

The Fourteenth Book

Of Operation and Sense

1. Tat: Thou hast well explained these things, Father: Teach me furthermore these things; for thou sayest, that Science and Art were the Operations of the rational, but now thou sayest that Beasts are unreasonable, and for want of reason, both are and are called Brutes; so that by this Reason, it must needs follow that unreasonable Creatures partake not of Science, or Art, because they come short of Reason.

2. Hermes: It must needs be so, Son.

3. Tat: Why then, O Father, do we see some unreasonable living Creatures use both Science and Art? As the Pismires treasure up for themselves food against the Winter, and Fowls of the Air likewise make them Nests, and four-footed Beasts know their own Dens.

4. These things they do, O Son, not by Science or Art, but by Nature; for Science or Art are things that are taught, but none of these brute Beasts are taught any of these things.

5. But these things being Natural unto them, are wrought by Nature, whereas Art and Science do not happen unto all, but unto some.

6. As men are Musicians, but not all; neither are all Archers or Huntsmen, or the rest, but some of them have learned something by the working of Science or Art.

7. After the same manner also, if some Pismires did so, and some not, thou mightest well say, they gather their food according to Science and Art.

8. But seeing they are all led by Nature, to the same thing, even against their wills, it is manifest they do not do it by Science or Art.

9. For Operations, O Tat, being unbodily, are in Bodies, and work by Bodies.

10. Wherefore, O Tat, in as much as they are unbodily, thou must needs say they are immortal.

11. But in as much as they cannot act without Bodies, I say, they are always in a Body.

12. For those things that are to any thing, or for the cause of any thing made subject to Providence or Necessity, cannot possibly remain idle of their own proper Operation.

13. For that which is, shall ever be; for both the Body, and the Life of it, is the same.

14. And by this reason, it follows, that the Bodies also are always, because I affirm: That this corporiety is always by the Act and Operation, or for them.

15. For although earthly bodies be subject to dissolution; yet these bodies must be the Places, and the Organs, and Instruments of Acts or Operations.

16. But Acts or Operations are immortal, and that which is immortal, is always in Act, and therefore also Corporification if it be always.

17. Acts or Operations do follow the Soul, yet come not suddenly or promiscuously, but some of them come together with being made man, being about brutish or unreasonable things.

18. But the purer Operations do insensibly in the change of time, work with the oblique part of the Soul.

19. And these Operations depend upon Bodies, and truly they that are Corporifying come from the Divine Bodies into Mortal ones.

20. But every one of them acteth both about the Body and the Soul, and are present with the Soul, even without the Body.

21. And they are always Acts or Operations, but the Soul is not always in a Mortal Body, for it can be without a Body, but Acts or Operations cannot be without Bodies.

22. This is a sacred speech, Son, the Body cannot Consist without a Soul.

23. Tat: How meanest thou that, Father?

24. Hermes: Understand it thus, O Tat, When the Soul is separated from the Body, there remaineth that same Body.

25. And this same Body according to the time of its abode, is actuated or operated in that it is dissolved and becomes invisible.

26. And these things the Body cannot suffer without act or operation, and consequently there remaineth with the Body the same act or operation.

27. This then is the difference between an Immortal Body, and a Mortal one, that the immortal one consists of one Matter, and so doth not the mortal one; and the immortal one doth, but this suffereth.

28. And everything that acteth or operateth is stronger, and ruleth; but that which is actuated or operated, is ruled.

29. And that which ruleth, directeth and governeth as free, but the other is ruled, a servant.

30. Acts or Operations do not only actuate or operate living or breathing or ensouled Bodies, but also breathless Bodies, or without Souls, Wood, and Stones, and such like, increasing and hearing fruit, ripening, corrupting, rotting, putrifying and breaking, or working such like things, and whatsoever inanimate Bodies can suffer.

31. Act or Operation, O Son, is called, whatsoever is, or is made or done, and there are always many things made, or rather all things.

32. For the World is never widowed or forsaken of any of those things that are, but being always carried or moved in itself, it is in labour to

bring forth the things that are, which shall never be left by it to corruption.

33. Let therefore every act or operation be understood to be always immortal, in what manner of Body soever it be.

34. But some Acts or Operations be of Divine, some of corruptible Bodies, some universal, some peculiar, and some of the generals, and some of the parts of every thing.

35. Divine Acts or Operations therefore there be, and such as work or operate upon their proper Bodies, and these also are perfect, and being upon or in perfect Bodies.

36. Particular are they which work by any of the living Creatures.

37. Proper, be they that work upon any of the things that are.

38. By this Discourse, therefore, O Son, it is gathered that all things are full of Acts or Operations.

39. For if necessarily they be in every Body, and that there be many Bodies in the World, I may very well affirm, that there be many other Acts or Operations.

40. For many times in one Body, there is one, and a second, and a third, besides these universal ones that follow.

41. And universal Operations, I call them that are indeed bodily, and are done by the Senses and Motions.

42. For without these it is impossible that the Body should consist.

43. But other Operations are proper to the Souls of Men, by Arts, Sciences, Studies, and Actions.

44. The Senses also follow these Operations, or rather are the effects or perfections of them.

45. Understand therefore, O Son, the difference of Operations, it is sent from above.

46. But sense being in the Body, and having its essence from it, when it receiveth Act or Operation, manifesteth it, making it as it were corporeal.

47. Therefore, I say, that the Senses are both corporeal and mortal, having so much existence as the Body, for they are born with the Body, and die with it.

48. But mortal things themselves have not Sense, as not consisting of such an Essence.

49. For Sense can be no other than a corporeal apprehension, either of evil or good that comes to the Body.

50. But to Eternal Bodies there is nothing comes, nothing departs; therefore there is no sense in them.

51. Tat: Doth the Sense therefore perceive or apprehend in every Body.

52. Hermes: In every Body, O Son.

53. Tat. And do the Acts or Operations work in all things?

54. Hermes: Even in things inanimate, O Son, but there are differences of Senses.

55. For the Senses of things rational, are with Reason; of things unreasonable, Corporeal only, but the Senses of things inanimate are passive only, according to Augmentation and Diminution.

56. But Passion and Sense depend both upon one head, or height, and are gathered together into the same, by Acts or Operations.

57. But in living wights there be two other Operations that follow the Senses and Passions, to wit, Grief and Pleasure.

58. And without these, it is impossible that a living wight, especially a reasonable one, should perceive or apprehend.

59. And therefore, I say, that these are the Ideas of Passions that bear rule, especially in reasonable living wights.

60. The Operations work indeed, but the Senses do declare and manifest the Operations, and they being bodily, are moved by the brutish parts of the Soul therefore I say, they are both maleficial or doers of evil.

61. For that which affords the Sense to rejoice with Pleasure is straightway the cause of many evils happening to him that suffers it.

62. But Sorrows gives stronger torments and Anguish, therefore doubtless are they both maleficial.

63. The same may be said of the Sense of the Soul.

64. Tat: Is not the Soul incorporeal, and the Sense a Body, Father? Or is it rather in the Body.

65. Hermes: If we put it in a Body, O Son, we shall make it like the Soul or the Operations, for these being unbodily, we say are in Bodies.

66. But Sense is neither Operation, nor Soul, nor anything else that belongs to the Body, but as we have said, and therefore it is not incorporeal.

67. And if it be not incorporeal it must needs be a Body; for we always say, that of things that are, some are Bodies and some incorporeal.