

Fernando Pessoa

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A cause is a relation of alteration (*movement*) between two things.

Put a match unlight upon your hand. It will have no effect on your organism. There is here then no proper cause — in the mere relation of contiguity.

The day comes after the night, and the night after the day but, etc.

Cause then does not consist, of necessity, in a relation of succession.

Now, if you drink, for instance, prussic acid, you will die. The prussic acid was the direct *cause* of your death. There are here contiguity, succession, but as we have seen, cause has not its essence in these. What then is here more? There is here an *alteration* produced.

Run a billiard ball against another: this last, when struck will move away. Here are contiguity, succession, and what more? A *movement*, that is to say a kind of an alteration. We now can perceive the characteristic of Cause. [...]

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Textos Filosóficos . Vol. II. Fernando Pessoa. (Estabelecidos e prefaciados por António de Pina Coelho.) Lisboa: Ática, 1968: 35.