

## May 2024 Challenge: Solution

Many thanks to Clarissa Parkinson, Shane Baggs, Frances T, and students at UCLA for participating in our May challenge!

As predicted, much of the shorthand here matches previously identified sources from Sydney Smith's essays, 'I would not live always' and 'On the beautiful'. However, there are two lines from a completely new source, which has not yet been identified.

Below we provide the full text and a line-by-line transcript, alongside the shorthand.

### Full text

Words in **blue/bold** do not have matching shorthand.

**Page 11** is from 'I would not live always' by Sydney Smith; it follows on from our transcription of page 9.

11.1 the possession of it; as a whole, is in  
11.2 his estimation the greatest good, and the loss of it the  
11.3 greatest curse of humanity. I beg to observe,  
11.4 that I am not idly depreciating the lot assigned  
11.5 to us on this globe, but I  
11.6 am bringing forward to your notice, and pressing  
11.7 on your conviction, the evils of  
11.8 life, that death may appear less terrible;  
11.9 that you may meet what you cannot  
11.10 avoid, firmly; that you may see this  
11.11 earth as it really is, and dwell not only  
11.12 on the good you leave, but the evils which you  
11.13 escape. Death is terrible to the man who lives  
11.14 at ease among his possessions; death is terrible to  
11.15 the young, terrible to him who has lived beyond  
11.16 hope: but what is it to the captive? What is it  
11.17 to **the** sick? What is it to wounded pride, to sullied  
11.18 fame, to hearts mourning over lost affections, to

**Page 12** is from 'On the beautiful' by Sydney Smith; it precedes our transcription of page 10.

12.1 But the investigation of this form, I grant, is painful  
12.2 and I know but of one method of shortening the  
12.3 road :— that is, by a careful study of the works  
12.4 of the ancient **sculptors**, who, being indefatigable in the  
12.5 school of nature, have left models of that  
12.6 perfect form behind them, which an artist would prefer  
12.7 as supremely beautiful, who had spent his  
12.8 whole life in that single contemplation.

12.9 But if industry carried them thus far,  
12.10 may not you **also** hope for the same reward  
12.11 **from the same labor?** We have the same school **opened to us that was**  
**opened to them,** for Nature  
12.12 denies her instructions to none who desire  
12.13 to become her pupils. Every body must perceive  
12.14 that in this opinion of Sir Joshua's there is  
12.15 a great deal of ingenuity as well as  
12.16 justice : and, in order to ascertain the effect  
12.17 of custom on the beauty of forms, I begin  
12.18 with stating, that where the customary figure of animals  
12.19 is very materially deviated from, there we have

**Page 13** follows on from our transcription of page 11 ('I would not live always').

13.1 the deceived, to the injured, to **the** forsaken and helpless?  
13.2 What has life been to them but a tissue of evils?  
13.3 What have they derived from it but vexation? What  
13.4 have they found in it but despair? They surely  
13.5 cannot mourn over the short duration of their  
13.6 being ; they surely when they bow their dying  
13.7 heads must say, with afflicted **Job**, "I would  
13.8 not live always!" An important consideration, in  
13.9 reflecting on the duration of life, is, that  
13.10 the enjoyments granted to us in this world,  
13.11 seem to be adapted to man's duration in it,  
13.12 and to be fit for no longer period;  
13.13 so that if his duration were much  
13.14 extended, it would **be** far less interesting than it is  
13.15 at present. Observe, as we advance in life,  
13.16 and exactly in proportion as we have been active

**Page 14** precedes our transcription of page 12 ('On the beautiful').

14.1 genius are conducted. By this, Phidias  
14.2 acquired his fame; he wrought **upon a sober principle** what has so  
14.3 much excited the enthusiasm of the world ; and by this  
14.4 **method** you who have courage to tread  
14.5 the same path, may acquire equal reputation.  
14.6 This is the idea which has acquired, and which  
14.7 seems to have a right to, the epithet  
14.8 of divine; as it may be said to preside,  
14.9 like a supreme judge, over all the productions  
14.10 of nature, appearing to **be possessed of the will and intention of the**  
**Creator,**  
14.11 as far as they regard the external form of  
14.12 living beings. When a man once possesses  
14.13 this idea **in its perfection,** there is no danger but that

14.14 he will **be sufficiently warmed by** it himself, and be able to  
14.15 warm and ravish every one else.  
14.16 Thus it is from a reiterated experience, **and a close comparison of the  
objects of nature**, that an artist becomes  
14.17 possessed of the idea of that central form, **if I may so express it,**  
14.18 from which every deviation is deformity.

**Page 15** follows on from our transcription of page 13 ('I would not live always').

15.1 and inquiring, how our interest ceases in **all**  
15.2 the objects before us ; not because the senses decay,  
15.3 but because we have so often witnessed the  
15.4 same scenes before — those exertions of talent,  
15.5 those beauties of nature, those revolutions in human  
15.6 **opinion**, which to **the** young and **the** inexperienced are so replete  
15.7 with wonder. This is the world now,  
15.8 it was the world ages past, it will be the world for  
15.9 ages to come ; it is all well for the little time  
15.10 we remain in it, hastening, as we know,  
15.11 to something greater and better: but it is a circle,  
15.12 **it is** not a line; if you were to  
15.13 live on, you must go round—you  
15.14 could not advance; and the truth and certainty of this  
15.15 may fairly be said to lessen the terror of death

### **Page 16**

Lines 1 and 2 of page 16 are from a **completely new source** which has not been identified.

The remaining lines of page 16 follow on from our transcription of page 14.  
Page 16 is the beginning of 'On the beautiful'.

Unidentified source (uncertain words in **bold red** type)

16.1 to invest in a **society** which has **no**  
16.2 just **commitment** to liberality and wisdom.

'On the beautiful'

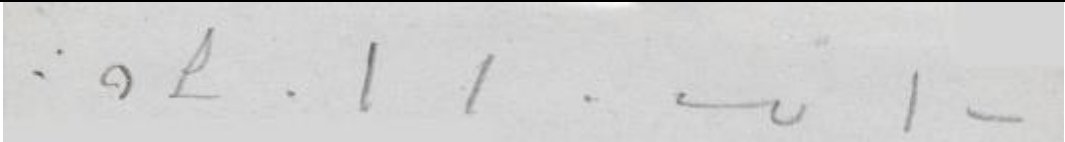

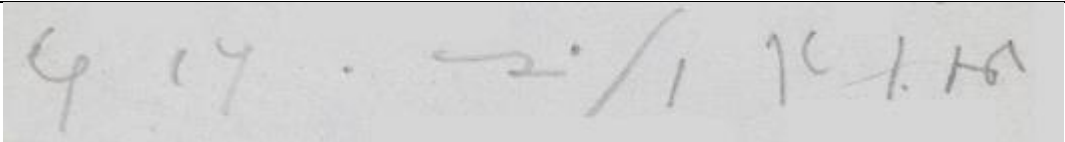
16.3 "All the objects which are exhibited to our view  
16.4 by Nature," says Sir Joshua Reynolds, upon  
16.5 close examination will be found to have their  
16.6 **blemishes and** defects. The most beautiful forms have something about  
them **like**  
**weakness minuteness, or imperfection.**  
16.7 But it is not every eye that  
16.8 perceives these blemishes ; it must be an eye  
**long used to the contemplation and comparison of these  
forms, and which, by a long habit of observing what any  
set of objects of the same kind have in common,** has acquired  
16.9 the power of discerning what each wants in particular.

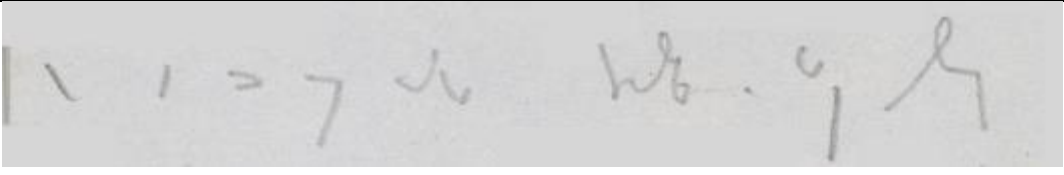
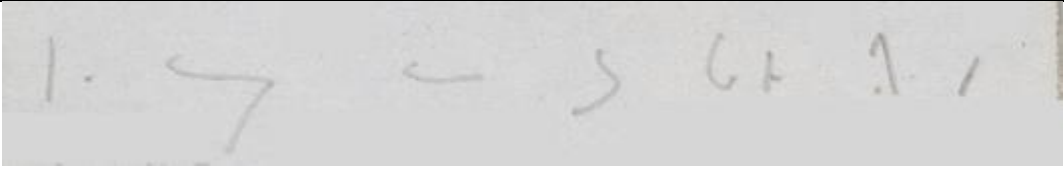
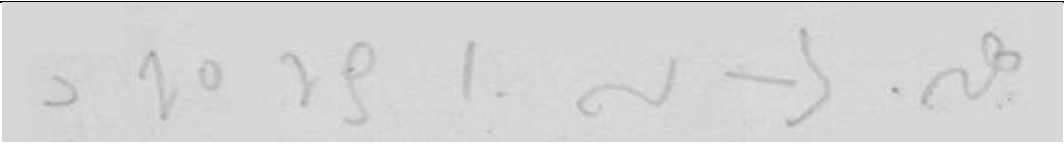


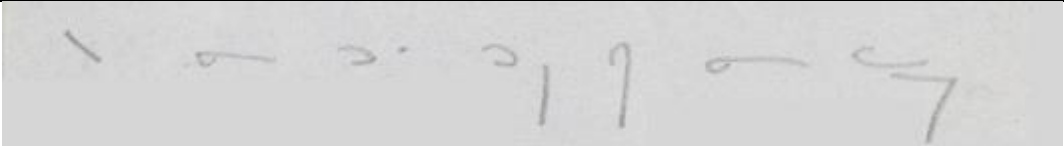
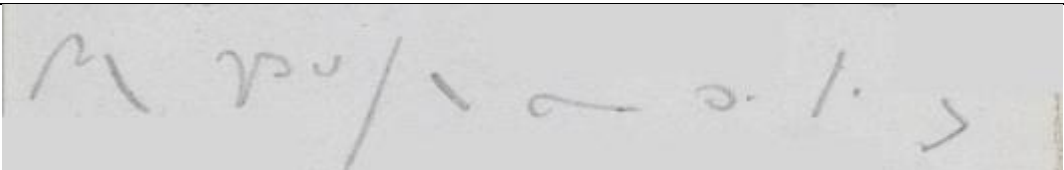
- 16.10 This long and laborious comparison, should be
- 16.11 the first study of the painter **who aims at the greatest style.**  
By this **means** he acquires
- 16.12 a just idea of beautiful forms ; he
- 16.13 corrects **Nature by herself, her imperfect state by her more**  
perfect. His eye being enabled to distinguish the **accidental deficiencies,**  
**excrescences, and** **deformities of things, from their general figures,**
- 16.14 he makes out **an abstract idea of the forms, more**
- 16.15 perfect **than any one original** : and, what may seem a
- 16.16 paradox, he learns to **design naturally, by drawing his figures unlike**  
**to any one object.**
- 16.17 This Idea of the perfect state of nature, **which the artist calls the ideal**  
**beauty,** is the
- 16.18 great leading principle by which works of

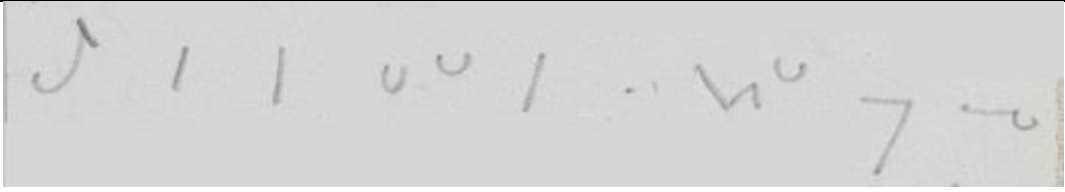
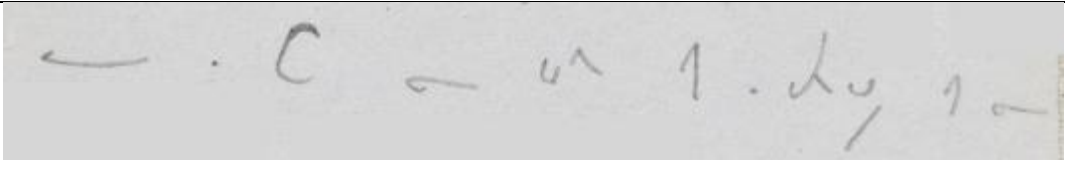
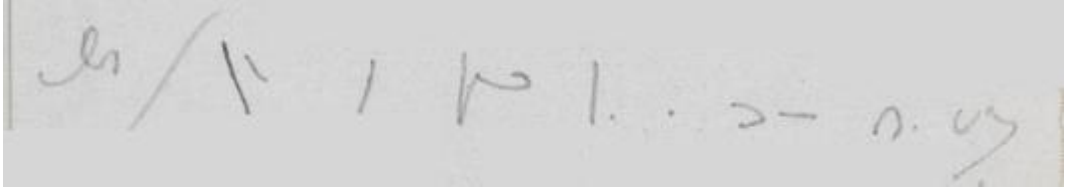
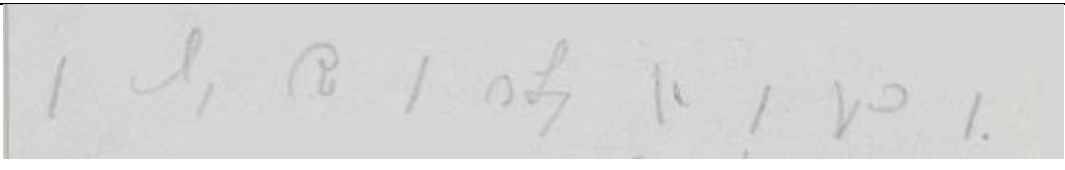
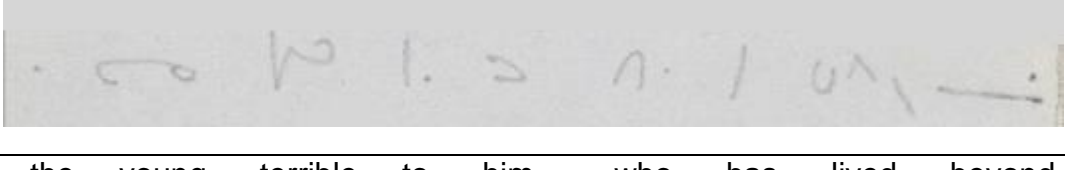
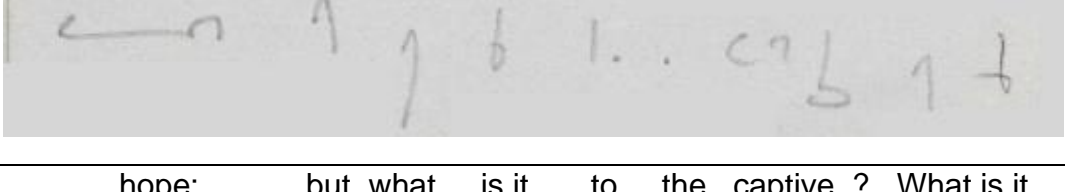
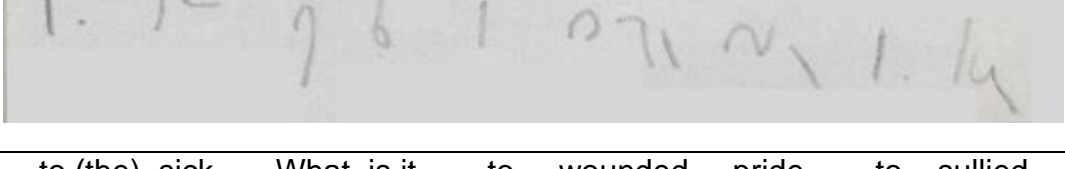
## Line-by-line transcript

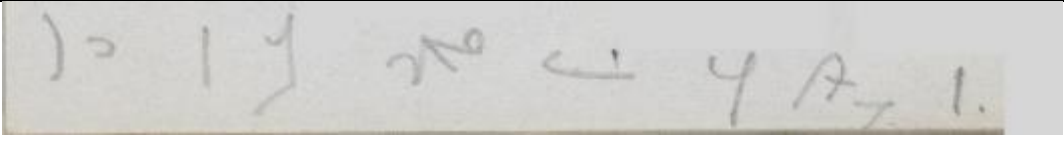
- Words **highlighted in green** are a transcription of the shorthand but are not in the source text.
- Words in brackets are in the source text but do not have any corresponding shorthand.
- Question marks indicate an uncertain transcription.

## Page 11 [ref: cdc5890012-11]

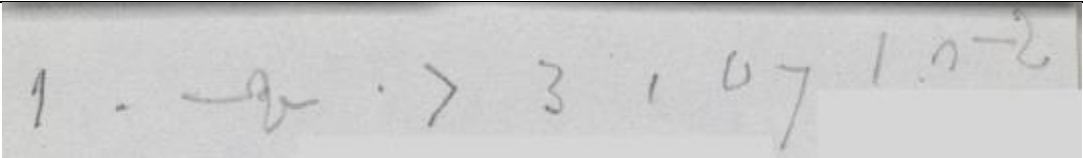
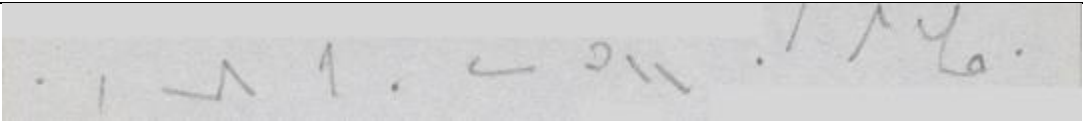
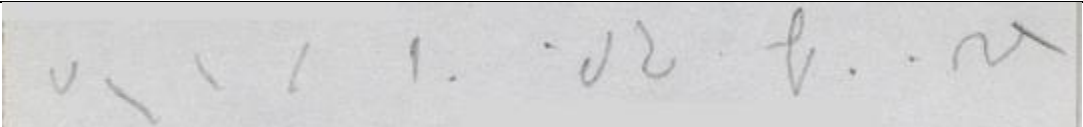
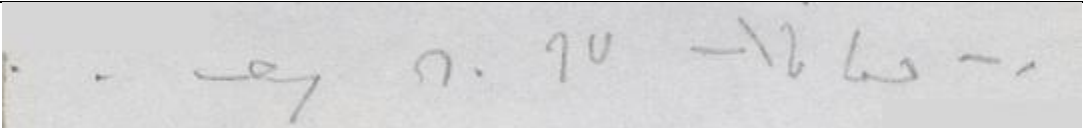
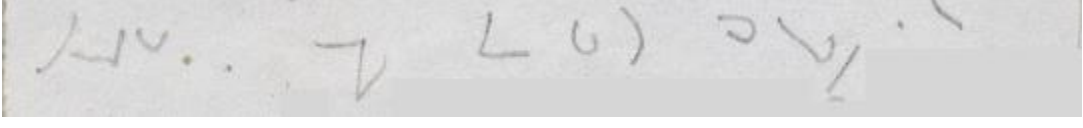
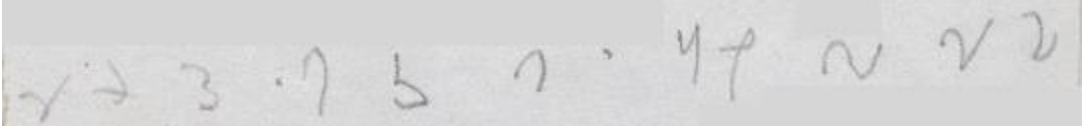
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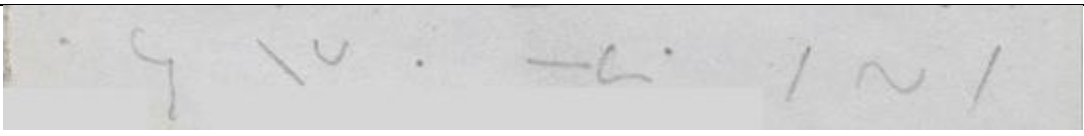

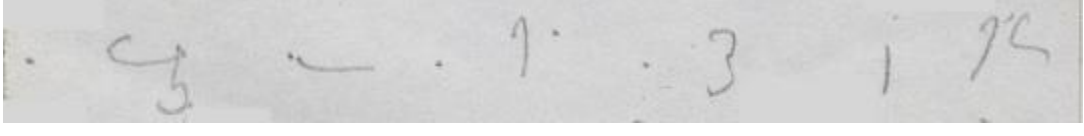
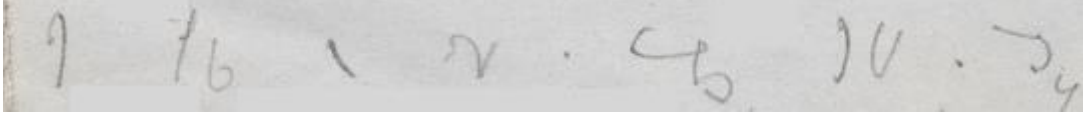
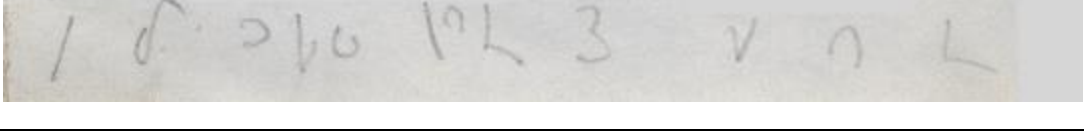
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	fame, to hearts mourning over lost affections, to

**Page 12 [ref: cdc5890012-12]**


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	road; that is, by a careful study of the works
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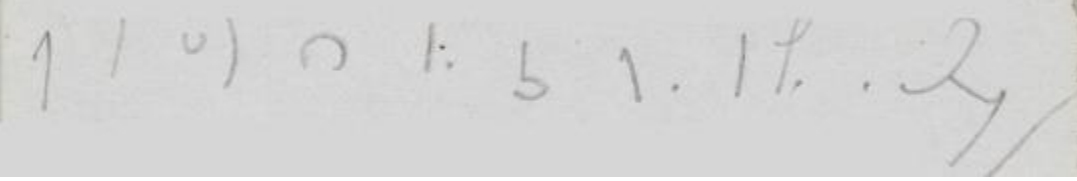






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	But if industry carried them thus far
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	may not? you? (also) hope for the same reward (from the same labour)
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	we have the same school for Nature (opened to us that was opened to them)
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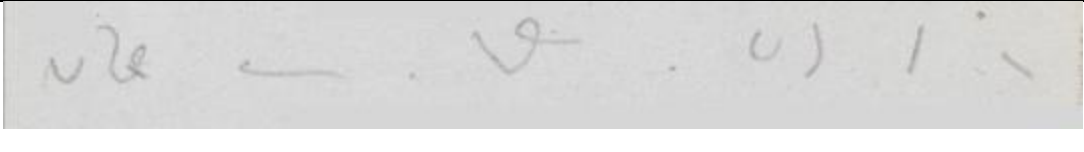
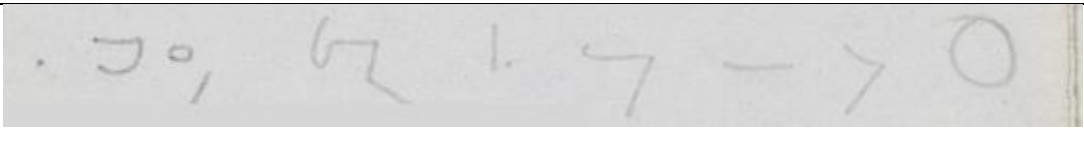
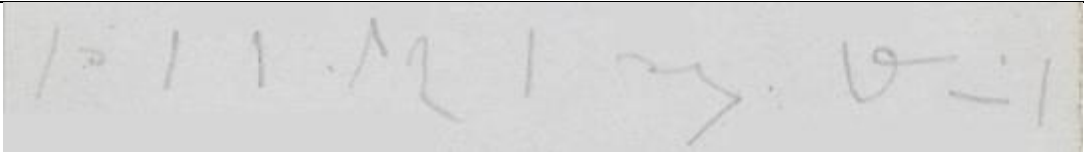

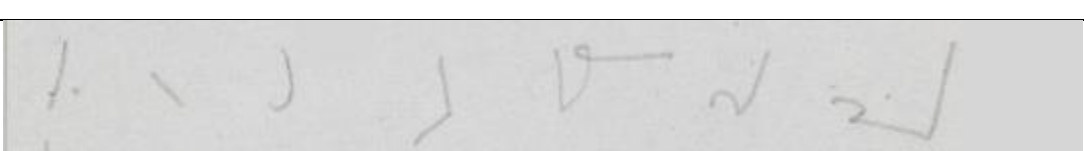
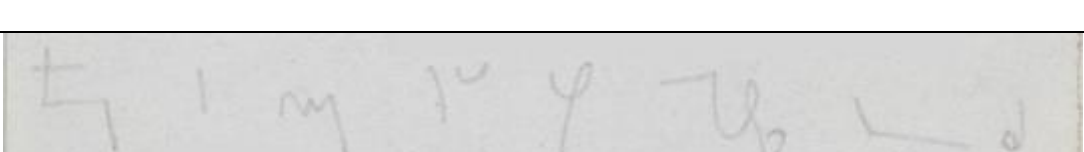
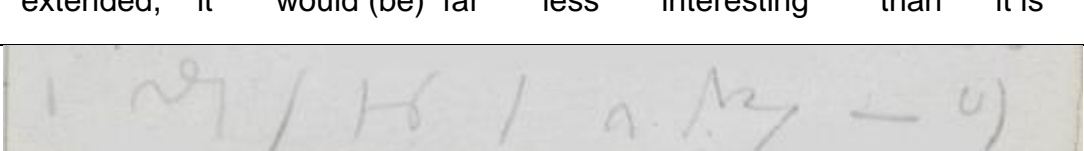
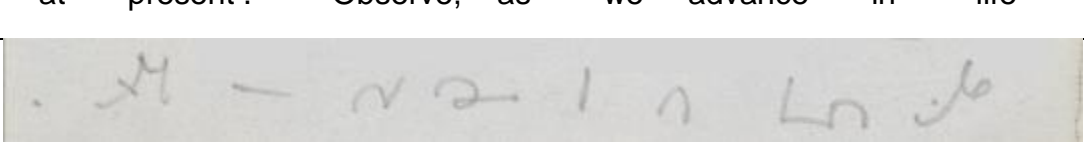


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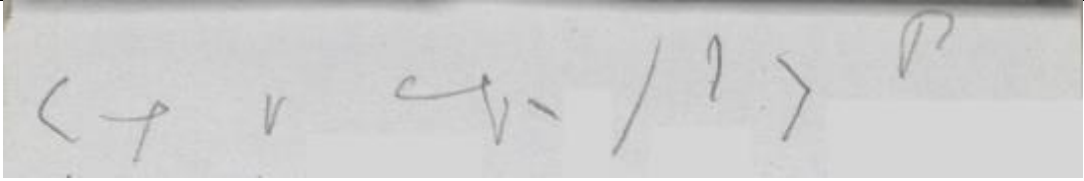

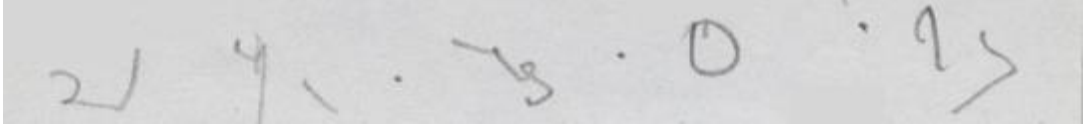
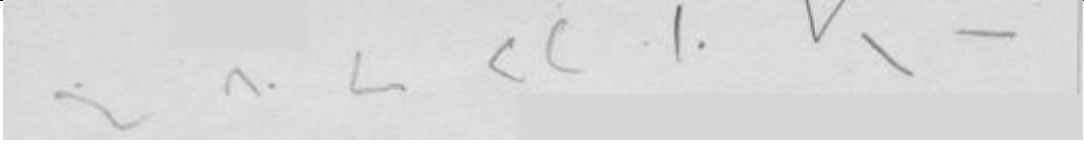
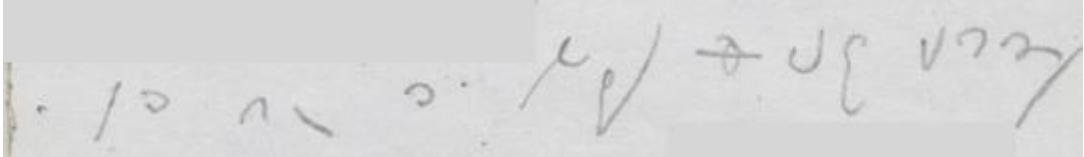
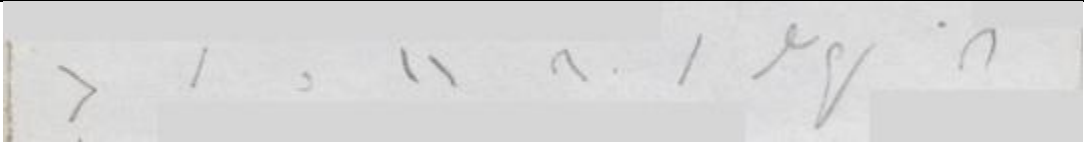
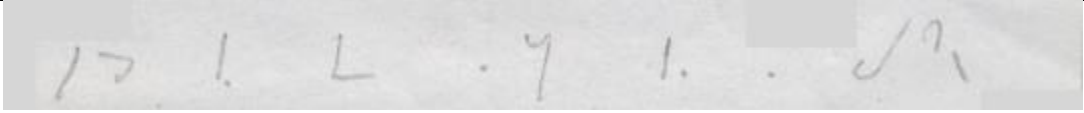
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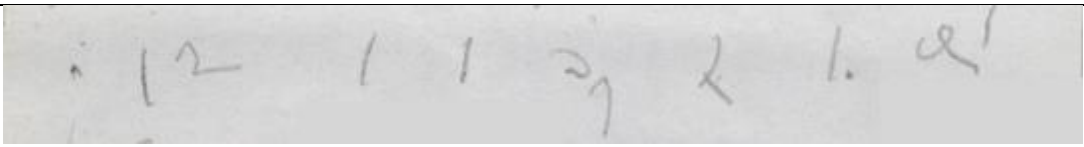
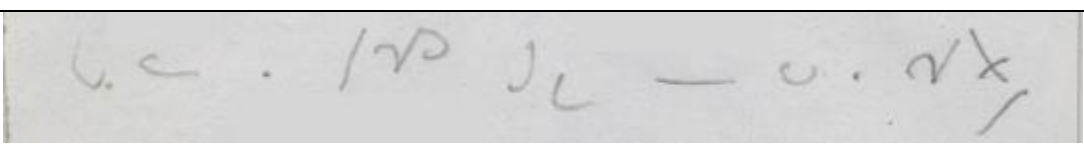
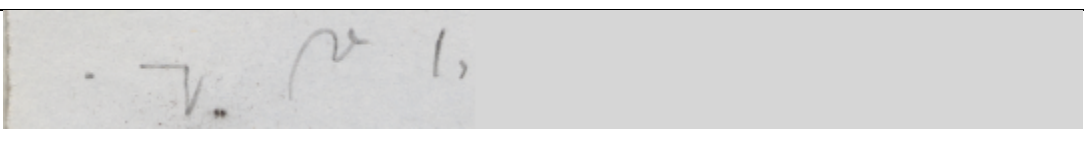
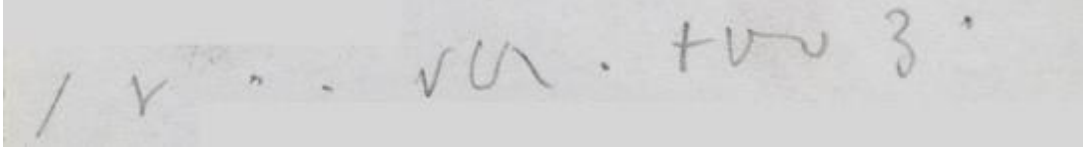
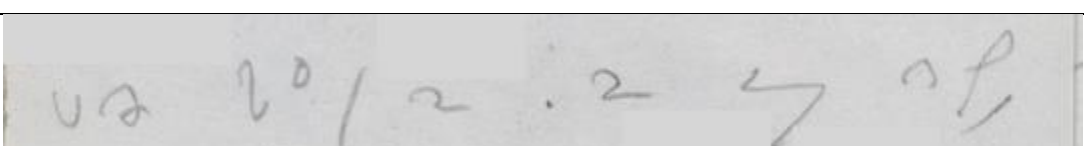

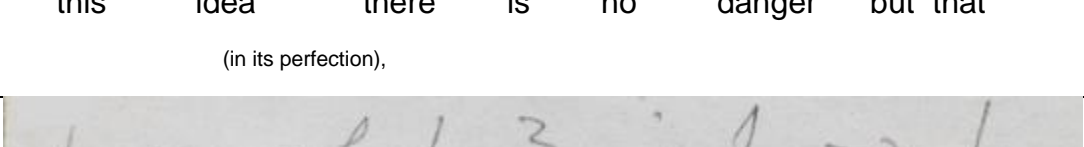
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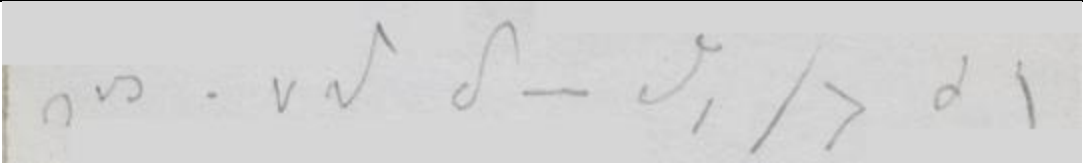
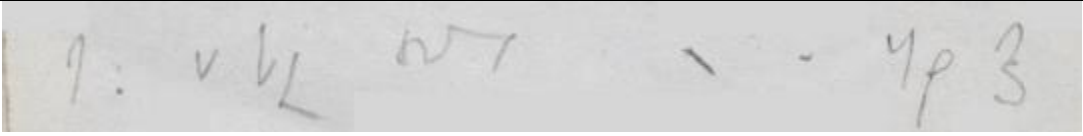

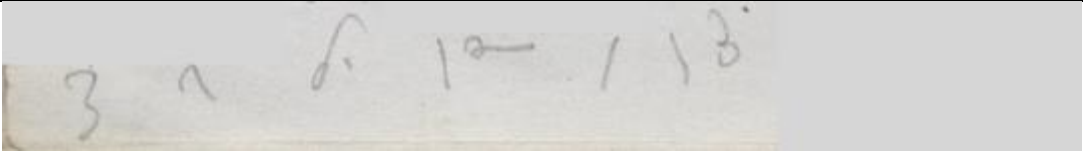
13.2	
	What has life been to them but a tissue of evils ?
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	What have they derived from it but vexation? What
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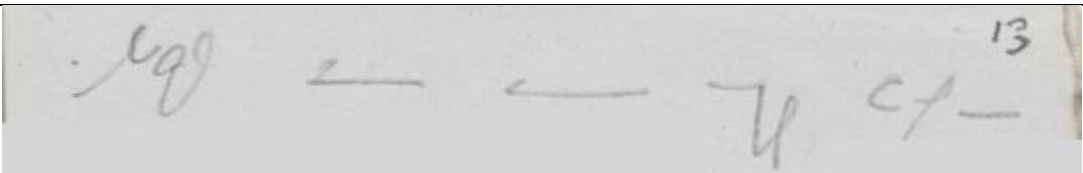
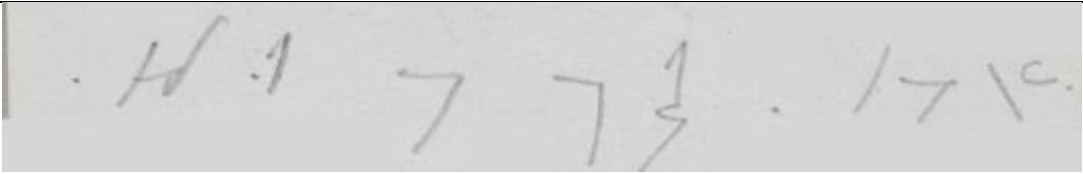
Page 14 ref: cdc5890012-14]

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14.1	
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	<p>acquired his fame he wrought what has so upon a sober principle</p>
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	<p>much excited the enthusiasm of the world; and by this (method)</p>
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	<p>you who have courage to tread ????</p>
14.5	
	<p>the same path may acquire equal reputation.</p>
14.6	
	<p>This is the idea which has acquired and which</p>
14.7	

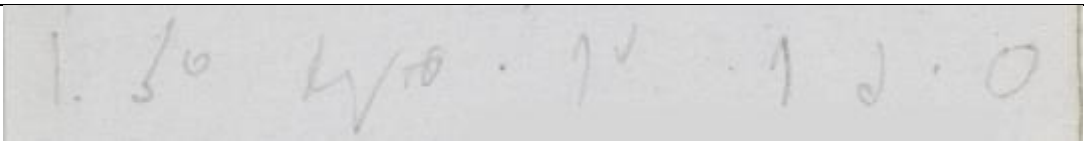
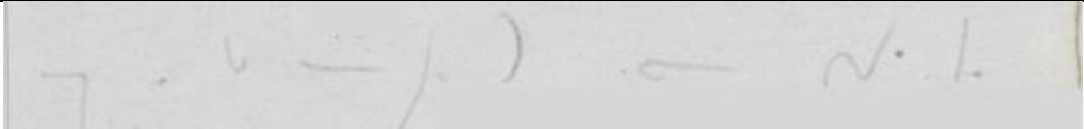
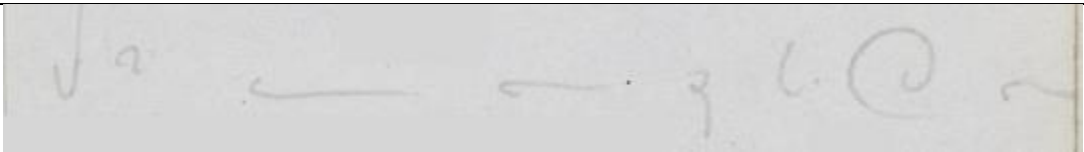

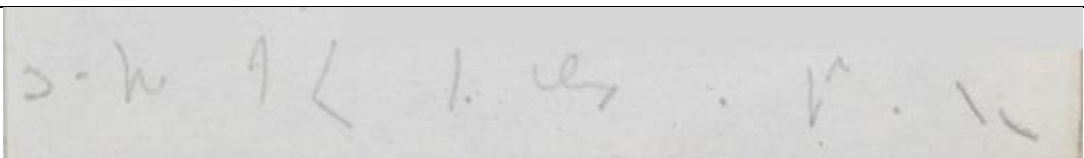
	seems to have a right to the epithet
14.8	
	of divine as it may be said to preside
14.9	
	like a supreme judge over all the productions
14.10	
	of nature appearing to (be possessed of the will and intention of the Creator)
14.11	
	as far as they regard the external form of
14.12	
	living beings. When a man once possesses
14.13	
	this idea there is no danger but that (in its perfection),
14.14	
	he will ? it himself? and be able to (be sufficiently warmed by)

14.15	
	warm and ravish every one else . Thus it is from?
14.16	
	a reiterated experience that an artist becomes (and a close comparison of the objects of nature)
14.17	
	possessed of the idea of that central form (if I may so express it)
14.18	
	from which every deviation is deformity.

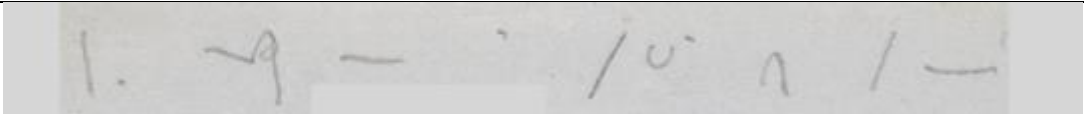
**Page 15 [ref: cdc5890012-15]**

Line	
15.1	
	and inquiring how our interest ceases in (all)
15.2	
	the objects before us; not because the senses decay

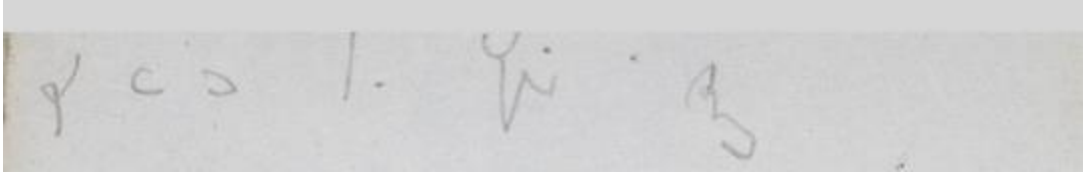

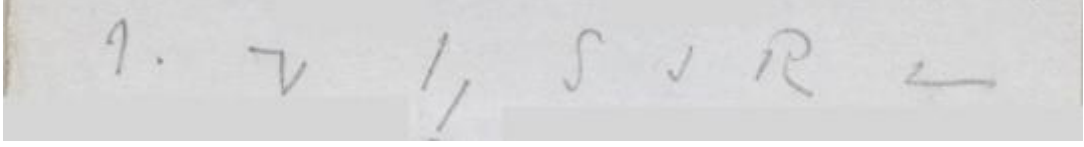
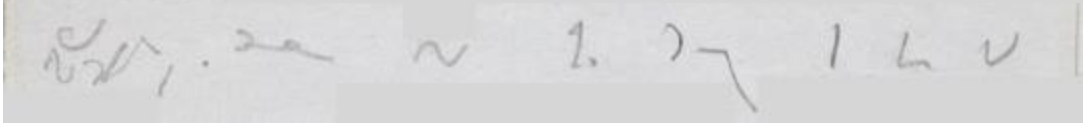
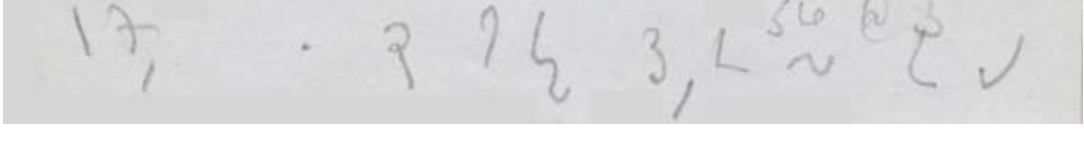
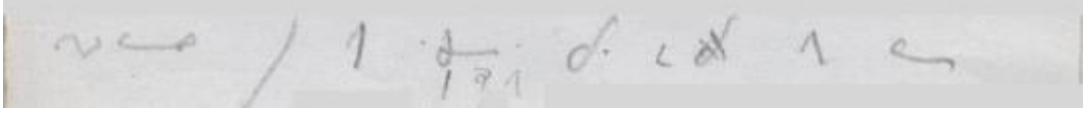

15.3	
	but because we have so often witnessed ???? the
15.4	
	same scenes before. Those exertions of talent,
15.5	
	those beauties of nature, those revolutions in human (opinion)
15.6	
	which to (the) young (and) the inexperienced are so replete
15.7	
	with wonder. This is the world now,
15.8	
	it was the world ages past, it will be the world for
15.9	
	ages to come. It is all well for the little time
15.10	

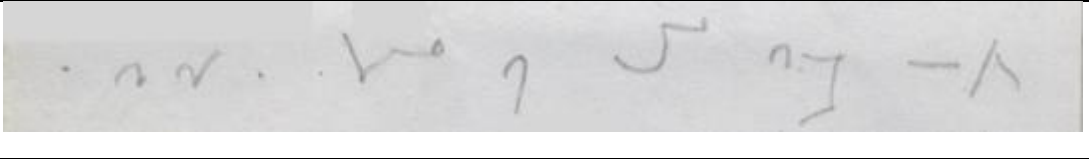
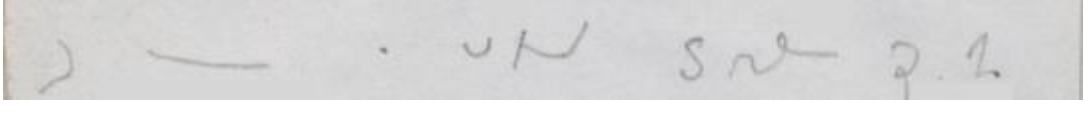
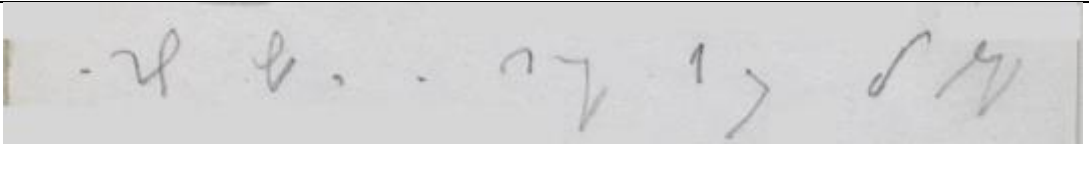
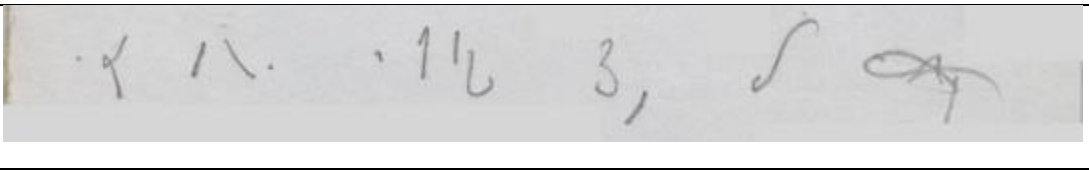
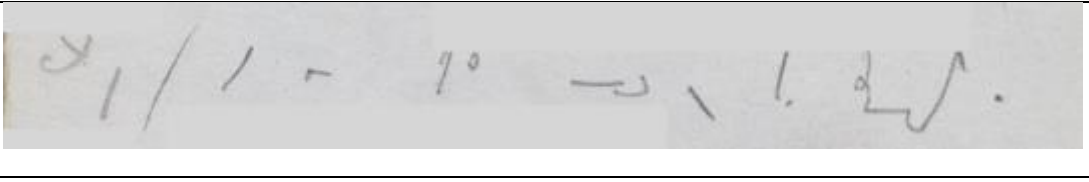
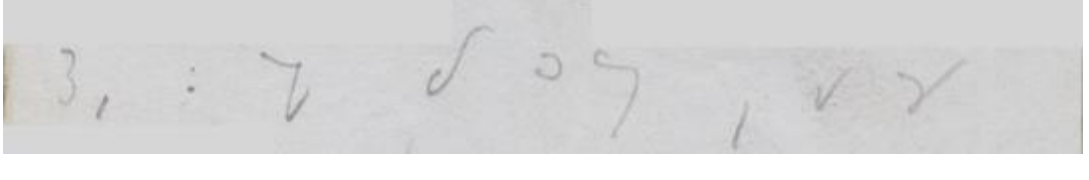
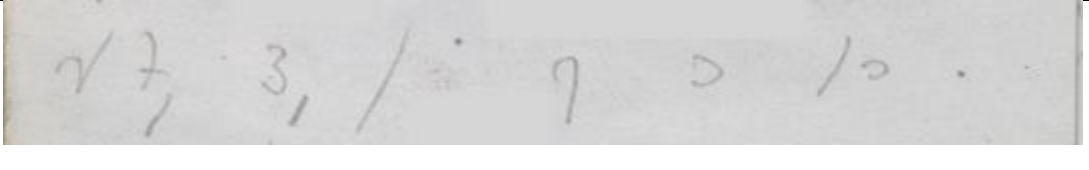
	we remain in it, hastening, as we know,
15.11	
	to something greater and better but it is a circle
15.12	
	(it is) not a line. If you were to
15.13	
	live on, you must go round, you
15.14	
	could not advance and the truth and certainty of this
15.15	
	may fairly be said to lessen the terror of death



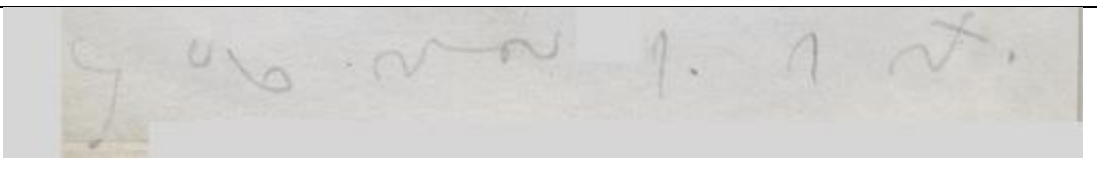
**Page 16 [ref: cdc5890012-16]**

<b>Line</b>	
16.1	
	to invest in a society? which has no?



16.2	
	just commitment? to liberality and wisdom
16.3	
	All the objects which are exhibited to our view
16.4	
	by Nature, says Sir Joshua Reynolds, upon
16.5	
	close examination will be found to have their
16.6	
	(blemishes and) defects. The most beautiful forms have <small>something about them will have</small> ????
16.7	
	????? . But it is not every eye that ????
16.8	
	perceives these blemishes. It must be an eye (...) has acquired (long used to the contemplation and comparison of these forms and which by a long habit of observing what any set of objects of the same kind have in common)

16.9	
	the power of discerning what each wants in particular.
16.10	
	This long and laborious comparison should be
16.11	
	the first study of the painter By this <small>(means)</small> he acquires (who aims at the greatest style).
16.12	
	a just idea of beautiful forms; he corrects Nature by herself, her imperfect state by her more
16.13	
	perfect. His eye being enabled to distinguish the
16.14	
	forms of nature he makes out (an abstract idea of the forms)
16.15	
	more perfect forms. And what may seem a

16.16	
	paradox he learns to (design naturally by drawing his figures unlike to any one object)
16.17	
	This idea of the perfect state of nature is the (which the artist calls the ideal beauty)
16.18	
	great leading principle by which works of