they actually occurred. The foolish person is not wise; the fool is not clever. The mockery that the foolish person draws on himself is amusing and sparing, the fool earns the sharpest scourge of the satirist, yet he still does not feel it. One may not fully despair that a foolish person could still be made shrewd. But he who thinks of making a fool clever is washing a Moor. The reason is that in the former a true and natural inclination reigns which at most fetters reason, but in the latter a silly phantom reigns that reverses reason's principles. I will leave it to others to decide whether one has actual cause to be troubled about *Holberg's* strange prediction, namely that the daily increase in fools is a matter of concern and gives rise to fears that they could eventually get it into their heads to found the fifth monarchy.<sup>12</sup> Supposing, however, that they were up to this, they might nevertheless not get too excited at that because one could easily whisper in the other's ear what the well-known jester of a neighboring court yelled to the students who ran after him as he rode through a Polish town in fool's attire: "You gentlemen, be industrious, learn something, because if we are too many, then we all can no longer have bread."

I come now from the frailties of the head which are despised and scoffed at to those which one generally looks upon with pity, or from those which do not suspend civil community to those in which official care provision takes an interest and for whom it makes arrangements. I divide these maladies in two, into those of impotency and into those of reversal. The first come under the general appellation of *imbecility*, the second under the name of the *disturbed mind*. The imbecile finds himself in a great impotency of memory, reason, and generally even of sensations. This ill is for the most part incurable, for if it is difficult to remove the

<sup>12</sup> A reference to the eschatological vision of the four realms or monarchies preceding the divine governance of the world in the prophet Daniel (Daniel 7:15–27).

[2:264] wild disorders of the disturbed brain, then it must be almost impossible to pour new life into its expired organs. The appearances of this weakness, which never allow the unfortunate person to leave the state of childhood, are too well known for it to be necessary to dwell long on this.

The frailties of the disturbed head can be brought under as many different main genera as there are mental capacities that are afflicted by it. I believe to be able to organize them all together under the following three divisions: first, the reversal of the concepts of experience in *derangement*, second, the power of judgment brought into disorder by this experience in *dementia*, third, reason that has become reversed with respect to more universal judgments in *insanity*. All remaining appearances of the sick brain can be viewed, it seems to me, either as different degrees of the cases mentioned or as an unfortunate coalition of these ills among one another, or, finally, as the engrafting of these ills on powerful passions, and can be subordinated under the classes cited.

With respect to the first ill, namely derangement, I explain its appearances in the following way. The soul of every human being is occupied even in the healthiest state with painting all kinds of images of things that are not present, or with completing some imperfect resemblance in the representation of present things through one or another chimerical trait which the creative poetic capacity draws into the sensation. One has no cause at all to believe that in the state of being awake our mind follows other laws than in sleep. Rather it is to be conjectured that in the former case the lively sensible impressions only obscure and render unrecognizable the more fragile chimerical images, while they possess their whole strength in sleep, in which the access to the soul is closed to all outer impressions. It is therefore no wonder that dreams are held for truthful experiences of actual things, as long as they last. Since they are then the strongest representations in the soul, they are in this state exactly what the sensations are in being awake. Now let us suppose that certain chimeras, no matter from which cause, had damaged, as it were, one or other organ of the brain such that the impression on that organ had become just as deep and at the same time just as correct as a sensation could make it, then, given good sound reason, this phantom would nevertheless have to be taken for an actual experience even in being awake. For it would be in vain to set rational arguments against a sensation or that representation which resembles the latter in strength, since the senses provide a far greater conviction regarding actual things than an inference of reason.

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At least someone bewitched by these chimeras can never be brought by reasoning to doubting the actuality of his presumed sensation. One also finds that persons who show enough mature reason in other cases nevertheless firmly insist upon having seen with full attention who knows what ghostly shapes and distorted faces, and that they are even refined enough to place their imagined experience in connection with many a subtle judgment of reason. This property of the disturbed person, due to which, while being awake and without a particularly noticeable degree of a vehement malady, he is used to representing certain things as clearly sensed of which nevertheless nothing is present, is *derangement*. The deranged person is thus a dreamer in waking. If the usual illusion of his senses is only in part a chimera, but for the most part an actual sensation, then he who is in a higher degree predisposed to such reversal is a *fantast*. When after waking up we lie in an idle and gentle distraction, our imagination draws the irregular figures such as those of the bedroom curtains or of certain spots on a near wall, into human shapes, and this with a seeming correctness that entertains us in a not unpleasant manner but the illusion of which we dispel the moment we want to. We dream then only *in part* and have the chimera in our power. If something similar happens in a higher degree without the attention of the waking person being able to detach the illusion in the misleading imagination, then this reversal lets us conjecture a *fantast*. Incidentally, this self-deception in sensations is very common, and as long as it is only moderate it will be spared with such an appellation, although, if a passion is added to it, this same mental weakness can degenerate into actual fantastic mania. Otherwise human beings do not see through an ordinary delusion to what is there but rather what their inclination depicts for them: the natural history collector sees cities in florentine stone, the devout person the passion story in the speckled marble, some lady sees the shadow of two lovers on the moon in a telescope, but her pastor two church steeples. Fear turns the rays of the northern light into spears and swords and in the twilight a sign post into a giant ghost. [2:266]

The fantastic mental condition is nowhere more common than in hypochondria. The chimeras which this malady hatches do not properly deceive the outer senses but only provide the hypochondriac with an illusory sensation of his own state, either of the body or of the soul, which is, for the most part, an empty whim. The hypochondriac has an ill which, regardless which place it may have as its main seat, nevertheless in all

likelihood migrates incessantly through the nerve tissue to all parts of the body. It draws above all a melancholic haze around the seat of the soul such that the patient feels in himself the illusion of almost all maladies of which he as much as hears. Therefore he talks of nothing more gladly than of his indisposition, he likes to read medical books, he recognizes everywhere his own misfortunes; in society he may even suddenly find himself in a good mood, and then he laughs a lot, dines well and generally has the look of a healthy human being. As regards his inner fantastic mania, the images in his brain often receive a strength and duration that is burdensome for him. If there is a ridiculous figure in his head (even if he himself recognizes it as only an image of fantasy) and if this whim coaxes an unbecoming laugh out of him in the presence of others without him indicating the cause of it, or if all kinds of obscure representations excite a forceful drive in him to start something evil, the eruption of which he himself is anxiously apprehensive about, and which nevertheless never comes to pass: then his state bears a strong resemblance to that of the deranged person, except that it is not that serious. The ill is not deeply rooted and lifts itself, in so far as the mind is concerned, usually either by itself or through some medication. One and the same representation affects the sensation in quite different degrees according to the different mental state of human beings. Therefore there is a kind of fantastic mania that is attributed to someone only because the degree of the feeling through which he is affected by certain objects is judged to be excessive for the moderate, healthy head. In this regard, the *melancholic* is a fantast with respect to life's ills. *Love* has quite a number of fantastic raptures, and the fine artifice of the ancient governments consisted in making the citizens into fantasts regarding the sense of public well-being. If someone is more excited by a moral sensation than by a principle, and this to a larger extent than others could imagine according to their own insipid and often ignoble feeling, then he is a fantast in their opinion. Let us place *Aristides*<sup>13</sup> among usurers, *Epictetus*<sup>14</sup> among courtiers and *Jean-Jacques Rousseau*<sup>15</sup> among the doctors of the Sorbonne. I think I hear loud derision and a hundred voices shout: *What fantasts!* This two-sided appearance of

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<sup>13</sup> Athenian statesman and soldier (fifth century BC) with a reputation for honesty already among his contemporaries.

<sup>14</sup> Stoic philosopher (c. 55–c. 135), who had grown up as a slave.

<sup>15</sup> French-Swiss philosopher (1712–78), who was very much at odds with academic philosophy and education, as represented preeminently by the University of Paris, known as the Sorbonne.

fantasy in moral sensations that are in themselves good is *enthusiasm*, and nothing great has ever been accomplished in the world without it. Things stand quite differently with the *fanatic* (*visionary, enthusiast*). The latter is properly a deranged person with presumed immediate inspiration and a great familiarity with the powers of the heavens. Human nature knows no more dangerous illusion. If its outbreak is new, if the deceived human being has talents and the masses are prepared to diligently accept this leaven, then even the state occasionally suffers raptures. Enthusiasm leads the exalted person to extremes, *Muhammad* to the prince's throne and *John of Leyden*<sup>16</sup> to the scaffold. To a certain extent, I can also count the disturbed *faculty of recollection* among the reversedness of the head, in so far as it concerns the concepts of experience. For it deceives the miserable person who is afflicted by it through chimerical representations of who knows what a previous state, which actually never existed. Someone who speaks of the goods that he alleges to have possessed formerly or of the kingdom that he had, and who otherwise does not noticeably deceive himself with regard to his present state, is a deranged person with regard to recollection. The aged grumbler, who strongly believes that the world was more orderly and the human beings were better in his youth, is a fantast with regard to recollection.

Up to this point the power of the understanding is not actually attacked in the disturbed head, at least it is not necessary that it be; for the mistake actually resides only in the concepts. Provided one accepts the reversed sensation as true, the judgments themselves can be quite correct, even extraordinarily reasonable. A disturbance of the understanding on the contrary consists in judging in a completely reversed manner from otherwise correct experience; and from this malady the first degree is *dementia*, which acts contrary to the common rules of the understanding in the immediate judgments from experience. The *demented person* sees or remembers objects as correctly as every healthy person, only he ordinarily explains the behavior of other human beings through an absurd delusion as referring to himself and believes that he is able to read out of it who knows what suspicious intentions, which they never have in mind. Hearing him, one would believe that the whole town is occupied with him. The market people who deal with one another and by chance [2:268]

<sup>16</sup> A Dutch tailor and merchant (1509–36), who became the leader of the short-lived anabaptist kingdom in Munster, Westphalia.

glance at him are plotting against him, the night watchman calls out to play pranks at him, in short, he sees nothing but a universal conspiracy against himself. The *melancholic* is a gloomy person who is demented with respect to his sad or offensive conjectures. But there are also all kinds of amusing dementia, and the amorous passion flatters itself or is tormented with many strange interpretations that resemble dementia. An arrogant person is to a certain measure a demented person who concludes from the conduct of others staring at him in scorn that they admire him. The second degree of the head that is disturbed with respect to the higher power of cognition is properly reason brought into disorder, in so far as it errs in a nonsensical manner in imagined more subtle judgments concerning universal concepts, and can be called *insanity*. In the higher degree of this disturbance all kinds of presumed excessively subtle insights swarm through the burned-out brain: the contrived length of the ocean, the interpretation of prophecies, or who knows what hotchpotch of imprudent brain teasing. If the unfortunate person at the same time overlooks the judgments of experience, then he is called *crazy*. But there is the case where there are many underlying correct judgments of experience, except that, due the novelty and number of consequences presented to him by his wit, his sensation is so intoxicated that he no longer pays attention to the correctness of the connection of these judgments. In that case often a very glittering semblance of dementia arises that can exist along with great *genius* to the extent that slow reason is no longer able to accompany the excited wit. The state of the disturbed head that makes it unreceptive to outer sensations is *amentia*; in so far as rage rules in the latter it is called *raving*. Despair is a temporary dementedness in someone who is [2:269] hopeless. The raging vehemence of a disturbed person is generally called *frenzy*. The frantic, in so far as he is demented, is *mad*.

The human being in the state of nature can only be subject to a few follies and hardly any foolishness. His needs always keep him close to experience and provide his sound understanding with such easy occupation that he hardly notices that he needs understanding for his actions. Indolence moderates his coarse and common desires, leaving enough power to the small amount of the power of judgment which he needs to rule over those desires to his greatest advantage. From where should he draw the material for foolishness, since, unconcerned about another's judgment as he is, he can be neither vain nor inflated? Since he has no idea at all of the worth of goods he has not enjoyed, he is safe from the

absurdity of stingy avarice, and because not much wit finds entrance to his head, he is just as well secured against every craziness. In like manner the disturbance of the mind can occur only seldom in this state of simplicity. Had the brain of the savage sustained some shock, I do not know where the fantastic mania should come from to displace the ordinary sensations that alone occupy him incessantly. Which dementia can well befall him since he never has cause to venture far in his judgment? Insanity, however, is surely wholly and entirely beyond his capacity. If he is ill in the head, he will be either idiotic or mad, and this, too, should happen most rarely, since he is for the most part healthy because he is free and in motion. The means of leavening for all of these corruptions can properly be found in the civil constitution, which, even if it does not produce them, nevertheless serves to entertain and aggravate them. The understanding, in so far as it is sufficient for the necessities and the simple pleasures of life, is a *sound understanding*, however, in so far as it is required for artificial exuberance,<sup>17</sup> be it in enjoyment or in the sciences, is the *refined understanding*. Thus the sound understanding of the citizen would already be a very refined understanding for the natural human being, and the concepts which are presupposed by a refined understanding in certain estates are no longer suited for those who are closer to the simplicity of nature, at least in terms of their insights, and those concepts usually make fools out of them when they take them over. Abbot *Terrasson* differentiates somewhere the ones of a disturbed mind into those who infer correctly from false representations and those who infer wrongly from correct representations.<sup>18</sup> This division seems to be [2:270] in agreement with the propositions advanced earlier. In those of the first type, the fantastists or deranged persons, it is not the understanding that properly suffers but only the faculty that awakens the concepts in the soul of which the power of judgment afterward makes use by comparing them. These sick people can be well opposed by judgments of reason, if not to put an end to their ill, at least still to ease it. However, since in those of the second kind, the demented and insane persons, the understanding itself is attacked, it is not only foolish to reason with them (because they would not be demented if they could grasp these rational arguments),

<sup>17</sup> *gekünstelte Üppigkeit*. Elsewhere in this volume, *Üppigkeit* is generally translated as “opulence.”

<sup>18</sup> Jean Terrasson (1670–1750), French classicist and philosopher, and member of the Académie Française.

but it is also extremely detrimental. For one thus gives their reversed head only new material for concocting absurdities; contradiction does not better them, rather it excites them, and it is entirely necessary in dealing with them to assume an indifferent and kind demeanor, as though one did not notice at all that their understanding was lacking something.

I have designated the frailties of the power of cognition *maladies of the head*, just as one calls the corruption of the will a *malady of the heart*. I have also only paid attention to their appearances in the mind without wanting to scout out their roots, which may well lie in the body and indeed may have their main seat more in the intestines than in the brain, as the popular weekly journal that is generally well known under the name of *The Physician*, plausibly sets forth in its 150<sup>th</sup>, 151<sup>st</sup>, and 152<sup>nd</sup> issues.<sup>19</sup> I can not even in any way convince myself that the disturbance of the mind originates from pride, love, too much reflection, and who knows what misuse of the powers of the soul, as is generally believed. This judgment, which makes of his misfortune a reason for scornful reproaches to the diseased person, is very unkind and is occasioned by a common mistake according to which one tends to confuse cause and effect. When one pays attention only a little to the examples, one sees that first the body suffers, that in the beginning, when the germ of the malady develops unnoticed, an ambiguous reversedness is felt which does not yet give suspicion of a disturbance of the mind, and which expresses itself in strange amorous [2:271] whims or an inflated demeanor or in vain melancholic brooding. With time the malady breaks out and gives occasion to locate its ground in the immediately preceding state of the mind. But one should rather say that the human being became arrogant because he was already disturbed to some degree, than that he was disturbed because he was so arrogant. These sad ills still permit hope of a fortunate recovery, if only they are not hereditary, and it is the physician whose assistance one chiefly has to seek in this. Yet, for honor's sake, I would rather not exclude the philosopher, who could prescribe the diet of the mind – but on the condition that, as

<sup>19</sup> See *Der Arzt. Eine medicinische Wochenschrift*, Part vi, Hamburg, 1761. The journal was authored and edited by Johann August Unzer of Altona near Hamburg. The contributions to which Kant refers are: "Vom Zusammenhang des Verstandes mit der Verdauung" (Of the connection of the understanding with digestion) (in issue 150); "Beweis, dass alle Arten des Unsinnns durch die Verbesserung der Verdauung curirt werden müssen" (Proof that all kinds of mental deficiency must be cured by the improvement of the digestion) (in issue 151); "Derselbe Beweis insbesondere von einigen hitzigen Deliris" (The same proof in particular of some feverish deliria) (in issue 152).

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also for most of his other occupations, he requires no payment for this one. In recognition, the physician would also not refuse his assistance to the philosopher, if the latter attempted now and then the great, but always futile cure of foolishness. He would, e.g., in the case of the frenzy of a *learned crier* consider whether cathartic means taken in strengthened dosage should not be successful against it. If, according to the observations of *Swift*,<sup>20</sup> a bad poem is merely a purification of the brain through which many detrimental moistures are withdrawn for the relief of the sick poet, why should not a miserable brooding piece of writing be the same as well? In this case, however, it would be advisable to assign nature another path to purification so that he would be thoroughly and quietly purged of the ill without disturbing the common wealth through this.

<sup>20</sup> Jonathan Swift (1667–1745), whose satirical poetics *Peri bathou or Anti-Sublime*, containing the idea referred to by Kant, had been published in a German translation in 1733.

