

## On Hume's Idea of Causation

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**Abstract:** The intention of this paper is to explore and explain David Hume's notion of causation. I will initially discuss Hume's distinction of the two contents of the mind obtained from perception namely, ideas and impression. After which, I will distinguish the three associations of idea. Moreover, I will likewise discuss on how Hume has decisively categorized all inquiries of human reason as logical or empirical in nature. The former is denoted by Hume as Relations of Ideas and the latter as Matters of Fact. Furthermore, I will discuss the two logical courses as to how Hume philosophizes on a given proposition. This would be refer to contemporary thinkers as "The Humean Method." Finally, from Hume's viewpoint, I will discuss how he is able to delve on the concerns of causation without refuting his own and others' empirical standpoints.

**Keywords:** Causation, Matters of Fact, Relations of Ideas.

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### I. Introduction

The word empiricism originated from the ancient Greek word *empeiria* meaning, "experience"<sup>1</sup>. It is a philosophical system that claims all ideas are solely dependent from our experiences of the world. Experience is the central figure of the ultimate empiricist postulate that claims "there can be no concept except where there is experience"<sup>2</sup> This notion is indeed acceptable and justifiable to sensible ideas but how about the question regarding causation? What is the particular impression or experience we could infer to in order for us to justify one event as the cause or effect? What are the qualifications and nature of causation? These are the intricate and interesting questions, which in the 'Humean' way, I will philosophically venture to answer.

### II. On Ideas and Impressions

The contents of the mind are what Hume explicitly specifies as *perceptions*. Both experience

and one's recollection of his memory obtained from these experiences hold an incontestable distinction between the degrees of their *vivacity* and *force*.<sup>3</sup> According to Hume, the liveliness and strength of one's sensory experience of a certain event can never arrive by faithfully emulating all angles of this sensory experience by one's mere operation of the mind, that is, to recall. Such memories, no matter how accurate and truthful they are, may still unintentionally omit a flicker of its liveliness and strength. Supposing I was given the privilege of visiting the Louvre Museum in Paris and examine the exquisiteness exhibited through Leonardo da Vinci's world-famous painting, La Joconde or of listening to a concert of the English classical crossover soprano, Sarah Brightman, Hume reasoned that no matter how much we compound our critical examination on the sublimity of the colors, strokes, and shades in the painting or audibly trace back the exquisiteness in posture, vocal mechanism,

breathing, focus, and mental concept<sup>4</sup> performed by the singer, we can *never* grasp the exact vivacity and force of our actual experience with the painting and music. Nothing can faithfully emulate the exact liveliness and strength of a certain event including the thoughts and memories of the great minds. The vivacity and force of one's sensory experience are more intense than the vivacity and force of one's memory: "The most lively thought is still inferior to the dullest sensation."<sup>5</sup>

Evidently, David Hume categorized these two contents of the mind in accordance with their degrees of vivacity and force. He termed the more vivacious and forceful content as *Impressions*, whereas the less as *Thoughts* or *Ideas*.<sup>6</sup> Impressions, according to Hume, are our entire lively perceptions. These perceptions do not solely comprise one's external experience but also encompass the internal ones.<sup>7</sup> External experience constitutes one's sensory experience, such as the *burning sensation* felt upon being licked by the flame of a lighted candle, but the feeling of *pain* derived from the burning sensation is what Hume termed as *internal experience* or words, those feelings, emotions, and will.<sup>8</sup>

Thoughts and Ideas, on the other hand, fall back on the mental facsimile of our faint vivacious and forceful impressions. Hume likewise identified ideas as faint mental copies, dull images, or obscure representations of the vivid impressions. However, these denotations are not merely literally expressed as faint images by virtue of obscureness; rather, these ideas are denoted as faint images by virtue of being *causally inferred* from impressions.<sup>9</sup> According to Scruton, ideas also constitute the construction of meanings of the ideas.<sup>10</sup> The causal relationship between impressions and ideas infers the construction of their meanings: "The meaning of everything which can be said

consists in its sensory or empirical content."<sup>11</sup> For instance, my visual impression of a particular kind of color *caused* me to arrive at the idea of blue. From my own impression, I could denote the meaning of the idea of blue by defining into words my visual impression of blue, which is "the portion of the color spectrum lying between green and violet"<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the meaning of the idea of color blue is the hue which lies between the colors green and violet. Hence, ideas do not merely demonstrate plainly faint photographs of impressions but also their causally derived meanings from impressions.

Moreover, there are two kinds of ideas: *simple* and *complex*. Simple ideas are merely the basic and individuating copies of our simple impressions received by our passive minds. Complex ideas, conversely, are the association of these simple ideas. The empiricists, namely Locke and Hume, asserted that complex ideas are established upon simple ideas and simple ideas are induced from simple impressions. For instance, if we were to think of a golden apple, we will only be acquainted by this idea by independently knowing what initially the ideas of *gold* and *apple* were. If we were not formerly introduced to the ideas of *gold* and *apple* experientially, then, it is expected of us to fail to comprehend the idea of a golden apple. Similarly, with regard to the idea of heroic cavalry, we understand this idea simply because we are introduced, by means of internal experience (or feelings), to the idea of heroism and *compound* it with the idea of a cavalry. Hence, "no impressions, no ideas"<sup>13</sup>

Hume states that the human intellect may appear to own an unrestrained freedom of thought, but our thoughts, if they were to be examined critically, are capsulated or enclosed by certain parameters of limitations. The limitations Hume is referring to are the powers

of the human intellect to ‘compound, transform, augment, or diminish’ ideas derived from our impressions.<sup>14</sup> Hence, we could not blame the human intellect to form a series of compounding, transforming, augmenting, and diminishing including that of the most scrutinized idea i.e., the idea of God. The idea of God as the omnipotent, omnibenevolent, and omniscient being would take its root from our external and internal impressions. Hume believed that this idea is derived from the faculty of the intellect to absolutely ‘augment’ the qualities of potency, benevolence, and wisdom which are derived from his experience. In a similar vein is the idea of God as a Heavenly Father. Hume would propose that the idea of God as a heavenly father can be linked to the experience we had with our earthly father. Hence, “the idea of a father led to the idea of a heavenly father.”<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, Hume takes into consideration the human organ defects that may lead to a ‘little susceptibility’ with regard to the association of one’s ideas. Take, for instance, the nature of a blind man. We can strongly presume the blind man’s incompetency in identifying the different colors. We cannot simply force a blind mind to appreciate the beauty of the color of the sunflower by merely describing that the color yellow is “the portion of the spectrum lying between [the colors] green and orange”<sup>16</sup> or by comparison on whose hue resembles that of a ripe pear. The defect of his sense of sight limits the range of his supposedly copious and extensive ideas. Although we can assume the availability of his other sensory organs, such as hearing, smell, taste and touch, we cannot assume the adequacy of his other sense organs in transporting the sufficient external experience for the comprehension of the idea of yellow. One organ is responsible for the construction one

specific type of idea. No other sense organ could substitute for the impression of another organ, such that pitch, loudness, tempo and tone can only be comprehended by the sense of hearing similar to that of colors which can only be accessed from the sense of sight. However, man’s undesired reality of an organ defect corresponds to a little accountability of his limited idea. Hume takes this into consideration because of the unwanted deficient nature of the blind man; he would account him with ‘little susceptibility’ of associating ideas from his defected organ which is sight. It is not by one’s desire that the blind man was barricaded with deficiency, hence, similarly, it is not by one’s desire that his ideas were restrained to some extent: “... by opening a new inlet for his sensations, you also open an inlet for the ideas”<sup>17</sup>; and in an inverse manner, by closing passages for impressions, you are closing passages for new ideas.

All ideas that the intellect possesses, whether simple or complex, only show how potently the mind reflects all information given through one’s external and internal experiences. All constituents of the human intellect are simply ‘copies’ of our impressions, hence, the empiricist maxim: “all ideas must be presented to man in the manner that it is available to his intellect”, and this manner is what we call impression, external and internal impressions, to be precise.

### III. On Associations of Ideas

Hume’s assertion that once ideas have been admitted in the mind, the mind naturally generates a series of interaction between *ideas* and *impressions*. These chains of interaction or association of ideas utterly speak of certain degrees of regularities. According to Hume, there is no way in which we can genuinely ascribe our ideas other than these three

principles of connections namely, *Resemblance*, *Contiguity* in time or place, and *Cause or Effect*.

The first association of ideas, *Resemblance*, simply demonstrates the method on how the intellect naturally connects the present and resembling idea to the original source. These ideas do not merely adhere to the idea that first appeared from impressions but also to the idea which 'represents' that fundamental impression.<sup>18</sup>

For instance, if one is to browse an old photo album and see in the process childhood pictures, Hume implies that the image we perceive naturally resembles and flows back to original idea of our childhood. Hence, resemblance in this aspect, simply demonstrates the natural association of your current idea to the original resemblance<sup>19</sup>.

However, in the case of representation, Owen propounded that it will crucially be introduced as an enigma to the empiricist maxim. He stated that the reason behind the 'question-begging' notion of the word *representation* is that this word illustrates not only the ideas which had entered the mind but also the ideas that will eventually enter the mind.<sup>20</sup> Hence, *representations* resemble the idea from the past and also that which Owen found to be contradicting the empiricist maxim, the future impressions.

The crucifix, a foremost Catholic symbol, is an image that was sculpted by persons who were actual witnesses to the crucifixion of Christ, but it also resembles and represents the fact that out of his selfless love, Christ died for us in the past. This representation may have passed the criterion of the empiricists' notion of representation which states that every idea that represents must primarily take its origin from either external or internal impression.

In the case, however, of an architect working on a project, he must initially make a *model* of the future building. Hence, the architect presents an idea that must resemble the future idea. He projects a model that represents something that has not pass through the sense. This is the enigma behind the word 'representation' that Owen talks of.

*Contiguity* in time or space, on the other hand, is the connection of ideas akin to neighboring qualities of another idea. On that account, when I think of the idea of a house, my mind naturally associates it with pre-existing ideas which is contiguous such as doors, windows, chimney, and the like. Hence, contiguity simply demonstrates the spatial and temporal connection between two ideas.

Moreover, *cause or effects* simply demonstrate how we associate our present ideas either from the past or the future ones. For instance, I have seen exactly with my two eyes the vehement removal of the illegal and untenable settlers in Tondo, Manila, hence it is naturally inclined in my situation to posit that the possible *cause* for such ineludible event is their illegal residency, or on the other hand, to naturally deliberate on the possible *effects* that spring from this event such as the detrimental impact in all aspects of their lives.

Hume strongly claims that no matter how much we colligate our distinct and innumerable thoughts, these three principles: resemblance, contiguity, and cause or effect, will only be the foundation for such association or chains of thoughts. However, out of the three associations of ideas, Hume found causes and effects to be problematic.

#### IV. On Relations of Ideas and Matters of Facts

Hume has decisively categorized all inquiries of human reason either as logical or empirical in nature.<sup>21</sup> The former is denoted by Hume as *Relations of Ideas* and the latter as *Matters of Fact*.

The Relations of Ideas are logical propositions which are either “intuitively or demonstratively certain”<sup>22</sup>. These propositions hold certainty without being causally inferred from any external factors simply because their truths are merely established by ‘virtue of the meaning of terms’<sup>23</sup>. This kind of proposition asserts its predicate as intrinsically found in the subject, such as the proposition “A triangle is a 3-sided figure”. This proposition is linguistically demonstrable and certain, simply because it does not entail any empirical observations for it to conclude a triangle is a 3-sided figure. However, by negating the predicate to the subject consequently follows a self-contradiction. To say, for example, that “a triangle is not a three-sided figure” simply exhibits falsity. Moreover, relations of ideas are determinable merely by one’s pure reason. Hume categorizes the demonstrative sciences as mathematics, geometry, algebra, and arithmetic under relations of ideas simply because it is unnecessary for us to examine the physical world in arriving at the proposition that 4 plus 6 is equal to the two-thirds of fifteen or the sum of all angles of a triangle is 180 degrees. No matter what the world turns out to be, 4 plus 6 will permanently be the two-thirds of fifteen and the sum of all angles in a triangle will still remain 180 degrees. These are necessary truths or truths which maintains truthfulness only by virtue of the ideas they express. According to Palmer, relations of ideas are simply *verbal truths* that do not authenticate new knowledge and evidences of the real world but only substantiate truthfulness purely within the

parameters of ideas.<sup>24</sup> Hence, relations of ideas are regarded as analytic and *a priori* in nature.<sup>25</sup>

On the other hand, Matters of Fact are propositions which do not essentially demonstrate *a priori* necessary truths, rather they are empirical propositions which establish truths by *experience*. Experience is the sole source of matters of fact.<sup>26</sup> It is only through experience or observation upon which we can establish certain knowledge about the reality. Moreover, matters of facts assert logical incongruity simply because it ‘summarizes’ everything that is acquired from impressions which happens to be either factual or not.<sup>27</sup> Will it rain tomorrow? Can we guarantee that all of the leaves of the tree will wither at fall? Hume asserts that matters of fact are knowledge on which we can never posit absolute certainty of. They are simply events which are happen at the present time. Their verification necessitates not only one’s mere operation of understanding but also authentication through the actual observation or experience of the external world. Negations of matters of facts can never signify any contradiction with each other because whatever is, is, and whatever is not, is not. Yes, it will rain tomorrow. Yes, all of the leaves of the tree will wither during fall. But if both questions entail an answer of no, then it is still a matter of fact because matters of fact can generate contrary effects. Its truthfulness does not lie within the absolute agreement of the predicate to the subject but rather on the justification of the proposition with experience. Hume states that matters of facts, which are based from observations, are the only enquiries of the human mind that can certainly pronounce and truthfully assert knowledge of the reality.<sup>28</sup> Hence, all matters of facts are synthetic and *a posteriori* in nature.

## V. On Humean Method

Hume's assertion concerning *categories of analysis* basically encompasses two logical courses as to how philosophizing should adhere to any given proposition. This method of reasoning is what contemporary thinkers would call "The Humean Method".<sup>29</sup> This method logically endeavors to answer two questions about the propositional claim. First, *Is it a relation of ideas?* Does the proposition bear any analytic truths, that is, does its denial produce a self-contradiction? According to Palmer, if the answer is YES, then, the proposition entails truthfulness but only in the realm of being 'philosophically trivial'.<sup>30</sup> On the other hand, if the answer is NO, then one must proceed to the second question: *Is it a matter of fact?* Is it a synthetic proposition that encompasses available sense data for its justification? Does its denial absolutely cause a self-contradicting proposition? If the answer is YES, it has passed the empirical standard. However, if the question is answerable by a mere NO, which is to say that, the proposition is neither analytic nor synthetic in nature, to quote Hume, "Commit it then to the flames, for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion."<sup>31</sup>

With that, David Hume definitively claimed three main categories of analysis. The propositional claims must be *nothing more* classified as an analytic, synthetic, or nonsense proposition.

To elucidate this further, let us deduce what kind of category of analysis the proposition "Gold is edible", by logically applying the proposed Humean Method, is. First, is it a Relation of Ideas? Is it analytic in nature? Does the predicate, *edible*, naturally inheres to the idea of *Gold*? Do we innately associate that the negation of the idea of 'edible' draws out a self-contradiction to the idea of *Gold*? No. Hence,

we must continue to inquire. Is it a matter of Fact? Is there any available impression as to how we can sensory trace back the idea that gold is indeed edible? Yes, through the sense of taste to be exact. Hence, the proposition 'Gold is edible' is certainly analysed as a synthetic one.

## VI. On Causation

During Hume's era, it has been the task of the intellectuals to philosophically endeavor on the metaphysical ideas such as God, world, and the self. Every philosopher can never pass upon the chance of intellectually wagering about these existing ideas. It is either they acknowledged or repudiated the established truth about such. However, David Hume, as an acclaimed empiricist, would empirically venture to look for the certitude of these metaphysical ideas through his own experiences than resort in complying with rationally established presuppositions of the other intellectuals. If Berkeley at that time had sublated the existence of a material substance, Hume, on the other hand, would repudiate not only what was utilized by the philosophers, but also of the scientists and the common people.<sup>32</sup> Conclusively, Hume scientifically endeavored to establish thorough answers brought about by the notion of which Hume is intellectually most renowned of, the notion of causation.

Concerning causal inferences, Hume delved into it by initially applying his "Humean Method" of philosophizing. Let us presuppose the equation wherein X causes Y, of which X signifies *smoking* while Y denotes *death*. Hence, the proposition to be examined here is *smoking causes death*. First, does the proposition contain any analytical truths? When one denies the idea of death to the idea of smoking, that is *smoking does not cause death*, will it undoubtedly produce a self-contradictory statement? And that when we thought of the idea of smoking, without any

experiential intervention, can we inherently pronounce that it will absolutely lead us to the idea of death? The answer would be a blunt “no.” Hence, does it further contain any accessible data whereby we can utterly say that causes are indeed empirically inferred? Indeed not. Then it can be concluded that causation is nothing but nonsense in account.

However, Hume would not immediately succumb to the nonsensical account of causation for he believed that matters of fact are the particular objects of human mind that can generate an authentic description and justification of reality. With that, Hume recognizes cognition concerning matters of facts to be solely founded on the *relation of cause and effects*.<sup>33</sup> To clearly explain this, an inference to what had just been previously discussed must be made. Hume had classified three associations of ideas. These associations speak of *resemblance*, *contiguity* in time and place, and *cause or effect*. Moreover, it has been the empiricist postulate that ideas are truthful the more related and connected they are to reality. In my understanding, *resemblance* and *contiguity* bear a relative notion of ideas that differs from one person to another. For instance, when I see a friend who according to my judgment bears a resemblance to or appears to be a duplicate of his father, to another person, this friend may instead be seen more of as a resemblance of his mother. Or that upon hearing the idea “being”, philosophy majors would contiguously associate it with metaphysical notions such as *esse*, to be, essence, corporeal being at the same spiritual ones, while on the other hand, science majors will merely associate it with corporeal beings such as human beings and organisms. *Resemblance* and *contiguity* may differ in the sentiments of the people, but *causes and effects*, will not depend on the disposition of the perceiver but rather on the available empirical

evidences it introduces to man. Another instance would be when an allegedly locked door was seen as open, it can be concluded that someone has broken into the house. Also, when footprints are seen in the desert, one could certainly assume that there had been a man in that place. Hence, to weigh among the three associations of ideas, we can generate the conclusion that causes or effects bear more truthfulness and justification of reality because all reasoning of man is colligated in the same level or nature in the presence of definite and available empirical evidences. However, the question is, *How are we able to justify a certain event as the cause of the succeeding one? What is the absolute nature of causes and effects?* It is indeed a fact that among the three associations of ideas, Hume distinguished causation as the enigmatic one.

Again, Hume believed that it is only through the relation of causes and effects in which we can certainly speak of matters of fact. However, the next intellectual hassle is to arrive at the knowledge of causes and effects. It is without doubt that an individual, including those with great minds, could firmly assert the remedying effect of ginger by simply observing its natural qualities or that an individual knows the precarious effect of chocolates on canines by being purely knowledgeable of its content. According to Hume, there are no entities in which we could rationally conclude matters of fact or real existence by simply perceiving its qualities, rationally inferring its causes and effects, nor reasoning independently from experience.<sup>34</sup> Hence, it is not by analytic endeavors that man is able to assert the causal relation of two ideas but rather by the experiences it avails to man. As what Hume enunciated “causes and effects are discoverable, not by reason but by experience”<sup>35</sup> Hence, to arrive at the knowledge of cause and effects is

to have a knowledge which is grounded on experience.

Hume, according to Craig, investigated causation as ‘the search of a particular impression.’<sup>36</sup> The problem behind such inquiry is to search for the absolute nature of causes. How are we able to aver that X indeed causes Y? It has been an enigma for Hume to postulate the nature of the idea ‘causes’ simply because of the unavailability of the sense data of causation. Hence, because of this enigma, Hume initially divided his inquisition into three components, namely: constancy, contiguity, and necessary connection.

*Constancy* simply adheres to the notion that X precedes Y. This precedence must constantly cohere in every event such that we presuppose the occurrence of category-Y event whenever category-X event takes place. Take, for instance, the causal relationship between fire and smoke. Fire causes smoke, and under the component of constancy, we could similarly state that fire precedes smoke; hence, it is expected of us to observe the existence of smoke every time we perceive the existence of fire. On the hand, *contiguity* must also be existent in every causal event. This precisely states the fact that X touches Y, in this case then, we can decisively state that there is indeed an observed trace or an observed contact between fire and smoke.

However, if two events display constancy and contiguousness, would it be sufficient to pronounce those events as causes and effects? Is it probably to guarantee, that even though these events project an image of contiguousness and constancy, these events indeed feature a causal interaction and not just a mere coincidence? According to Hume, it is unsatisfactory to proclaim it as such. There must be an existing bond between X-type events and Y-type events to pronounce that

there is indeed a causal interaction between the two. There must an existing inherent idea that every time a category-X-event is observed, the effect could already be assumed as a category-Y-event without referring to any experience. There is thus present a *necessary connexion* or the *necessary bond* on which we could affirm with certainty the existence of causation between the two constant and contiguous events.

Craig states that when inquiring about the impression of the necessary connexion, we must ask: What is perceived when we observe some causal interaction?<sup>37</sup> What do we perceive in the process of ingesting ginger tea and the treatment of cough or sore throat? What do we perceive as a precarious effect of chocolates to canine and not to human beings? Hume claims that “there is no other impressions we can see rather than that what appeals to our outward sense”.<sup>38</sup> The objects for observations are merely the entities which can be drawn out from our sensory organs such as color, movement, taste, sound, and any physical changes and such objects of impression are not simply the impression of a necessary connexion.

Indeed, Hume is an empiricist who resorts to justifying real existence based on what is perceivable. However, Hume does not merely subject himself to literal truths. What have been accounted through impressions, either as contiguous or contingent event, cannot be immediately concluded as a cause, rather he claimed that these might be reckoned as impressions of ‘further events, further objects, further members of the causal chain and not the impression of the linking power or necessary connexion.’<sup>39</sup>

Hume stated two reasons for the absence of a necessary connexion. First, causal interaction only occurs in two distinct events.<sup>40</sup> X causes Y

entails event-X as distinct from event-Y basically because if one sublated the difference between the two, that is to say event X is similar to event Y, only corresponds to conjoining the two events into one either in the form of X causes X or Y causes Y. Moreover, if one has obliterated their distinction then it may toilsome for one to investigate which is the cause or effect within the two similar events because of the analytic or *a priori* nature it possesses. Also, when a proposition essentially becomes analytic and *a priori* in nature then it only corresponds to limiting it to the category of *relations of ideas* which Hume found out to be inconsistent in elucidating the knowledge of the relations of cause and effects.

Second, causal events are categorized as *matters of fact* and such matters of facts propositions must permanently be contingent, hence they cannot possess something which is *necessary* including that of the necessary connexion. It is only in *relations of ideas* or propositions which are analytic and *a priori* in nature in which we could discover the existence of a necessary connexion. As an example, there is a necessary connection between  $3+5$  and  $8$  because we could already presuppose that when one has engaged in the idea  $3+5$  it can be concluded with certainty that it will correspond to  $8$  without initially resorting to experience. In a similar vein, if one negated  $3+5$  to  $8$  that is pronouncing  $3+5 \neq 8$ ; hence we will be engaged in a self-contradiction. But if those propositions in which the predicate is intrinsically found in the subject are the ones possessing the necessary bond, hence, the absence of distinction between the two events is observed. And if such distinction is extinguished, cyclically and problematically, resort to the first reason for the absence of a necessary connexion is made, which states that causal

events must necessary possess two distinct events.

The notion which we had if necessary connexion is indeed perceivable is to look at the first appearance of the cause with a pre-determined and certain knowledge of the effect without depending on the assistance of experience. However, there is no such instance whereby man is able to rationally anticipate and convict the future effects with certainty. There is no available impression in which we could utterly and certainly pronounce that there is indeed a necessary cause-effect link between two distinct, constant, and contiguous events. There are no impressions of a necessary connexion, hence “rules out the possibility of a necessary connexion”<sup>41</sup>.

According to Craig, “the subject begins with a search for the impression for which the idea of power is derived, and ends by defining a cause”<sup>42</sup>, hence to posit that there is no impression of a necessary connexion only follows that by no means could an absolute definition of a cause generated. However, Hume does not totally repudiate the notion of causes and effects in this world, but he held firmly the position that “there can be no intuitive or demonstrative knowledge that every event has a cause.”<sup>43</sup> Hume believed that it is merely an arbitrary notion of man to coin an event as cause or effects simply because there is a constant conjunction existing between X and Y events. The fact that man unconsciously associates that X-event precedes Y-events, and Y-events succeeds X-events, is deeply-rooted on the principle of custom.<sup>44</sup> To be more precise, “They are the distinguishing marks of beliefs.”<sup>45</sup> Man believed that if it rained then the entire ground will be wet, and conversely, if the entire ground is wet then man can definitely assert that it had rained. Because of the recurrence of X follows Y, it is out of custom

that whenever one experiences X, he constantly assumes that it will be anticipated by a Y event. Custom habituates man to constantly assume that the future will perpetually resemble the past. Hume, pronounced that these train of events is merely an individuating impression that we recognized as casual impression. They are certainly not causal events because of the empirical absence of the impressions of a necessary connexion. Everything that man causally infers is attributed to not as causal impression but what Hume would distinguish as merely a feeling, belief, habit or custom, which impulsively emanated within man's convenience.

The assertion that there are no available impressions from which we can account the existence of a necessary connexion to, and such custom or belief of man that uses to form arbitrary notion of causal inferences between two events, it could only be concluded that there is indeed no empirically and demonstratively justified truth to which we can absolutely ascribe causation. The secret powers are unknown and as Hume would love to state: "nature has kept us a great distance from all her secret, and afforded us only the knowledge of a few superficial qualities of objects."<sup>46</sup> Nature has concealed itself from the parameters on which human curiosity could never unlock her secrets. Rather, nature has only provided us a glimpse of her secret, which in turn, ignited our desires to verge into a philosophical inquisition, but in end such fruitful knowledge is still, ironically, fruitless and insufficient for drawing out the absolute truth about causation.

## VII. Conclusion

David Hume claimed that it is the idea of a necessary connexion which certainly determines two events as causal events. However, as an empiricist, who resorted to the validity of ideas from experience, he saw nothing which is akin

to his senses that which can attribute as the impression of the necessary connexion. Hence, with that given assertion, Hume pronounced that there is no impression of necessary connexion; there is no idea of a necessary connexion. Therefore, there is no causal interaction between two contiguous and constant events; they are just merely nothing but individuating future objects, events, or impressions which man has arbitrarily distinguished, out of custom, as causes and effects.

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<sup>1</sup> Fumerton, Richard, *Empiricism Philosophy*, date accessed November 2, 2015  
<http://www.britannica.com/topic/empiricism>

<sup>2</sup> Scruton, Roger, *A Short History of Modern Philosophy: From Descartes to Wittgenstein*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (New York: Routledge Classics, 1995). .p. 123.

<sup>3</sup> Treatise on Human Nature Part I. Section I on Hume, David, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Beauchamp, Tom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 96

<sup>4</sup> *The Five Basic Elements of Singing* retrieved from <http://operamomsays.blogspot.com/2012/02/5-basic-elements-of-singing.html>

<sup>5</sup> Hume, David, *op.cit.*, p.96

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Noonan, Harold, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Hume: On Knowledge*, (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 60.

<sup>8</sup> Hume, David, *op.cit.*, p.97.

<sup>9</sup> Noonan, Harold, *op.cit.*, p. 62

<sup>10</sup> Scruton, Roger, *op.cit.*, p. 123.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124.

<sup>12</sup> Merriam Webster's 11<sup>th</sup> Collegiate Dictionary © 2003

<sup>13</sup> Scruton, Roger, *op.cit.*, p. 124.

<sup>14</sup> Hume, David, *op.cit.*, p.97.

<sup>15</sup> Gaarder, Jostein, *Sophie's World: A Novel about the History of Philosophy* trans. Paulette Moller, (New York: FSG Classics, 2007), p. 267.

<sup>16</sup> Merriam Webster's 11<sup>th</sup> Collegiate Dictionary © 2003

<sup>17</sup> Hume, David, *op.cit.*, p 98.

<sup>18</sup> Owen, David, *Hume's Reason*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 68.

<sup>19</sup> Hume, David, *op.cit.*, p. 101.

<sup>20</sup> Owen, David., *op.cit.*, p. 69.

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<sup>21</sup> Scruton, Roger, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

<sup>22</sup> Hume, David, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

<sup>23</sup> Scruton, Roger, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>24</sup> Palmer, Donald, *Looking at Philosophy: The Unbearable Heaviness of Philosophy Made Lighter*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., (New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 2010), p. 211.

<sup>25</sup> Immanuel Kant was the one who coined Hume's Relations of ideas as analytic and *a priori* in nature and Matters of Fact as synthetic and *a posteriori*. However, I prefer using the terms –analytic and synthetic–throughout the discussion for purposes of linguistic convenience.

<sup>26</sup> Scruton, Roger, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Palmer, Donald, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Hume, David, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

<sup>32</sup> Palmer, Donald, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

<sup>33</sup> Hume, David, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 110.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Craig, Edward, “The Idea of Necessary Connexion” on *Reading Hume on Human Understanding: Essays on the First Enquiry*, (ed.) Millican, Peter, (USA, Oxford University Press: 2000), p. 215.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Hume, David, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

<sup>41</sup> Scruton, Roger, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

<sup>42</sup> Craig, Edward, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

<sup>43</sup> Noonan, Harold, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

<sup>44</sup> Hume, David, *op. cit.*, p., 121.

<sup>45</sup> Scruton, Roger, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

<sup>46</sup> Hume, David, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

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