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# David Hume's Mitigated Skepticism

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## Abstract

The main objective of this paper is to explain Hume's skepticism as moderate skepticism. In section one, an explanation of Hume's skepticism about the reality of the external world has been carried out in order to distinguish Humean skepticism from Cartesian. A discussion on Hume's denial of the distinction between primary and secondary qualities and his theory of causation takes place in section two. Hume's denial of the distinction between primary and secondary qualities supports his skepticism, at least to the extent that the said denial refutes a metaphysical realism of Lokean kind. The discussion on Hume's theory of causation is meant to explain that Hume's denial of the necessary relation between cause and effect does not entail that he refutes the propositions with certainty, although he refutes the certainty of empirical propositions. In Section III, I have tried to show how Hume's skepticism on the Self as a substance (Material or Mental) and that on the Necessity of Self Identity is carried out moderately through the notion of memory and resemblance, although he claims that self is a 'bundle or collection of different perceptions'. In Section IV, I have tried to underline that Humean skepticism is not as radical as Pyrrhonism.

**Keywords:** Skepticism, Doubt, Probability, Knowledge, Certainty

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## 1. Introduction

David Hume's skepticism appears to differ from both Descartes and Pyrrho. He carries a distinct philosophical identity. Descartes used his Skepticism, not for its own sake but for transcending it. Cartesian Skepticism gave birth to certainty. For Descartes, Skepticism is not a doctrine but only a method. So he was against Pyrrho, who was clearly not certain about any kind of beliefs. For Pyrrho, both pro and contrary arguments are equally strong and balanced, leading him to detach himself from all judgments. So he suggested suspending judgements. For Pyrrho, suspension of judgements leads to freedom from confusion. Of course, it does not lead to any certainty.

Hume was quite different. At places, it appears that Hume was not a universal doubter like Pyrrho, not even like Descartes. One would feel that Hume was not skeptical about knowledge like Pyrrho. He was skeptical only about some areas of knowledge. He rejected some knowledge claims without rejecting all of them. Hume's skepticism is mitigated skepticism. Unlike Descartes, Hume did not doubt the certainty of mathematical propositions at any stage of his investigations. Secondly, Hume could never have acceded certainty to empirical propositions even at the end of his investigations, although such propositions were accepted on the ground of probability.

Hume exhibits his skeptical doubts concerning understanding in his Enquiries, distinguishing between 'the relation of ideas' and 'the matters of fact'. Geometry and arithmetic come under the relations of ideas. Judgements in these areas do not become true or false because of reality. We have already seen in Descartes that his dream argument fails to introduce doubts about their truth. Their truth, according to Hume, depends on the relations of ideas. So Hume is quite unlike Pyrrho and Descartes. For Pyrrho, all judgements have equal value because all of them can be opposed. But Descartes succeeded even in doubting geometry and arithmetic with the help of his demon argument. But for Hume, these judgements are beyond all doubts. The Cartesian demon did not disturb him. These judgements are through and through conceptual. As Hume remarks, "propositions of this kind are

discoverable by the mere operation of thought, without dependence on what is anywhere existent in the universe. Though there never was a circle or triangle in nature, the truths demonstrated by Euclid would forever retain their certainty and evidence."*

In order to understand Hume's position, let us consider Part 4 of Book 1 of The Treatise of Human Nature. In this part, Section Two is devoted to Skepticism with regard to the senses. Hume is led to reflect: "We may well ask what causes induce us to believe in the existence of body? But 'tis in vain to ask, whether there be a body or not? That is a point which we must take for granted in all our reasoning's."† Hume makes a fine distinction between the questions, whether there exists an external world, and the question, how have we come to believe in the existence of such a world? Hume has no doubt that we happen to believe in the external world. What interests him so much is not whether there is any external world, but the question that induces him to believe in the external world. The concept of the external world that an ordinary man accepts is quite naive. It is believed that the objects continue to exist when they are not perceived, and the percipients themselves are part of this world and exist along with the objects they perceive. Percipients and their perceptions may be destroyed without the objects being destroyed. In short, the objects do not depend on us for their existence. Hume makes an attempt to demolish this picture of the external world. In Hume's own words, the issue that interests him is: "Why we attribute a CONTINU'D existence to objects, even when they are not present to the senses; and why we suppose them to have an existence DISTINCT from the mind and perception."‡ There are three possibilities. It is possible that our senses have provided us with the opinion of a continued and distinct existence of objects. If not the sense, then the reason might have been the source. If neither reason nor senses are the sources, then the source may be imagination.

According to Hume, the mind's limit is perception: It is acquainted only with its perception. So the existence of an object for Hume meant the same as the existence of perception. But perceptions are not continuous. Their existence is always short-lived. There are interruptions in our perception. I am looking in a given direction,

and the perception of the church tower occurs. I turn my head in another direction, and as a result, I see the chimney of a factory. So the perception of the church is interrupted, another perception of a factory's chimney occurs. Like this, one after the other, newer and newer perceptions continue. So our perception occurs in a discontinuous fashion. There is no such thing as the continuity of one and the same perception. As Hume remarks, "Everything, which appears to the mind, is nothing but a perception, and is interrupted, and dependent on the mind."§ To accept the existence of an external world is to accept a double existence, the existence of something as perception and its existence beyond perception. Hume rejects such a double existence. According to Hume, "there is only a single existence… which I shall call indifferently *object* or *perception*, according as it best suits my purpose."** So Hume's strategy is clear. He wishes to show that the continuous and independent existence of an object simply means the existence of unperceived perceptions. But this is certainly absurd.

To understand Hume's strategy, we must be careful about the distinction between the qualitative identity and numerical identity. Sometimes numerically, the same object may present two qualitatively different appearances. A person acting as a hero on the stage is the same person as the husband of a woman. The appearance as a hero is qualitatively different from the appearance as a husband. This is different from the case of tomato and an apple, presenting qualitatively the same appearance. In the former case, the hero is numerically identical to the husband, though his appearances are qualitatively different. In the latter case, the appearances are qualitatively the same but have numerically different objects. In his rejection of the external world, Hume is trying to show that the qualitative identity of an object with another object is confused with its numerical identity.

Perceptions occur in a sequence, one after the other. As soon as the interruption in perception occurs, there is also an interruption in its existence. In a given series of perceptions, some may be qualitatively different and others qualitatively alike, but no perception is numerically the same as the other perception. This implies that no two different perceptions are numerically the same perception. Consider Hume's remark,

> "The very image, which is present to the senses, is with us the real body; and 'tis to these interrupted images we ascribe a perfect identity… The smooth passage of the imagination along the ideas of the resembling perceptions makes us ascribe to them a perfect identity. The interrupted manner of their appearance makes us consider them as so many resembling, but still, distinct beings, which appear after certain intervals. The perplexity arising from this contradiction produces a propension to unite these broken appearances by the fiction of a continued existence."††

What Hume means is that different images or perceptions occurring at different times have their distinct existences. But some images or perceptions are qualitatively the same. Our faculty of imagination provides numerical identity to resembling perceptions. For numerical identity, Hume uses the expression 'perfect identity'. This means if the perceptions had been deprived of resemblance or qualitative identity, they would also be deprived of the perfect identity (Hume's expression) or numerical identity. So it is the faculty of imagination in us that is responsible for introducing continuous and independent existence. But perceptions can never be either continuous or independent of our mind. The conclusion is clear that the continued and independent existence of objects is the fiction of our mind, and this fiction has been generated by the imagination. If all perceptions had been qualitatively different from each other, then the fiction of the continued and independent existence of objects would have never arisen. So Hume ultimately blames not senses or reason but the imagination for letting us believe in the existence of external reality. But this belief is obviously false.

Hume's analysis of primary and secondary qualities also leads to the denial of the external world. Berkeley had already established before Hume that the secondary qualities such as colours and sounds etc., are mere perceptions, and so also are the primary qualities, which allow the occurrence of the secondary qualities. Locke was wrong in making the distinction between the two. Hume accepts Berkeley's conclusions. If colours, sounds, motion, extension etc., are only our perceptions, then there remains nothing in the world which is continuous and independent of existence.

As he writes, "If colours, sounds, tastes, and smells be merely perceptions, nothing we can conceive is possest of a real, continued and independent existence; not even motion, extension and solidity, which are the primary qualities chiefly insisted on."‡‡ Primary qualities are nothing but those that make the operation of secondary qualities possible. Obviously, there is no charm in accepting the hypothesis of an external world if that world is devoid of colour, sound, taste, motion, extension, etc. It is said that the world of scientists is devoid of secondary qualities, but even such a world is not devoid of motion. Whatever status is given to *occupiers* of such a world, these *occupiers* are in constant motion.

Concerning Hume's notion of causality, it would be wrong to say that he denied the relation of causality. He was concerned only with the analysis of this relation. Of course, he denied that causal relation is a logical relation. So also, he denied the explanation of cause in terms of force, energy, etc. Consider the following remark of Hume, "The idea of cause and effect is derived from experience, which presenting us with certain objects constantly conjoined with each other, produces such a habit of surveying them in that relation, that we cannot without a sensible violence survey them in any other."§§ Hume means that when two objects occur, one after the other, and continue reoccurring in the same fashion, again and again, we are led to say that one of them is the cause and the other is the effect. That which occurs earlier is the cause, and that which occurs later is the effect. We develop a habit to see them like that. The habit to consider two objects causally connected depends on the frequency of instances. As Hume remarks, "As the habit, which produces the association, arises from the frequent conjunction of objects, it must arrive at its perfection by degrees, and must acquire new force from each instance, that falls under our observation."*** If the conjunction of objects does not occur frequently, this conjunction would be a matter of chance. One would say it was only a chance that the objects were found together. The objects that have causal relation are contiguous in space and time, and one that proceeds is the cause and the other that proceeds are the effect. As Hume says, referring to them, "that they are contiguous in time and place, and that the object we call cause precedes the other we call effect."††† So the relation of contiguity and that of precedence are necessary to the relation of causation. Contiguity is essential for

the relation of causation otherwise conjoining will be impossible. It is again a definitional matter that a cause does not occur after the effect that the cause occurs before the effect.

With one stroke, Hume rejects the explanation of causation in terms of *efficacy, agency, power, force, energy, necessity, connection, productive quality* etc. His argument is that all these terms "are nearly synonymous; and therefore 'tis an absurdity to employ any of them in defining the rest. By this observation we reject at once all the vulgar definitions, which philosophers have given of power and efficacy."‡‡‡ If there had been any such thing as causal power, it would have been possible for us to have its impressions on our mind. But, according to Hume, "we never have any impression that contains any power or efficacy. We never therefore have any idea of power."§§§

Consider now the necessary connection. It is said that cause and effect are necessarily connected. This differentiates causal relations from other kinds of relations. Without necessary connection, it is impossible to infer a given effect from a given cause. Hume has given a skeptical solution to this problem. According to Hume, the idea of necessity can arise only from some impression, but there is no impression of necessity. So, Hume concludes, "necessity is something that exists in mind, not in objects… Either we have no idea of necessity, or necessity is nothing but that determination of the thought to pass from causes to effects and from effects to causes, according to their experienced union."**** Hume was led to give two definitions of the relation between cause and effect, one of them *philosophical* and the other *natural*. The first definition reads, "An object precedent and contiguous to another, and where all the objects resembling the former are placed in like relations of precedency and contiguity to those objects, that resemble the latter."†††† And the second definition reads, "A CAUSE is an object precedent and contiguous to another, and so united with it that the idea of the one determines the mind to form the idea of the other, and the impression of the one to form a more lively idea of the other."‡‡‡‡ The first definition simply places the objects in the causal situation. In the second definition, the emphasis is on how the mind moves from one to the other. So the second definition stresses the mental operation.

Hume's views on induction have attracted the attention of the eminent philosophers of our age. According to him, induction cannot be justified. But this does not mean that we do not operate with inductive reasoning. Though not justified, it would have been impossible to live in this world without inductive reasoning. When we are thirsty, we take water and thirst is quenched. In the past, I have observed that water quenches thirst. The inductive generalization that water quenches thirst was obtained by observing several instances. But what is the guarantee that this generalization will hold good in the future? What is the guarantee that the future would resemble the past? Maybe tomorrow, when I take water, I die, so instead of quenching the thirst, water kills me. The same difficulties hold good with all the inductive generalizations like 'food satisfies hunger', 'arsenic is poisonous', 'fire burns', etc. Hume says, "that the supposition *that the future resembles the past*, is not founded on arguments of any kind, but is derived entirely from habit, by which we are determined to expect for the future the same train of objects, to which we have been accustomed."[§§§§] So the ground for accepting inductive generalization is not any kind of reasoning but the habit of our mind. One may argue that the future resembles the past simply because nature is uniform. It is not the case that one part of nature behaves one way and another part another way. Hume argues that "*instances, of which we have had no experience, resemble those, of which we have had experience. And that the course of nature continues always uniformly the same*."[*****] But how does one know that nature is uniform? For uniformity of nature, we take the help of induction: from time immemorial, water quenched thirst, food satisfied hunger, a fire burned etc. In the past, I made predictions about the future, and when the future became present, then those predictions were satisfied. An expectation is formed, what happened about these past futures will also happen about the future futures. Nature is obviously uniform. But all this shows that the uniformity of nature is grounded in induction. So induction is used to justify the uniformity of nature, and the uniformity of nature is used to justify induction. This is a vicious circle. If induction itself is required to justify the uniformity of nature, then uniformity of nature cannot be used to justify induction. Inductive beliefs are the result of our habits. They are not the result of any kind of argument. It is on the

ground of our past experiences that we expect things to happen in the future. But all future predictions are probable only and can never reach certainty because the negation of a future prediction does not involve a contradiction. The negation of such a prediction is possible. This simply means that there is no guarantee that future futures will resemble the past futures. Though there is no guarantee, I expect them to resemble so.

Prior to Hume, the views about the self and its identity that were in circulation were none but those of Descartes and Hobbes. Though an empiricist, Locke retained the Cartesian dualism of mind and body. Hobbes believed only in physical bodies, abolishing the mental substance. In opposition to Hobbes, Berkeley abolished the material substance and retained only the mental substance. So it is not only Descartes who talked about mental substance. Locke and Berkeley also did the same. Hume attacks the concept of mental substance, refusing to accept the soul or self as any kind of substance. It is said that a substance exists by itself. This definition hardly distinguishes substances from things that are not substances. Even perceptions become substances. As Hume remarks, "all our perceptions are different from each other, and from everything else in the universe, they are also distinct and separable, and may be considered as separately existent, and may exist separately, and have no need of anything else to support their existence. There are, therefore, substances."†††† It is clear that in Hume's philosophy, perceptions play a major role. They are the foundational truths of Hume's philosophy. Hume has given the existence of perceptions so much importance that their existence is sufficient to oust substances. As Hume remarks, "we have no perfect idea of anything but of a perception. A substance is entirely different from a perception. We have, therefore, no idea of a substance."‡‡‡‡ Hume has ruled out the possibility of considering the soul or self as a substance, mental or material, in which perceptions are supposed to exist.

Though one may not agree with Hume on his views concerning personal identity, his analysis of this notion is insightful. (For his analysis, see Section Six of Part Four of Book 1 of Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*.) Hume disagrees with his predecessors, Berkeley and Locke, for converting perceptions into dependent types of

entities. Thoughts are supposed to be thoughts of someone. Hume is unable to accept this view. He says, "All these (perceptions) are different, and distinguishable, and separable from each other, and maybe separately considered and may exist separately and have no need of anything to support their existence."§§§§§ This shows the possibility of there being perceptions without being perceptions of anyone.

It is said about the self that it resides inside. So, Hume searches for this self-looking into himself. To his great shock, he fails to catch the self. As he observes, "When I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception and never can observe anything but the perception."****** This thought experiment shows that Hume took for granted that the self is also a kind of object that can be detected through the senses. He took for granted that it is not very unlike a sound, a taste, a smell, etc. Hume hoped to have an encounter with the self. But the self is not the kind of object that could be seen, touched, smelled, tasted, etc. The self is supposed to be what makes seeing, tasting, hearing etc., possible. The self is a presupposition of their existence. This would be leading towards Kant.

What is the nature of *myself* and my fellow beings? Hume's response is very simple. He maintains that a man is "nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement."†††††† So different persons are the different bundles of perceptions. Even the numerical difference between persons depends on the numerical difference between the perceptions. There is no such thing as numerically the same perception, belonging to two different bundles of perceptions. Each perception belongs to only one bundle. Crudely speaking, this view means simply, I think my thoughts, and you think yours. The perceptions that occur in a bundle occur by accident. No principle unites them. Hume refuses to accept any principle that unites different perceptions. According to Hume, "The mind is a kind of theatre, where several perceptions successively make their appearance; pass, re-pass, glide away, and mingle in an infinite variety of

postures and situations."‡‡‡‡‡ The theatre example is simply to show that certain perceptions may resemble each other, but they are different. The mind has been presented as a passive receptor of perceptions.

Hume makes a distinction between identity and resemblance. He thinks that sometimes resemblance is confused with identity. By resemblance, Hume means a succession of related objects. He also thinks that sometimes numerical identity is also confused with identity arising out of resemblance. Hume's attempt is to reject any hidden principle of unity. Such a principle is not required. The soul is not something over and above its perceptions. As he says, "I cannot compare the soul more properly to anything than to a republic or commonwealth, in which the several members are united by the reciprocal ties of government and subordination."§§§§§§ 'Members' in this remark refers to human perceptions. A soul is a commonwealth of perceptions. These perceptions are of a reciprocal type. The commonwealth services through its members. There is no such thing as a hidden commonwealth over and above its members. Therefore, there is no such thing as a hidden soul over and above its perceptions. To talk about the soul is to talk about perceptions only.

Sometimes people introduce identity even in cases in which there is a resemblance. Hume cites two examples, that of a church and of a ship. Imagine that a given church is destroyed and the parish rebuilt the same church. In this case, neither the form nor the material is the same. Yet the inhabitants of the parish call it the same church. Similar is the case of a ship, which in due course became quite a new ship because of frequent reparation. Yet we call these two ships the same. Hume finds that both vegetables and animals are not very unlike the church and the ship. There occurs a total change in them. Yet we call them the same. Hume concludes, "The identity, which we ascribe to the mind of man, is only a fictitious one, and of a like-kind with that which we ascribe to vegetables and animal bodies."******* The identity is fictitious because they are cases of resemblance. Our decision that it is the same ship or the same church is only verbal. There could have been nothing wrong if we had said that neither the church nor the ship was the same. Hume concludes the discussion on this issue with the

penetrating remark, "that all the nice and subtle questions concerning personal identity can never possibly be decided, and are to be regarded rather as grammatical than as philosophical difficulties."†††††† So Hume is quite unlike all contemporary philosophers who reduced philosophical difficulties to grammatical difficulties. But for Hume, philosophical difficulties are serious and quite unlike grammatical difficulties. For him, the issues of personal identity are riddled with grammatical difficulties. The solution to these difficulties does not make any changes in the objects. Hume has undoubtedly not made only a grammatical move when he introduced memory in connection with the discussion of the mind. Perceptions not only occur; some of them also recur. This recurrence is possible because of memory. When a perception is remembered, then remembered perceptions resemble the original perception. So memory binds the two perceptions. Memory occurs as a relation between perceptions. Hume thinks that "the memory not only discovers the identity, but also contributes to its production, by producing the relation of resemblance among the perceptions. The case is the same whether we consider ourselves or others."‡‡‡‡‡‡ My memory unites the perceptions that occur to me, and your memory unites the perceptions which occur to you. So memory becomes the source of personal identity. Hume's reference to memory in the case of human beings totally distinguishes human identity from the identity of the ships and the churches. Neither the ships of any kind nor the churches of any kind happen to possess memories. So also, vegetable and animal bodies are not supposed to possess memories. But memory simply cannot be a criterion of personal identity because memory presupposes personal identity. Unless I know myself, it is impossible to know my memories. Instead of clarifying the issue of personal identity, Hume has introduced difficulties for its explanation.

Lastly, consider Hume's skepticism. Though Hume denied on many occasions in his work that he was a complete Pyrrhonian, many philosophers of repute consider him as a committed Pyrrhonian. In *Hume's Philosophy of Human Nature*, John Laird remarked that "Hume remained a complete Pyrrhonian regarding all ultimate principles."§§§§§§§ Popkin, too, considers Hume a

complete Pyrrhonian. Hume has quoted a poem equating Hume with Pyrrho in one of his letters. The poem reads:

> "The wise in every age conclude,
>
> What Pyrrho taught and Hume renewed,
>
> That dogmatists are fools"********

The fact that Hume valued this poem so much that he quoted it in one of his letters shows that Hume had high regard for Pyrrhonian thought and did not mind himself being considered a follower of Pyrrho's thought. Then what led Hume to write against Pyrrho? The sorts of things he wrote against Pyrrho exhibit his misunderstanding of Pyrrho. Once these misunderstandings are removed, Hume is closer to the Pyrrhonian thought than to any other philosophical thought.

Consider some of the arguments Hume made against Pyrrhonism. According to Hume, "The great subverter of *Pyrrhonism* or the excessive principles of Skepticism is action and employment, and the occupations of common life."†††††††† This remark against Pyrrhonism clearly shows that Pyrrhonism involves the suspension of belief and judgements and the suspension of action. Therefore, once we involve ourselves in action, needless to say, no life is possible without this involvement; we have to give up the suspension of action. Perhaps Pyrrho's lifestyle has given this impression. However, we should not forget that he lived for 90 years and those years were full of action. Suspension of judgements and beliefs certainly does not mean suspension of action. Hume even praised Copernicus, Ptolemy, Stoics and Epicureans for giving us something. But, Pyrrhonians had hardly any influence on his mind. As he writes,

> "a Pyrrhonian cannot expect that his philosophy will have any constant influence on the mind: or if it had, that its influence would be beneficial to society. On the contrary, he must acknowledge, if he will acknowledge anything, that all human life must perish, were his principles universally and steadily to prevail. All discourse, all action would immediately cease; and men remain in a total lethargy, till

> the necessities of the nature, unsatisfied, put an end to their miserable existence."‡‡‡‡‡‡‡

Unfortunately, nature could not end the existence of Pyrrho, the father of skepticism. He stops real discourses but not action. He introduced the doctrine of ataraxia for promoting human life rather than killing life. Hume certainly has a wrong picture of Pyrrho's thought. Consider a further remark against Pyrrhonism. He says,

> "Though a Pyrrhonian may throw himself or others in a momentary amazement and confusion by profound reasoning's; the first and most trivial event in life will put to flight all his doubts and scruples.... When he awakes from his dream, he will be the first to join in the laugh against himself, and to confess, that all his objections are mere amusement."§§§§§§§§

Hume accepts that the Pyrrhonian reason was profound. However, in this context, it seems that he has a picture of the Cartesian doubter, confusing him to be a Pyrrhonian doubter. Descartes, as we have already seen in the First Meditation, was an extremely serious doubter, but soon after reaching sixth Meditation, he was the first to join in the laugh against himself. Rejection of Pyrrhonian skepticism, which for Hume meant excessive skepticism, led him to adopt the position of moderate skepticism; he calls it mitigated skepticism or academic philosophy. This is like adopting Aristotle's golden mean. He rejects excessive skepticism on the one hand and dogmatism on the other. Referring to his own variety of skepticism he writes, "There is, indeed, a more *mitigated* skepticism or *academically* philosophy, which may be both durable and useful, and which may, in part, be the result of this Pyrrhonism, or *excessive* skepticism, When its undistinguished doubts are, in some measure, corrected by common sense and reflection."********* But the attitude of skepticism that Hume adopted both in his *Treatise* and *Enquiries* is not the result of commonsense or from the following nature; it is the result of following Pyrrho. As Christopher Hookway says, "Hume's arguments often resemble the modes of Agrippa, and his insistence that judgement results from custom and imagination rather than from reason or understanding amounts to an admission that there is no defensible criterion of truth."††††††††† In his work, Sextus has discussed all five

modes of Agrippa. According to Christopher Hookway, even Hume's refusal to have any rational justification for induction employs "arguments of a familiar Agrippan form."‡‡‡‡‡‡‡‡ Hume certainly fails to discover any criterion for determining which of the conflicting judgements one should accept. His position is completely like Pyrrho. When he questions himself, "Can I be sure, that in leaving all established opinions I am following truth; and by what criterion shall I distinguish her, even if fortune should at last guide me on her foot-steps?"§§§§§§§§§ This is the Pyrrhonian bewilderment. Any criterion that I choose is doubted, be it mine or someone else's.

As Popkin rightly points out, "There are two important points which Hume never recognized as part of the Pyrrhonian thesis, and therefore attacked the Pyrrhonians for omitting, first that we cannot remain wholly inactive, and second, that sensation and thought are natural occurrences and are to be accepted as such."********** Sextus would agree with Hume that we couldn't remain wholly inactive. So also he would agree with Hume that sensation and thought are natural occurrences. We are forced to have them. So Sextus, too, becomes a mitigated skeptic. Sextus was a Hume in ancient times, as Hume was a Sextus of the modern age.

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## End Notes

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§ Ibid., p. 193.

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†† Ibid., p. 205.

‡‡ Ibid., p. 228.

§§ Ibid., p. 125.

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††† Ibid., p. 155.

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†††† Ibid., p. 170.

‡‡‡‡ Ibid., p. 170.

§§§§ Ibid., p. 134.

***** Ibid., p. 89.

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§§§§§§§§ Ibid., p. 160.

********* Ibid., p. 161.

††††††††† Christopher Hookway, Skepticism, p. 94.

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