

# Locke's Thoughts Concerning Education

John Locke

The following is abridged from John Locke's *Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693).

A sound mind in a sound body, is a short, but full description of a happy state in this world: He that has these two, has little more to wish for; and he that wants either of them, will be but little better for anything else. Men's happiness or misery is most part of their own making. He, whose mind directs not wisely, will never take the right way; and he, whose body is crazy and feeble, will never be able to advance in it. I confess, there are some men's constitutions of body and mind so vigorous, and well framed by nature, that they need not much assistance from others, but by the strength of their natural genius, they are from their cradles carried towards what is excellent; and by the privilege of their happy constitutions are able to do wonders: but examples of this kind are but few, and I think I may say, that of all the men we meet with, nine parts of ten are what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education. 'Tis that which makes the great difference in mankind: the little, and almost insensible impressions on our tender infancies, have very important and lasting consequences: and there 'tis, as in the fountains of some rivers, where a gentle application of the hand turns the flexible waters into channels, that make them quite contrary courses, and by this little direction given them at first in the source, they receive different tendencies and arrive at last, at very remote and distant places.

I imagine the minds of children as easily turned this or that way, as water itself; and though this be the principal part, and our main care should be about the inside, yet the clay cottage is not to be neglected. I shall therefore begin with the case, and consider first the health of the body, as that, which perhaps you may rather expect from that study, I have been thought more peculiarly to have applied my self to; and that also which will be soonest dispatched, as lying, if I guess not amiss, in a very little compass.

How necessary health is to our business and happiness; and how requisite a strong constitution, able to endure hardships and fatigue, is to one that will make any figure in the world, is too obvious to need any proof.

The consideration, I shall here have of health, shall be, not what a physician ought to do with a sick or crazy child; but what the parents, without the help of physic, should do for the preservation and improvement of an healthy, or at least, not sickly constitution in their children: and this perhaps might be all dispatched, in this one short rule, viz. That gentlemen should use their children, as the honest farmers and substantial yeomen do theirs. But because the mothers possibly may think this a little too hard, and the fathers too short, I shall explain my self more particularly; only laying down this as a general and certain observation for the women to consider, viz. That most children's constitutions are either spoiled, or at least harmed, by cockering and tenderness.

The first thing to be taken care of, is, that children be not too warmly clad or covered, winter or summer. The face, when we are born, is no less tender than any other part of the body: 'tis use alone hardens it, and makes it more able to endure the cold. And therefore the Scythian philosopher gave a very significant answer to the Athenian, who wondered how he could go naked in frost and snow: how said the Scythian, can you endure your face exposed to the sharp winter air? My face is used to it, said the Athenian. Think me all face, replied the Scythian. Our bodies will endure any thing, that from the beginning they are accustomed to...

Give me leave therefore to advise you, not to fence too carefully against the cold of this our climate. There are those in England who wear the same clothes winter and summer, and that without any inconvenience, or more sense of cold than others find. But if the mother will needs have an allowance for frost and snow, for fear of harm; and the father, for fear of censure; be sure let not his winter clothing be too warm...

I have said he here, because the principal aim of my discourse is, how a young Gentleman should be brought up from his infancy, which, in all things, will not so perfectly suit the education of daughters; though where the difference of sex requires different treatment, 'twill be no hard matter to distinguish.

I would also advise his feet to be washed every day in cold water; and to have his shoes so thick that they might leak and let in water, when ever he comes near it...

I shall not need here to mention swimming, when he is of an age able to learn, and has any one to teach him. 'Tis that saves many a man's life: and the Romans thought it so necessary, that they rank'd it with Letters; and it was the common phrase to mark one ill educated and good for nothing; that he had neither learnt to read nor to swim...

Another thing that is of great advantage to everyone's health, but especially children's, is, to be much in the open air, and very little as may be by the fire, even in winter. By this he will accustom himself also to heat and cold, shine and rain; all which, if a man's body will not endure, it will serve him to very little purpose in this world: and when he is grown up, it is too late to begin to use him to it: it must be got early and by degrees...

Narrow breasts, short and stinking breath, ill lungs, and crookedness, are the natural and almost constant effects of hard bodice and clothes that pinch. That way of making slender wastes and fine shapes, serves but the more effectually to spoil them...

As for his diet, it ought to be very plain and simple; and, if I might advise, flesh should be forborn as long as he was in the coats, or at least till he was two or three years old...

Of all that looks soft and effeminate, nothing is more to be indulged children than sleep. In this alone they are to be permitted to have their full satisfaction; nothing contributing more to the growth and health of children than sleep. All that is to be regulated in it is, in what part of the twenty four hours they should take it: which will easily be resolved, by only saying, that it is of great use to accustom them to rise early in the morning... 'tis worth the while to accustom him to early rising, and early going to bed, between this and that; for the present improvement of his health, and other advantages...

Let his bed be hard, and rather quilts than feathers...

And thus I have done with what concerns the body and health, which reduces itself to these few and easily observable rules. Plenty of open air, exercise and sleep; plain diet, no wine or strong drink, and very little or no physic; not too warm and straight clothing, especially the head and feet kept cold, and the feet often used to cold water, and exposed to wet.

Due care being had to keep the body in strength and vigor, so that it may be able to obey and execute the orders of the mind, the next and principal business is, to set the mind right, that on all occasions it may be disposed to consent to nothing, but what may be suitable to the dignity and excellency of a rational creature.

If what I have said in the beginning of this discourse be true, as I do not doubt but it is, viz., that the difference to be found in the manners and abilities of men, is owing more to their education than to anything else, we have reason to conclude that great care is to be had of the forming children's minds, and giving them that seasoning early, which shall influence their lives always after. For when they do well or ill, the praise or blame will be laid there; and when anything is done untowardly, the common saying will pass upon them, that it is suitable to their breeding.

As the strength of the body lies chiefly able to endure hardships, so also does that of the mind. And the great principle and foundation of all virtue and worth is placed in this, that a man is able to deny himself his own desires, cross his own inclinations, and purely follow what reason directs as best, though the appetite lean the other way.

The great Mistake I have been observed in people's breeding their children has been that this has not been taken care enough of in its due season; that the mind has not been made obedient to discipline, and pliant to reason, when at first it was most tender, most easy to be bowed. Parents, being wisely ordained by nature to love their children are very apt, if reason watch that natural affection very warily, are apt, I say, to let it run into fondness. They love their little ones and tis their duty, but they often, with them, cherish their faults too. They must not be crossed, forsooth; they must be permitted to have their wills in all things; and they being in their infancies not capable of great vices, their parents think they may safely enough indulge their little irregularities, and make themselves sport with that pretty perverseness, which, they think, well enough becomes that innocent age. But to a fond parent, that would not have his child corrected for a perverse trick, but excused it, saying, it was a small matter; Solon very replied, ay, but custom is a great one.

The fondling must be taught to strike and call names; must have what he cries for and do what he pleases. Thus parents, by humoring and cockering them when little, corrupt the principles of nature in their children, and wonder afterwards to taste the bitter waters when they themselves have poisoned the fountain...

...The coverings of our bodies, which are for modesty, warmth, and defense are, by the folly or vice of parents, recommended to their children for other uses. They are made matters of vanity and emulation. A child is set a-longing after a new suit, for the finery of it; and when the little girl is tricked up in her new gown and commode, how can her mother do less than teach her to admire herself, by calling her, her little queen and her princess? Thus the little ones are taught to be proud of their clothes, before they can put them on. And why should they not continue to value themselves for their outside fashionableness of the tailor or tirewoman's making, when their parents have so early influenced them to do so?...

Craving. It seems plain to me, that the principle of all virtue and excellency lies in a power of denying our selves the satisfaction of our own desires, where reason does not authorize there. This power is to be got and improved by custom, made easy and familiar by an early practice. If therefore I might be heard, I would advise, that, contrary to the ordinary way, children should be used to submit their desires, and go without their longings, even from their very cradles. The first thing they should learn to know, should be, that they were not to have anything, because it pleased them, but because was thought fit for them. If things suitable to their wants were supplied to them, so that they were never suffered to have what they once cried for, they would learn to be content without it; would never with bawling and peevishness contend for mastery; nor be half so uneasy to themselves and others as they are, because from the first beginning they are not thus handled. If they were never suffered to obtain their desire by the impatience they expressed for it, they would no more cry for other things than they do for the moon.

... And that this ought to be observed as an inviolable maxim, that whatever once is denied them, they are certainly not to obtain by crying or importunity; unless one has a mind to teach them to be impatient and troublesome, by rewarding them for it, when they are so.

Those therefore that intend ever to govern their children, should begin it whilst they are very little; and look that they perfectly comply with the will of their parents. Would you have your son obedient to you, when past a child? Be sure then to establish the authority of a father, as soon as he is capable of submission, and can understand in whose power he is. If you would have him stand in awe of you, imprint it in his infancy; and, as he approaches more to a man, admit him nearer to your familiarity: so shall you have him your obedient subject (as is fit) whilst he is a child, and your affectionate friend when he is a man... For liberty and indulgence can do no good to children: their want of judgment makes them stand in need of restraint and discipline. And, on the contrary, imperiousness and severity is but an ill way of treating men, who have reason of their own to guide them, unless you have a mind to make your children, when grown up, weary of you; and secretly to say within themselves, "When will you die, father?"...

Thus much for the settling your authority over your children in general. Fear and awe ought to give you the first power over their minds, and love and friendship in riper years to hold it: for the time must come, when they will be past the rod and correction; and then, if the love of you make them not obedient and dutiful, if the love of virtue and reputation keep them not in laudable courses, I ask, what hold will you have upon them, to turn them to it? ...

...For I am very apt to think, that great severity of punishment does but very little good; nay, great harm in education: and I believe it will be found, that, *caeteris paribus*, those children who have been most chastised, seldom make the best men...

The usual lazy and short way by chastisement, and the rod, which is the only instrument of government that tutors generally know, or ever think of, is the most unfit of any to be used in education; because it tends to both those mischiefs, which, as we have shown, are the Scylla and Charybdis, which, on the one hand or the other, ruin all that miscarry.

1. This kind of punishment contributes not at all to the mastery of our natural propensity to indulge corporal and present pleasure, and to avoid pain at any rate, but rather encourages it; and so strengthens that in us, which is the root of all vicious and wrong actions. For what motives, I pray, does a child act by, but of such pleasure and pain, that drudges at his book against his inclination, or abstains from eating unwholesome fruit, that he takes pleasure in, only out of fear of whipping? He in this only prefers the greater corporal pleasure, or avoids the greater corporal pain; and what is it, to govern his actions, and direct his conduct, by such motives as these? What is it, I say, but to cherish that principle in him, which it is our business to root out and destroy? And therefore I cannot think any correction useful to a child, where the shame of suffering for having, done amiss does not work more upon him than the pain.

2. This sort of correction naturally breeds an aversion to that which it is the tutor's business to create a liking to. How obvious is it to observe, that children come to hate things liked at first, as soon as they come to be whipped, or chid, and teased about them? And it is not to be wondered at in them, when grown men would not be able to be reconciled to any thing by such ways. Who is there that would not be disgusted with any innocent recreation in itself indifferent to him, if he should with blows, or ill language, be hale to it, when he had no mind? Or be constantly so treated, for some circumstance in his application to it? This is natural to be so. Offensive circumstances ordinarily infect innocent things which they are joined with: and the very sight of a cup, wherein any one uses to take nauseous physic, turns his stomach, so that nothing will relish well out of it, though the cup be never so clean and well-shaped, and of the richest materials.

3. Such a sort of slavish discipline makes a slavish temper. The child submits, and dissembles obedience, whilst the fear of the rod hangs over him; but when that is removed, and, by being out of sight, he can promise himself impunity, he gives the greater scope to his natural inclination, which by this way is. not at all altered, but on the contrary heightened and increased in him; and after such restraint, breaks out usually with the more violence. or,

4. If severity carried to the highest pitch does prevail, and works a cure upon the present unruly distemper, it is often bringing in the room of it a worse and more dangerous disease, by breaking the mind; and then, in the place of disorderly young fellow, you have a low-spirited, moped creature: who, however with his unnatural sobriety he may please silly people, who commend tame, unactive children because they make no noise, nor give them any trouble; yet, at last, will probably prove as uncomfortable a thing to his friends, as he will be, all his life, an useless thing to himself and others.

Beating them, and all other sorts of slavish and corporal punishments, are not the discipline fit to be used in the education of those we would have wise, good, and ingenuous men; and therefore very rarely to be applied, and that only in great occasions, and cases of extremity. On the other side, to flatter children by rewards of things that are pleasant to them, is as carefully to be avoided. He that will give to his son apples, or sugar-plums, or what else of this kind he is most delighted with, to make him learn his book, does but authorize his love of pleasure, and cocker up that dangerous propensity, which he ought by all means to subdue and stifle in him. You can never hope to teach him to master it whilst you compound for the check you give his inclination in one place, by the satisfaction you propose to it in another. To make a good, a wise, and a virtuous man, it is fit he should learn to cross his appetite, and deny his inclination to riches, finery, or pleasing his palate, etc., whenever his reason advises the contrary, and his duty requires it. But when you draw him to do anything that is fit, by the offer of money or reward the pains of learning his book, by the pleasure of a luscious morsel; when you promise him a lace-cravat, or a fine new suit, upon performance of some of his little tasks; what do you, by proposing these as rewards, but allow them to be the good things he should aim at, and thereby

encourage his longing for them, and accustom him to place his happiness in them? Thus people, to prevail with children to be industrious about their grammar, dancing, or some other such matter of no great moment to the happiness or usefulness of their lives by misapplied rewards and punishments, sacrifice their virtue, invert the order of their education, and teach them luxury, pride, or covetousness, etc. For in this way, flattering those wrong inclinations, which they should restrain and suppress, they lay the foundations of those future vices, which cannot be avoided, but by curbing our desires, and accustoming them early to submit to reason.

I say, not this, that I would have children kept from the conveniences or pleasures of life, that are not injurious to their health or virtue. On the contrary, I would have their lives made as pleasant, and as agreeable to them as may be, in a plentiful enjoyment of whatsoever might innocently delight them: provided it be with this caution, that they have those enjoyments only as the consequences of the state of esteem and acceptance they are in with their parents and governors; but they should never be offered or bestowed on them, as the reward of this or that particular performance, that they show an aversion to, or to which they would not have applied themselves without that temptation.

But if you take away the rod on one hand, and these little encouragements, which they are taken with, on the other, How then (will you say) shall children be governed? Remove hope and fear, and there is an end of all discipline. I grant, that good and evil, reward and punishment, are the only motives to a rational creature; these are the spur and reins whereby all mankind are set on work and guided, and therefore they are to be made use of to children too. For I advise their parents and governors always to carry this in their minds, that they are to be treated as rational creatures.

I grant, and punishments must be proposed to children, if we intend to work upon them. The mistake, I imagine, is that those that are generally made use of, are ill chosen. The pains and pleasures of the body are, I think, of ill consequence, when made the rewards and punishments, whereby men would prevail on their children: for they serve but to increase and strengthen those appetites which 'tis our business to subdue and master. What principle of virtue do you lay in a child, if you will redeem his desires of one pleasure by the proposal of another? This is but to enlarge his appetite, and instruct it to wander. If a child cries for an unwholesome and dangerous fruit, you purchase his quiet by giving him a less hurtful sweetmeat; this perhaps may preserve his health, but spoils his mind, and sets that farther out of order. For here you only change the object, but flatter still his appetite, and allow that must be satisfied: wherein, as I have showed, lies the root of the mischief: and till you bring him to be able to bear a denial of that satisfaction, the child may at present be quiet and orderly, but the disease is not cured. By this way of proceeding you foment and cherish in him, that which is the spring from whence all the evil flows, which will be sure on the next occasion to break out again with more violence, give him stronger longings, and you more trouble.

The rewards and punishments, then, whereby we should keep children in order, are quite of another kind; and of that force, that when we can get them once to work, the business, I think, is done, and the difficulty is over. Esteem and disgrace are, of all others, the most powerful incentives to the mind, when one is brought to relish them. If you can once get into children a love of credit, and an apprehension of shame and disgrace, you have put into them the true principle, which will constantly work, and incline them to the right. But it will be asked, How shall this be done? I confess, it does not, at first appearance, want some difficulty; but yet I think it worth our while to seek the ways (and practice them when found) to attain this, which I look on as the great secret of education.

First, children (earlier perhaps than we think) are very sensible of praise and recommendation. They find a pleasure in being esteemed and valued, especially by their parents, and those whom they depend on. If therefore the father caress and commend them, when they do well; show a cold and neglectful countenance to them upon doing ill; and this accompanied by a like carriage of the mother; and all others that are about them, it will in a little time make them sensible of the difference: and this, if constantly observed, I doubt not but will of itself work more than threats or blows, which lose their force, when once grown common, and are of no use when shame does not attend them; and therefore are to be forborne, and never to be used, but in the case hereafter-mentioned, when it is brought to extremity.

... If by these means you can come once to shame them out of their faults, (for besides that, I would willingly have no punishment,) and make them in love with the pleasure of being well thought on, you may turn them as you please, and they will be in love with all the ways of virtue.

The great difficulty here is, I imagine, from the folly and perverseness of servants, who are hardly to be hindered from crossing herein the design of the father and mother. Children, discountenanced by their parents for any fault, find usually a refuge and relief in the caresses of these foolish flatterers, who thereby undo whatever the parents endeavor to establish. When the father or mother looks sour on the child, everybody else should put on the same carriage to him, and nobody give him countenance, till forgiveness asked, and a contrary carriage restored him to his esteem and former credit again. If this were constantly observed, I guess there would be little need of blows or chiding: their own ease and satisfaction would quickly teach children to court commendation, and avoid doing that which they found everybody condemned, and they were sure to suffer for, without being chid or beaten. This would teach them modesty and shame; and they would quickly come to have a natural abhorrence for that which they found made them slighted and neglected by everybody. But how this inconvenience from servants is to be remedied, I can only leave to parents' care and consideration. Only I think it of great importance; and that they are very happy, who can get discreet people about their children...

Concerning reputation, I shall only remark this one thing more of it: that, though it be not the true principle and measure of virtue, (for that is the knowledge of a man's duty, and the satisfaction it is to obey his Maker, in following the dictates of that light God has given him, with the hopes of acceptation and reward), yet it is that which comes nearest to it: and being the testimony and applause that other people's reason, as it were, by common consent, gives to virtuous and well-ordered actions, is the proper guide and encouragement of children, till they grow able to judge for themselves, and to find what is right by their own reason.

This consideration may direct parents how to manage themselves in reproofing and commending their children. The rebukes and chiding, which their faults will sometimes make hardly to be avoided, should not only be sober, grave, and unpassionate words, but also alone and in private: but the commendations children deserve, they should receive before others. This doubles the reward, by spreading their praise; but the backwardness parents show in divulging their faults, will make them set a greater value on their credit themselves, and teach them to be the more careful to preserve the good opinion of others, whilst they think they have it: but when being exposed to shame, by publishing their miscarriages, they give it up for lost, that check upon them is taken off, and they will be the less careful to preserve other's good thoughts of them, the more they suspect that their reputation with them is already blemished.

But if a right course be taken with children, there will not be so much need of the application of the common rewards and punishments, as we imagine, and as the general practice has established. For, all their innocent folly, playing, and childish actions are to be left perfectly free and unrestrained, as far as they can consist with the respect due to those that are present; and that with the greatest allowance.

...Let therefore your rules to your son be as few as is possible, and rather fewer than more than seem absolutely necessary. For if you burden him with many rules, one of these two things must necessarily follow; that either he must be very often punished, which will be of ill consequence, by making punishment too frequent and familiar; or else you must let the transgressions of some of your rules go unpunished, whereby they will of course grow contemptible, and your authority become cheap to him. Make but few laws, but see they be well observed, when once made. Few years require but few laws; and as his age increases when one rule is by practice well established, you may add another.

...keep them to the practice of what you would have grow into a habit in them by kind words and gentle admonitions, rather as minding them of what they forget, than by harsh rebukes and chiding, as if they were willfully guilty...

...Never trouble yourself about those faults in them, which you know age will cure... If his tender mind be filled with a veneration for his parents and teachers, which consists in love and esteem, and a fear to offend them; and with respect and good-will to all people; that respect will of itself teach those ways of expressing it, which he observes most acceptable. Be sure to keep up in him the principles of good-nature and kindness; make them as habitual as you can, by credit and commendation, and the good things accompanying that state: and when they have taken root in his mind, and are settled there by a continued practice, fear not; the ornaments of conversation, and the outside of fashionable manners, will come in their due time...



...What shall I do with my son? If I keep him always at home, he will be in danger to be my young master; and if I send him abroad, how is it possible to keep him from the contagion of rudeness and vice, which is so everywhere in fashion? In my house, he will perhaps be more innocent, but more ignorant, too, of the world, and being used constantly to the same faces, and little company will, when he comes abroad, be a sheepish or conceited creature... Virtue is harder to be got than a knowledge of the world; and if lost in a young man, is seldom recovered... A young man, before he leaves the shelter of his father's house, and the guard of a tutor, should be fortified with resolution, and made acquainted with men, to secure his virtue; lest he should be led into some ruinous course, or fatal precipice, before he is sufficiently acquainted with the dangers of conversation, and has steadiness enough not to yield to every temptation... But how any one's being put into a mixed herd of unruly boys, and then learning to wrangle at trap, or rook at span-farthing, fits him for civil conversation or business I do not see... I am sure, he who is able to be at the charge of a tutor at home, may there give his son a more genteel carriage, more manly thoughts, and a sense of what is worthy and becoming, with a greater proficiency in learning into the bargain, and ripen him up sooner into a man, than any at school can do... And if a young gentleman, bred at home, be not taught more of them than he could learn at school, his father has made a very ill choice of a tutor. Take a boy from the top of a grammar-school, and one of the same age, bred as he should be in his father's family, and bring them into good company together; and then see which of the two will have the more manly carriage, and address himself with the more becoming assurance to strangers....

Vice, if we may believe the general complaint, ripens so fast now-a-days, and runs up to seed so early in young people, that it is impossible to keep a lad from the spreading contagion, if you will venture him abroad in the herd, and trust to chance, or his own inclination, for the choice of his company at school...

It is virtue then, direct virtue, which is the hard and valuable part to be aimed at in education... And therefore I cannot but prefer breeding of a young gentleman at home in his father's sight, under a good governor, as much the best and safest way to this great and main end of education, when it can be had, and is ordered as it should be... This I am sure, a father that breeds his son at home, has the opportunity to have him more in his own company, and there give him what encouragement he thinks fit; and can keep him better from the taint of servants, and the meaner sort of people, than is possible to be done abroad. But what shall be resolved in the case, must in great measure be left to the parents...

Having under consideration how great the influence of company is, and how prone we are all, especially children, to imitation, I must here take the liberty to mind parents of this one thing, viz. That he that will have his son have a respect for him and his orders, must himself have a great reverence for his son. *Maxima debetur pueris reverentia* [The most scrupulous respect is due to boyhood]. You must do nothing before him, which you would not have him imitate... What I say of the father's carriage before his children, must extend itself to all those who have any authority over them, or for whom he would have them have any respect.

...learning to read, write, dance, foreign language, etc., as under the same privilege, there will be but very rarely any occasion for blows or force in an ingenuous education. The right way to teach them those things, is, to give them a liking and inclination to what you propose to them to be learned, and that will engage their industry and application. This I think no hard matter to do, if children be handled as they should be, and the rewards and punishments above-mentioned be carefully applied, and with them these few rules observed in the method of instructing them.

1. None of the things they are to learn should ever be made a burden to them, or imposed on them as a task. Whatever is so proposed, presently becomes irksome: the mind takes an aversion to it, though before it were a thing of delight or indifference. Let a child be but ordered to whip his top at a certain time every day, whether he has, or has not a mind to it; let this be but required of him as a duty, wherein he must spend so many hours morning and afternoon, and see whether he will not soon be weary of any play at this rate. Is it not so with grown men? What they do cheerfully of themselves, do they not presently grow sick of, and can no more endure, as soon as they find it is expected of them as a duty? Children have as much a mind to show that they are free, that their own good actions come from themselves, that they are absolute and independent, as any of the proudest of you grown men, think of them as you please.

2. As a consequence of this, they should seldom be put upon doing even those things you have got an inclination in them to, but when they have a mind and disposition to it. He that loves reading, writing, music, etc., finds yet in himself

certain seasons wherein those things have no relish to him; and, if at that time he forces himself to it, he only bothers and wearies himself to no purpose. So it is with children... For a child will learn three times as much when he is in tune, as he will with double the time and pains, when he goes awkwardly, or is dragged unwillingly to it. If this were minded as it should, children might be permitted to weary themselves with play, and yet have time enough to learn what is suited to the capacity of each age. And if things were ordered right, learning anything they should be taught, might be made as much a recreation to their play, as their play is to their learning... Get them but to ask their tutor to teach them, as they do often their play-fellows, instead of this calling upon them to learn, and they being satisfied that they act as freely in this, as they do in other things) they will go on with as much pleasure in it, and it will not differ from their other sports and play. By these ways, carefully pursued, I guess a child may be brought to desire to be taught anything you have a mind he should learn...

...But to things we would have them learn, the great and only discouragement I can observe, is, that they are called to it, 'tis made their business; they are teased and chid about it, and do it with trembling and apprehension; or, when they come willingly to it, are kept too long at it, till they are quite tired; all which intrenches too much on that natural freedom they extremely affect, and 'tis that liberty alone, which gives the true relish and delight to their ordinary play-games. Turn the tables, and you will find they will soon change their application; especially if they see the examples of others, whom they esteem and think above themselves... And I think it no hard matter, to gain this point; I am sure it will not be, where children have no ill examples set before them. The great danger therefore I apprehend, is only from servants and other ill-ordered children, or such other vicious or foolish people, who spoil children, both by the ill pattern they set before them in their own ill manners, and by giving them together, the two things they should never have at once; I mean vicious pleasures, and commendation.

...Children being to be restrained by the parents only in vicious (which, in their tender years, are only a few) things, a look a nod only ought to correct them, when they do amiss: Or, if words are sometimes to be used, they ought to be grave, kind and sober, representing the ill, or unbecomingness of the fault, rather than a hasty rating of the child for it, which makes him not sufficiently distinguish, whether your dislike be not more directed to him, than his fault...

...the shame of the whipping, and not the pain, should be the greatest part of the punishment. Shame of doing amiss, and deserving chastisement, is the only true restraint belonging to virtue. The smart of the rod, if shame accompanies it not soon ceases, and is forgotten; and will quickly, by use, lose its terror. I have known the children of a person of quality kept in awe, by the fear of having their shoes pulled off, as much as others by apprehension of a rod hanging over them. Some such punishment I think better than beating; for 'tis shame of the fault and the disgrace that attends it, that they should stand in fear of, rather than pain, if you would have them have a temper truly ingenuous. But stubbornness and an obstinate disobedience must be mastered with force and blows... For when once it comes to be a trial of skill, a contest for mastery betwixt you, as it is, if you command, and he refuses, you must be sure to carry it, whatever blows it costs, if a nod or words will not prevail; unless, for ever after, you intend to live in obedience to your son... The pain of the rod, the first occasion that requires it, continued and increased without leaving off till it has thoroughly prevailed, should first bend the mind, and settle the parent's authority: and then gravity mixed with kindness should forever after keep it...

...This is certain, however, if it does no good, it does great harm; if it reaches not the mind, and makes not the will supple, it hardens the offender; and whatever pain he has suffered for it, it does but endear to him his beloved stubbornness, which has got him this time the victory, and prepares him to contest and hope for it for the future. Thus, I doubt not but by ill-ordered correction, many have been taught to be obstinate and refractory, who otherwise would have been very pliant and tractable...

It will perhaps be wondered, that I mention reasoning with children: and yet I cannot but think that the true way of dealing with them. They understand it as early as they do language; and, if I misobserve not, they love to be treated as rational creatures, sooner than is imagined. 'Tis a pride should be cherished in them, and, as much as can be, made the greatest instrument to turn them by.



But when I talk of reasoning, I do not intend any other, but such as is suited to the child's capacity and apprehension. Nobody can think a boy of three or seven years old, should be argued with, as a grown man. Long discourses, and philosophical reasonings, at best, amaze and confound, but do not instruct, children. When I say therefore, that they must be treated as rational creatures, I mean, that you should make them sensible, by the mildness of your carriage, and the composure, even in your correction of them, that what you do is reasonable in you, and useful and necessary for them... Much less are children capable of reasonings from remote principles. They cannot conceive the force of long deductions: the reasons that move them must be obvious, and level to their thoughts, and such as may (if I may so say) be felt and touched. But yet, if their age, temper, and inclinations, be considered, they will never want such motives, as may be sufficient to convince them. If there be no other more particular, yet these will always be intelligible, and of force, to deter them from any fault, fit to be taken notice of in them, (viz.) that it will be a discredit and disgrace to them, and displease you.

But, of all the ways whereby children are to be instructed, and their manners formed, the plainest, easiest, and most efficacious, is to set before their eyes the examples of those things you would have them do or avoid. Which, when they are pointed out to them, in the practice of persons within their knowledge, with some reflections on their beauty or unbecomingness, are of more force to draw or deter their imitation, than any discourses which can be made to them. Virtues and vices can by no words be so plainly set before their understandings, as the actions of other men will show them, when you direct their observation, and bid them view this or that good or bad quality in their practice. And the beauty or uncomeliness of many things, in good and ill breeding, will be better learnt, and make deeper impressions on them, in the examples of others, than from any rules or instructions that can be given about them. This is a method to be used, not only whilst they are young, but to be continued, even as long as they shall be under another's tuition or conduct. Nay, I know not whether it be not the best way to be used by a father, as long as he shall think fit, on any occasion, to reform anything he wishes mended in his son; nothing sinking so gently and so deep, into men's minds, as example. And what ill they either overlook, or indulge in them themselves, they cannot but dislike, and be ashamed of, when it is set before them in another.

...'Tis not good husbandry to make his fortune rich, and his mind poor. I have often, with great admiration, seen people lavish it profusely in tricking up their children in fine clothes, lodging and feeding them sumptuously, allowing them more than enough of useless servants, and yet at the same time starve their minds, and not take sufficient care to cover that, which is the most shameful nakedness, viz., their natural wrong inclinations and ignorance. This I can look on as no other than a sacrificing to their own vanity; it showing more their pride, than true care of the good of their children...

The consideration of charge ought not, therefore, to deter those who are able: the great difficulty will be, where to find a proper person. For those of small age, parts, and virtue, are unfit for this employment: and those that have greater, will hardly be got to undertake such a charge. You must therefore look out early, and enquire everywhere; for the world has people of all sorts...

If you find it difficult to meet with such a tutor as we desire, you are not to wonder. I only can say, Spare no care nor cost to get such an one. All things are to be had that way: and I dare assure you, that, if you can get a good one, you will never repent the charge; but will always have the satisfaction to think it the money of all other the best laid out... In this choice be as curious, as you would in that of a wife for him: for you must not think of trial, or changing afterwards; that will cause great inconvenience to you, and greater to your son...

...The tutor therefore ought, in the first place, to be well-bred: and a young gentleman, who gets this one qualification from his governor, lets out with great advantage, and will find, that this one accomplishment will more open his way to him, get him more friends, and carry him farther in the world, than all hard words, or real knowledge he has got from the liberal arts, or his tutors learned encyclopaedia. Not that those should be neglected, but by no means preferred, or suffered to thrust out the other.

Besides being well-bred, the tutor should know the world well: the ways, the humors, the follies, the cheats, the faults of the age he has fallen into, and particularly of the country he lives in. These he should be able to show to his pupil, as he finds him capable; teach him skill in men, and their manners; pull off the mask which their several callings and

pretenses cover them with, and make his pupil discern what lies at the bottom, under such appearances, that he may not, as unexperienced young men are apt to do, if they are unwarned, take one thing for another, judge by the outside, and give himself up to show, and the insinuation of a fair carriage, or an obliging application...

The only fence against the world is a thorough knowledge of it, into which a young gentleman should be entered by degrees, as he can bear it; and the earlier the better, so he be in safe and skillful hands to guide him. The scene should be gently opened, and his entrance made step by step, and the dangers pointed out that attend him, from the several degrees, tempers, designs, and clubs of men. He should be prepared to be shocked by some, and caressed by others; warned who are like to oppose, who to mislead, who to undermine him, and who to serve him... This, I confess, containing one great part of wisdom, is not the product of some superficial thoughts, or much reading; but the effect of experience and observation in a man, who has lived in the world with his eyes open, and conversed with men of all sorts...

A great part of the learning now in fashion in the schools of Europe, and that goes ordinarily into the round of education, a gentleman may, in a good measure, be unfurnished with, without any great disparagement to himself, or prejudice to his affairs. But prudence and good breeding are, in all the stations and occurrences of life, necessary; and most young men suffer in the want of them... Nor is it requisite that he should be a thorough scholar, or possess in perfection all those sciences, which it is convenient a young gentleman should have a taste of, in some general view, or short system. A gentleman, that would penetrate deeper, must do it by his own genius and industry afterwards; for nobody ever went far in knowledge, or became eminent in any of the sciences, by the discipline and constraint of a master.

The great work of a governor is to fashion the carriage, and form the mind; to settle in his pupil good habits, and the principles of virtue and wisdom; to give him, by little and little, a view of mankind; and work him into a love and imitation of what is excellent and praise-worthy; and in the prosecution of it, to give him vigor, activity, and industry... For who expects, that under a tutor a young gentleman should be an accomplished critic, orator, or logician; go to the bottom of metaphysics, natural philosophy, or mathematics; or be a master in history or chronology? Though something of each of these is to be taught him: but it is only to open the door, that he may look in, and, as it were, begin, an acquaintance, but not to dwell there: and a governor (would be much blamed, that should keep his pupil too long, and lead him too far in most of them...

Seneca complains of the contrary practice in his time; and yet the Burgersdiciuses and the Scheiblers did not swarm in those days, as they do now in these. What would he have thought, if he had lived now, when the tutors think it their great business to fill the studies and heads of their pupils with such authors as these? He would have had much more reason to say, as he does, "Non vitae, sed scholae discimus," we learn not to live, but to dispute, and our education fits us rather for the university than the world...

...The sooner you treat him as a man, the sooner he will begin to be one: and if you admit him into serious discourses sometimes with you, you will insensibly raise his mind above the usual amusements of youth, and those trifling occupations which it is commonly wasted in. For it is easy to observe, that many young men continue longer in the thought and conversation of school-boys, than otherwise they would, because their parents keep them at that, distance, and in that low rank, by all their carriage to them.

...Nothing cements and establishes friendship and good-will, so much as confident communication of concerns and affairs... The reservedness and distance that fathers keep, often deprives their sons of that refuge, which would be of more advantage to them than an hundred rebukes and chidings...

But whatever he consults you about, unless it lead to some fatal and irremediable mischief, be sure you advise only as a friend of more experience; but with your advice mingle nothing of command or authority, no more than you would to your equal or a stranger...

...it will be fit to consider which way the natural make of his mind inclines him. Some men, by the unalterable frame of their constitutions, are stout, others timorous; some confident others modest, tractable or obstinate, curious or careless. There are not more differences in men's faces, and the outward lineaments of their bodies, than there are in

the makes and tempers of their minds; only there is this difference, that the distinguishing characters of the face; and the lineaments of the body, grow more plain and visible with time and age but the peculiar physiognomy of the mind is most discernible in children; before art and cunning have taught them to hide their deformities, and conceal their ill inclinations under a dissembled outside.

Begin therefore betimes nicely to observe your son's temper, and that, when he is under least restraint. See what are his predominant passions and prevailing inclinations; whether he be fierce or mild, bold or bashful, compassionate or cruel, open or reserved, etc. For as these are different in him, so are your methods to be different, and your authority must hence take measures to apply it self [in] different ways to him. These native propensities, these prevalences of constitution, are not to be cured by rules, or a direct contest, especially those of them that are the humbler and meaner sort, which proceed from fear and lowness of spirit; though with art they may be much mended, and turned to good purposes. But of this be sure, after all is done, the bias will always hang on that side that nature first placed it: and, if you carefully observe the characters of his mind now in the first scenes of his life, you will ever after be able to judge which way his thoughts lean, and what he aims at even hereafter, when, as he grows up, the plot thickens, and he puts on several shapes to act it.

I told you before, that children love liberty, and therefore they should be brought to do the things that are fit for them, without feeling any restraint laid upon them. I now tell you, they love something more; and that is dominion: and this is the first original of most vicious habits, that are ordinary and natural. This love of power and dominion shews itself very early, and that in these two things.

...whatever the matter be, about which it is conversant, whether great or small, the main (I had almost said only) thing to be considered, in every action of a child, is, what influence it will have upon his mind; what habit it tends to, and is like to settle in him; How it will become him when he is bigger; and if it be encouraged, whither it will lead him, when he is grown up... They should be brought to deny their appetites; and their minds as well as bodies, be made vigorous, easy, and strong, by the custom of having their inclinations in subjection, and their bodies exercised with hardships: but all this without giving them any mark or apprehension of ill-will towards them. The constant loss of what they craved or carved to themselves should teach them modesty, submission, and a power to forbear: but the rewarding their modesty, and silence, by giving them, what they liked, should also assure them of the love of those, who rigorously exacted this obedience. The contenting themselves now in the want of what they wished for is a Virtue, that another time should be rewarded with what is suited and acceptable to them; which should be bestowed on them, as if it were a natural consequence of their good behavior; and not a bargain about it. But you will lose your labor, and what is more, their love and reverence too, if they can receive from others what you deny them. This is to be kept very stanch, and carefully to be watched. And here the servants come again in my way.

...so they should always be heard, and fairly and kindly answered, when they ask after anything they would know, and desire to be informed about. Curiosity should be as carefully cherished in children, as other appetites suppressed... if a right course be taken to raise in them the desire of credit, esteem, and reputation, I do not at all doubt. And when they have so much true life put into them, they may freely be talked with about what most delights them, and be directed, or let loose to it; so that they may perceive that they are beloved and cherished, and that those under whose Tuition they are, are not Enemies to their satisfaction. Such a management will make them in love with the hand that directs them, and the virtue they are directed to, and the virtue they are directed to...

3. As to the having and possessing of things, teach them to part with what they have easily and freely to their friends; and let them find by experience, that the most liberal has always most plenty, with esteem and commendation to boot, and they will quickly learn to practice it. This, I imagine, will make brothers and sisters kinder and civiler to one another and consequently to others, than twenty rules about good manners, with which children are ordinarily perplexed and cumbered. Covetousness, and the desire of having in our possession, and under our dominion, more than we have need of, being the root of all evil, should be early and carefully weeded out; and the contrary quality, of a readiness to impart to others, implanted. This should be encouraged by great commendation and credit, and constantly taking care, that he loses nothing by his liberality. Let all the instances he gives of such freeness be always repaid, and with interest; and let him sensibly perceive, that the kindness he shows to others is no ill husbandry for himself; but that it brings a return of

kindness, both from those that receive it, and those who look on. Make this a contest among children, who shall out-do one another this way. And by this means, by a constant practice, children having made it easy to themselves to part with what they have, good-nature may be settled in them into an habit, and they may take pleasure, and pique themselves in being kind, liberal, and civil to others...

Crying is a fault that should not be tolerated in children; not only for the unpleasant and unbecoming noise it fills the house with, but for more considerable reasons, in reference to the children themselves, which is to be our aim in education. Their crying is of two sorts; either stubborn and domineering, or querulous and whining. 1. Their crying is very often a contention for mastery, and an open declaration of their insolence or obstinacy; when they have not the power to obtain their desire, they will, by their clamor and sobbing, maintain their title and right to it. This is open justifying themselves, and a sort of remonstrance of the unjustness of the oppression which denies them what they have a mind to.

2. Sometimes their crying is the effect of pain or true sorrow, and a bemoaning themselves under it. ... 1. The obstinate or stomachful crying should by no means be permitted; because it is but another way of flattering their desires, and encouraging those passions, which 'tis our main business to subdue: and if it be, as often it is, upon the receiving any correction, it quite defeats all the good effects of it; for any chastisement, which leaves them in this declared opposition, only serves to make them worse. The restraints and punishments laid on children are all misapplied and lost, as far as they do not prevail over their wills, teach them to submit their passions, and make their minds supple and pliant to what their parent's reason advises them now, and so prepare them to obey what their own reason shall advise hereafter. But if, in anything wherein they are crossed, they may be suffered to go away crying, they confirm themselves in their desires, and cherish the ill humor, with a declaration of their right, and a resolution to satisfy their inclination the first opportunity... This therefore is another reason why you should seldom chastise your children: for, whenever you come to that extremity, 'tis not enough to whip or beat them; you must do it till you find you have subdued their minds; till with submission and patience they yield to the correction; which you shall best discover by their crying, and their ceasing from it upon your bidding. Without this, the beating of children is but a passionate tyranny over them: and it is mere cruelty, and not correction, to put their bodies in pain, without doing their minds any good...

2. ...They should be hardened against all sufferings, especially of the body, and have a tenderness only of shame and for reputation. The many inconveniences this life is exposed to, require we should not be too sensible of every little hurt... In the little harms they suffer, from knocks and falls, they should not be pitied for falling, but bid do so again; which is a better way to cure their falling than either chiding or bemoaning them. But, let the hurts they receive be what they will, stop their crying, and that will give them more quiet and ease at present, and harden them for the future.

Cowardice and courage are so nearly related to the fore-mentioned tempers, that it may not be amiss here to take notice of them. Fear is a passion, that, if rightly governed, has its use. And though self-love seldom fails to keep it watchful and high enough in us, yet there may be an excess on the daring side. Fool-hardiness and insensibility of danger, being as little reasonable, as trembling and shrinking at the approach of every little evil. Fear was given us as a monitor to quicken our industry, and keep us upon our guard against the approaches of evil; and therefore to have no apprehension of mischief at hand, not to mistake a just estimate of the danger, but heedlessly to run into it, be the hazard what it will, without considering of what use or consequence it may be, is not the resolution of a rational creature, but brutish fury.

...Courage, that makes us bear up against dangers that we fear, and evils that we feel, is of great use in an estate, as ours is in this life, exposed to assaults on all hands: and therefore it is very advisable to get children into this armor as early as you can... True fortitude is prepared for dangers of all kinds; and unmoved, whatsoever evil it be that threatens. I do not mean unmoved with any fear at all. Where danger shows itself, apprehension cannot, without stupidity, be wanting: where danger is, sense of danger should be; and so much fear as should keep us awake, and excite our attention, industry and vigor; but not disturb the calm use of our reason, nor hinder the execution of what that dictates.

The first step to get this noble and manly steadiness, is, what I have above-mentioned, carefully to keep children, from frights of all kinds, when they are young. Let not any fearful apprehension be talked into them, nor terrible objects

surprise them... The next thing is, by gentle degrees to accustom children to those things they are too much afraid of. But here great caution is to be used, that you do not make too much haste, nor attempt this cure too early, for fear lest you increase the mischief instead of remedying it... The only thing we naturally are afraid of is pain, or loss of pleasure. And because these are not annexed to any shape, color, or size of visible objects, we are frightened with none of them, till either we have felt pain from them, or have notions put into us that they will do us harm... Your child shrieks, and runs away at the sight of a frog; let another catch it, and lay it down at a good distance from him: at first accustom him to look upon it; when he can do that, then to come nearer to it, and see it leap, without emotion; then to touch it lightly, when it is held fast in another's hand and so on, till he can come to handle it as confidently as a butterfly, or a sparrow. By the same way any other vain terrors may be removed; if care be taken, that you go not too fast, and push not the child on to a new degree of assurance, till he be thoroughly confirmed in the former... Successes of this kind, often repeated, will make him find, that evils are not always so certain, or so great, as our fears represent them; and that the way to avoid them, is not to run away, or be discomposed, dejected and deterred by fear, where either our credit or duty requires us to go on.

But since the great foundation of fear in children is pain, the way to harden and fortify children against fear and danger is, to accustom them to suffer pain... and they who have once brought themselves not to think bodily pain the greater of evils, or that which they ought to stand most in fear of, have made no small advance towards virtue... inuring children gently to suffer some degrees of pain without shrinking, is a way to gain firmness to their minds, and lay a foundation for courage and resolution in the future part of their lives...

Managed by these degrees, and with such circumstances, I have seen a child run away laughing, with good smart blows of a wand on his back, who would have cried for an unkind word, and been very sensible of the chastisement of a cold look from the same person...

...Children should from the beginning be bred up in an abhorrence of killing or tormenting any living creature, and be taught not to spoil or destroy anything, unless it be for the preservation or advantage of some other that is nobler...

...whatever miscarriage a child is guilty of, and whatever be the consequence of it, the thing to be regarded in taking notice of it, is only what root it springs from, and what habit it is like to establish; and to that the correction ought to be directed, and the child not to suffer any punishment for any harm which may have come by his play or inadvertency. The faults to be amended lie in the mind; and if they are such as either age will cure, or no ill habits will follow from...

...It is not unusual to observe the children in gentlemen's families treat the servants of the house with domineering words, names of contempt, and an imperious carriage; as if they were of another race and species beneath them. Whether ill example, the advantage of fortune, or their natural vanity inspire this haughtiness; it should be prevented, or weeded out; and a gentle, courteous, affable carriage towards the lower ranks of men, placed in the room of it. No part of their superiority will be hereby lost: but the distinction increased, and their authority strengthened... If they are suffered from their cradles to treat men ill and rudely, because by their father's title they think they have a little power over them, at best it is ill-bred, and if care be not taken, will by degrees nurse up their natural pride into an habitual contempt of those beneath them. And where will that probably end, but in oppression and cruelty?

Curiosity in children (which I had occasion just to mention, section 108) is but an appetite after knowledge, and therefore ought to be encouraged in them, not only as a good sign, but as the great instrument nature has provided to remove that ignorance they were born with, and which, without this busy inquisitiveness, will make them dull and useless creatures. The ways to encourage it, and keep it active and vigorous, are, I suppose, these following: 1. Not to check or discountenance any inquiries he shall make, nor suffer them to be laughed at; but to answer all his questions, and explain the matters he desires to know, so as to make them as much intelligible to him. as suits the capacity of his age and knowledge... Mark what 'tis his mind aims at in the question, and not what words he expresses it in... For knowledge to the understanding is acceptable as light to the eyes: and children are please and delighted with it exceedingly, especially if they see that their inquiries are regarded, and that their desire of knowing is encouraged and commended. And I doubt not, but one great reason why many children abandon themselves wholly to silly sports; and trifle away all their time in trifling, is, because they have found their curiosity balked, and their inquiries neglected...

...Let others, whom they esteem, be told before their faces of the knowledge they have in such and such things; and since we are all, even from our cradles, vain and proud creatures, let their vanity be flattered with things that will do them good, and let their pride set them on work on something which may turn to their advantage. Upon this ground you shall find, that there cannot be a greater spur to the attaining what you would have the eldest learn and know himself, than to set him upon teaching it his younger brothers and sisters.

3. As children's inquiries are not to be slighted, so also great care is to be taken that they never receive deceitful and eluding answers...

...and if by chance their curiosity leads them to ask what they should not know, it is a great deal better to tell them plainly that it is a thing that belongs not to them to know, than to pop them off with a falsehood or a frivolous answer.

...For where there is no desire, there will be no industry.

If you have not hold enough upon him this way to stir up rigor and activity in him, you must employ him in some constant bodily labor, whereby he may get a habit of doing something... and if they have some little hardship and shame in them, it may not be the worse, to make them the sooner weary him, and desire to return to his book...

We formerly observed, that variety and freedom was that that delighted children, and recommended their plays to them; and that therefore their book, or anything we would have them learn, should not be enjoined them as business. This their parents, tutors, and teachers are apt to forget... Children quickly distinguish between what is required of them and what not... Make him play so many hours every day, not as a punishment for playing, but as if it were the business required of him. This, if I mistake not, will in a few days, make him so weary of his most beloved sport, that he will prefer his book, or any thing to it...

This, I think, is sufficiently evident, that children generally hate to be idle. All the care then is, that their busy humor should be constantly employed in something of use to them; which if you will attain, you must make what you would have them do a recreation to them, and not a business. The way to do this, so that they may not perceive you have any hand in it is this proposed here, viz. to make them weary of that which you would not have them do, by enjoining and making them, under some pretense or other, do it till they are surfeited. For example: Does your son play at top and scourge too much? Enjoin him to play so many hours every day, and look that he do it; and you shall see he will quickly be sick of it and willing to leave it. By this means, making the recreations you dislike a business to him, he will of himself with delight betake himself to those things you would have him do, especially if they be proposed as rewards for having performed his task in that play which is commanded him...

...One thing more about children's play-things may be worth their parents care. Though it be agreed they should have of several sorts; yet, I think they should have none bought for them. This will hinder that great variety they are often overcharged with, which serves only to teach the mind to wander after change and superfluity, to be unquiet, and perpetually stretching itself after something more still, though it knows not what, and never to be satisfied with what it has...

How then shall they have the play-games you allow them, if none must be bought for them? I answer, they should make them themselves, or at least endeavor it, and set themselves about it; till then they should have none, and till then they will want none of any great artifice. A smooth pebble, a piece of paper, the mother's bunch of keys, or any thing they cannot hurt themselves with, serves as much to divert little children, as those more chargeable and curious toys from the shops, which are presently out of order and broken...

Lying is so ready and cheap a cover for any miscarriage, and so much in fashion amongst all sorts of people, that a child can hardly avoid observing the use is made of it on all occasions, and so can scarce be kept, without great care, from getting into it... And the first time he is found in a lie, it should rather be wondered at, as a monstrous thing in him, than reprov'd as an ordinary fault. If that keeps him not from relapsing, the next time he must be sharply rebuked, and fall into the state of great displeasure of his father and mother, and all about him, who take notice of it. And if this way



work not the cure, you must come to blows; for, after he has been thus warned, a premeditated lie must always be looked upon as obstinacy, and never be permitted to 'scape unpunished.

Children, afraid to have their faults seen in their naked colors, will like the rest of the sons of Adam, be apt to make excuses. This is a fault usually bordering upon, and leading to untruth, and is not to be indulged in them...

That which every gentleman (that takes any care of his education) desires for his son, besides the estate he leaves him, is contained I suppose in these four things, Virtue, Wisdom, Breeding, and Learning...

I place Virtue as the first and most necessary of those endowments that belong to a man or a gentleman, as absolutely requisite to make him valued and beloved by others, acceptable or tolerable to himself; without that, I think, he will be happy neither in this nor the other world.

As the foundation of this, there ought very early to be imprinted on his mind a true notion of God, as of the independent Supreme Being, Author and Maker of all things, from whom we receive all our good, who loves us, and gives us all things; and, consequent to it, a love and reverence of this Supreme Being... And I am apt to think, the keeping children constantly morning and evening to acts of devotion to God, as to their Maker, Preserver, and Benefactor, in some plain and short form of prayer, suitable to their age and capacity, will be of much more use to them in religion, knowledge, and virtue, than to distract their thoughts with curious inquiries into his inscrutable essence and being.

...Forebear any discourse of other spirits, till the mention of them coming in his way, upon occasion hereafter to be set down, and his reading the Scripture history, put him upon that inquiry.

Wisdom I take, in the popular acceptation, for a man's managing his business ably and with foresight in this world. This is the product of a good natural temper, application of mind and experience together, and not to be taught children...

The next good quality belonging to a gentleman is good breeding...

...We ought not to think so well of ourselves as to stand upon our own value; or assume a preference to others, because of any advantage we may imagine we have over them; but modestly to take what is offered, when it is our due. But yet we ought to think so well of ourselves, as to perform those actions which are incumbent on and expected of us, without discomposure or disorder...

...part of ill breeding lies in the appearance of too little care of pleasing or showing respect to those we have to do with. To avoid these, two things are requisite: first, a disposition of the mind not to offend others: and, secondly, the most acceptable and agreeable way of expressing that disposition. From the one, men are called civil: from the other, well-fashioned...

You will wonder, perhaps, that I put learning last, especially if I tell you I think it the least part. This will seem strange in the mouth of a bookish man: and this making usually the chief, if not only bustle and stir about children, this being almost that alone, which is thought on, when people talk of education, makes it the greater paradox. When I consider what a-do is made about a little Latin and Greek, how many years are spent in it, and what a noise and business it makes to no purpose, I can hardly forbear thinking that the parents of children still live in fear of the school-master's rod, which they look on as the only instrument of education; as a language or two to be its whole business. How else is it possible, that a child should be chained to the oar seven, eight, or ten of the best years of his life, to get a language or two, which I think might be had at a great deal cheaper rate of pains and time, and be learned almost in playing. Forgive me therefore, if I say, I cannot with patience think, that a young gentleman should be put into the herd, and be driven with a whip and scourge, as if he were to run the gauntlet through the several classes, "ad cariendum in genii cultum."...Not so, not so fast, I beseech you. Reading, and writing, and learning, I allow to be necessary, but yet not the chief business. I imagine you would think him a very foolish fellow, that should not value a virtuous or a wise man infinitely before a great scholar. Not but that I think learning a great help to both, in well-disposed minds; but yet it must be confessed also, that in others not so disposed, it helps them only to be the more foolish or worse men. I say this, that, when you consider of the breeding of your son, and are looking out for a school-master, or a tutor, you would not

have (as is usual) Latin and logic only in your thoughts. Learning must be had, but in the second place, as subservient only to greater qualities. Seek out somebody that may know how discreetly to frame his manners; place him in hands where you may, as much as possible, secure his innocence, cherish and nurse up the good, and gently correct and weed out any bad inclinations, and settle in him good habits. This is the main point; and this being provided for, learning may be had into the bargain, and that, as I think, at a very easy rate, by methods that may be thought on.

When he can talk, 'tis time he should begin to learn to read. But as to this, give me leave here to inculcate again what is very apt to be forgotten, viz. that a great care is to be taken that it be never made as a business to him, nor he look on it as a task. We naturally, as I said; even from our cradles, love liberty, and have therefore an aversion to many things for no other reason but because they are enjoined us. I have always had a fancy that learning might be made a play and recreation to children; and that they might be brought to desire to be taught, if it were proposed to them as a thing of honor, credit, delight, and recreation, or as a reward for doing something else, and if they were never chid or corrected for the neglect of it. That which confirms me in this opinion, is, that amongst the Portuguese, 'tis so much a fashion and emulation amongst their children to learn to read and write, that they cannot hinder them from it: they will learn it one from another and are as intent on it as if it were forbid them... make them seek it, as another sort of play or recreation. But then, as I said before, it must never be imposed as a task, nor made a trouble to them. There may be dice and playthings, with the letters on them, to teach children the alphabet by playing; and twenty other ways may be found, suitable to their particular tempers, to make this kind of learning a sport to them.

Thus children may be cozened into a knowledge the letters; be taught to read without perceiving it to be anything but a sport, and play themselves into that others are whipped for. Children should not have anything like work, or serious, laid on them; neither their minds nor bodies will bear it. It injures their health; and their being forced and tied down to their books, in an age at enmity with all such restraint, has; I doubt not, been the reason why a great many have hated books and learning all their lives after: it is like a surfeit, that leaves an aversion behind, not to be removed.

I have therefore thought, that if playthings were fitted to this purpose, as they are usually to none, contrivances might be made to teach children to read, whilst they thought they were only playing. For example; what if an ivory-ball were made like that of the Royal-Oak lottery, with thirty-two sides, or one rather of twenty-four or twenty-five sides; and upon several of those sides pasted on an A, upon several others B, on others C, and on others D? I would have you begin with but these four letters, or perhaps only two at first; and when he is perfect in them, then add another; and so on, till each side having one letter, there be on it the whole alphabet. This I would have others play with before him, it being as good a sort of play to lay a stake who shall first throw an A or B, as who upon dice shall throw six or seven. This being a play amongst you, tempt him not to it, lest you make it business; for I would not have him understand it is anything but a play of older people, and I doubt not but he will take to it of himself. And that he may hate the more reason to think it is a play, that he is sometimes in favor admitted to, when the play is done, the ball should be laid up safe out of his reach, that so it may not, by his having it in his keeping at any time, grow stale to him.

To keep up his eagerness to it, let him think it a game belonging to those above him; and when by this means he knows the letters, by changing them into syllables, he may learn to read, without knowing how he did so, and never have any chiding or trouble about it, nor fall out with books, because of the hard usage and vexation they have caused him. Children, if you observe them, take abundance of pains to learn several games, which, if they should be enjoined them, they would abhor as a task and business...

Thus much for learning to read, which let him never be driven to, nor chid for; cheat him into it if you can, but make it not a business for him. 'Tis better it be a year later before he can read, than that he should this way get an aversion to learning. If you have any contests with him, let it be in matters of moment, of truth, and good-nature; but lay no task on him about A B C. Use your skill to make his will supple and pliant to reason: teach him to love credit and commendation; to abhor being thought ill or meanly of, especially by you and his mother; and then the rest will come all easily...

When by these gentle ways he begins to be able to read, some easy, pleasant book, suited to his capacity, should be put into his hands, wherein the entertainment that he finds might draw him on, and reward his pains in reading; and yet not such as should fill his head with perfectly useless trumpery, or lay the principles of vice and folly. To this purpose I think

Aesop's Fables the best, which being stories apt to delight and entertain a child, may yet afford useful reflections to a grown man; and if his memory retain them all his life after, he will not repent to find them there, amongst his manly thoughts and serious business. If his Aesop has pictures in it, it will entertain him much the better, and encourage him to read when it carries the increase of knowledge with it: for such visible objects children bear talked of in vain, and without any satisfaction, whilst they have no ideas of them; those ideas being not to be had from sounds, but from the things themselves, or their pictures. And therefore, I think, as soon as he begins to spell, as many pictures of animals should be got him as can be found, with the printed names to them, which at the same time will invite him to read, and afford him matter of inquiry and knowledge. Reynard the Fox is another book, I think, that may be made use of to the same purpose. And if those about him will talk to him often about the stories he has read, and hear him tell them, it will, besides other advantages, add encouragement and delight to his reading, when he finds there is some use and pleasure in it, which in the ordinary method, I think, learners do not till late; and so take books only for fashionable amusements, or impertinent troubles, good for nothing.

The Lord's Prayer, the Creeds, and Ten Commandments, 'tis necessary he should learn perfectly by heart; hut, I think, not by reading them himself in his primer, but by somebody's repeating them to him, even before he can read. But learning by heart, and learning to read, should not, I think, be mixed, and so one made to clog the other. But his learning to read should be made as little trouble or business to him as might be. What other books there are in English of the kind of those above-mentioned, fit to engage the liking of children, and tempt them to read, I do not know; but am apt to think that children, being generally delivered over to the method of schools, where the fear of the rod is to enforce, and not any pleasure of the employment to invite them to learn; this sort of useful books, amongst the number of silly ones that are of all sorts, have yet had the fate to be neglected; and nothing that I know has been considered of this kind out of the ordinary road of the horn-book, primer, psalter, Testament, and Bible.

As for the Bible, which children are usually employed in to exercise and improve their talent in reading, I think, the promiscuous reading of it through by chapters as they lie in order, is so far from being of any advantage to children, either for the perfecting their reading or principling their religion, that perhaps a worse could not be found. For what pleasure or encouragement can it be to a child, to exercise himself in reading those parts of a book where he understands nothing? And how little are the law of Moses, the Song of Solomon, the prophecies in the Old, and the Epistles and Apocalypse in the New Testament, suited to a child's capacity? And though the history of the Evangelists and the Acts have something easier; yet, taken all together, it is very disproportionate to the understanding of childhood. I grant, that the principles of religion are to be drawn from thence, and in the words of the Scripture; yet none should be proposed to a child but such as are suited to a child's capacity and notions. But it is far from this to read through the whole Bible, and that for reading's sake. And what an odd jumble of thoughts must a child have in his head, if he have any at all, such as he should have concerning religion, who in his tender age reads all the parts of the Bible indifferently, as the word of God, without any other distinction. I am apt to think that this, in some men, has been the very reason why they never had clear and distinct thoughts of it all their lifetime.

And now I am by chance fallen on this subject, give me leave to say, that there are some parts of the Scripture which may be proper to be put into the hands of a child to engage him to read; such as are the story of Joseph and his brethren, of David and Goliath, of David and Jonathan, etc., and others, that he should be made to read for his instruction; as that, "What you would have others do unto you, do you the same unto them;" and such other easy and plain moral rules, which, being fitly chosen, ought often be made use of, both for reading and instruction together... Dr. Worthington, to avoid this, has made a catechism which has all its answers in the precise words of the Scripture, a thing of good example and such a sound form of words, as no Christian can except against as not fit for his child to learn. Of this, as soon as he can say the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments by heart, it may be fit for him to learn a question every day, or every week, as his understanding is able to receive and his memory to retain them. And when he has this catechism perfectly by heart, so as readily and roundly to answer to any question in the whole book, it may be convenient to lodge in his mind the moral rules, scattered up and down in the Bible, as the best exercise of his memory, and that which may be always a rule to him, ready at hand, in the whole conduct of his life.

When he can read English well, it will be seasonable to enter him in writing. And here the first thing should be taught him is, to hold his pen right; and this he should be perfect in, before he should be suffered to put it to paper: for not only children, but anybody else, that would do anything well, should never be put upon too much of it at once, or be set to perfect themselves in two parts of an action at the same time, if they can possibly be separated. When he has learned to hold his pen right, (to hold it betwixt the thumb and forefinger alone, I think best; but on this you should consult some good writing-master, or any other person who writes well and quick) then next he should learn how to lay his paper, and place his arm and body to it...

When he can write well, and quick, I think it may be convenient, not only to continue the exercise of his hand in writing, but also to improve the use of it farther in drawing, a thing very useful to a gentleman on several occasions... I do not mean that I would have your son a perfect painter; to be that to any tolerable degree, will require more time than a young gentleman can spare from his other improvements of greater importance... Short-hand, an art, as I have been told, known only in England, may perhaps be thought worth the learning, both for despatch in what men write for their own memory, and concealment of what they would not have lie open to every eye.

As soon as he can speak English, it is time for him to learn some other language: this nobody doubts of, when French is proposed. And the reason is, because people are accustomed to the right way of teaching that language, which is by talking it into children in constant conversation, and not by grammatical rules. The Latin tongue would easily be taught the same way, if his tutor, being constantly with him, would talk nothing else to him, and make him answer still in the same language. But because French is a living language, and to be used more in speaking, that should be first learned, that the yet pliant organs of speech might be accustomed to a due formation of these sounds, and he get the habit of pronouncing French well, which is the harder to be done the longer it is delayed.

When he can speak and read French well, which in this method is usually in a year or two, he should proceed to Latin, which 'tis a wonder parents, when they have had the experiment in French, should not think ought to be learned the same way by talking and reading. Only care is to be taken, whilst he is learning these foreign languages, by speaking and reading nothing else to his tutor, that he do not forget to read English, which may be preserved by his mother, or somebody else, hearing him read some chosen parts of the Scripture, or other English book, every day. 164 Latin I look upon as absolutely necessary to a gentleman; and indeed custom, which prevails over everything, has made it so much a part of education, that even those children are whipped to it, and made spend many hours of their precious time uneasily in Latin, who, after they are once gone from school, are never to have more to do with it as long as they live. Can there be anything more ridiculous than that a father should waste his own money, and his son's time, in setting him to learn the Roman language, when, at the same time, he designs him for a trade, wherein he, having no use of Latin, fails not to forget that little which he brought from school, and which it is ten to one he abhors for the ill usage it procured him?

If therefore a man could be got who himself speaks good Latin, who would be always about your son and talk constantly to him and make him read Latin, that would be the true, genuine and easy way of teaching him Latin, and that I could wish; since besides teaching him a language without pains or chiding (which children are wont to be whipped for at school six or seven years together) he might at the same time not only form his mind and manners, but instruct him also in several sciences such as are a good part of geography, astronomy, chronology, anatomy, besides some parts of history and all other parts of knowledge of things that fall under the senses, and require little more than memory. For there, if we would take the true way, our knowledge should begin and in those things be laid the foundation, and not in the abstract notions of logic and metaphysics, which are fitter to amuse than inform the understanding in its first setting out towards knowledge. In which abstract speculations when young men have had their heads employed a while, without finding the success and improvement or use of it which they expected, they are apt to have mean thoughts either of learning or themselves, to quit their studies and throw away their books, as containing nothing but hard words and empty sounds; or even concluding that if there be any real knowledge in them, they themselves have not understanding capable of it...

...In teaching of children this too, I think, it is to be observed, that in most cases, where they stick, they are apt to be farther puzzled, by putting them upon finding it out themselves... Therefore, wherever they are at a stand, and are willing

to go forward, help them presently over the difficulty, without any rebuke or chiding; remembering, that where harsher ways are taken, they are the effect only of pride and peevishness in the teacher, who expects children should instantly be masters of as much as he knows: whereas he should rather consider that his business is to settle in them habits, not angrily to inculcate rules, which serve for little in the conduct of our lives; at least are of no use to children, who forget them as soon as given. ...The great use and skill of a teacher is to make all as easy as he can....

This, I think, will be agreed to, that if a gentleman be to study any language, it ought to be that of his own country, that he may understand the language, which he has constant use of, with the utmost accuracy. There is yet a farther reason why masters and teachers should raise no difficulties to their scholars; but, on the contrary, should smooth their way and readily help them forwards where they find them stop. Children's minds are narrow and weak, and usually susceptible but of one thought at once. Whatever is in a child's head, fills it for the time, especially if set on with any passion. It should therefore be the skill and art of the teacher, to clear their heads of all other thoughts, whilst they are learning of anything, the better to make room for what he would instill into them, that it may be received with attention and application, without which it leaves no impression. The natural temper of children disposes their minds to wander. Novelty alone takes them; whatever that presents, they are presently eager to have a taste of, and are as soon satiated with it. They quickly grow weary of the same thing, and so have almost their whole delight in change and variety. It is a contradiction to the natural state of childhood for them to fix their fleeting thoughts. Whether this be owing to the temper of their brains, or the quickness or instability of their animal spirits, over which the mind has not yet got a full command; this is visible, that it is a pain to children to keep their thoughts steady to anything. A lasting, continued attention is one of the hardest tasks that can be imposed on them: and therefore, he that requires their application, should endeavor to make what he proposes as grateful and agreeable as possible; at least, he ought to take care not to join any displeasing or frightful idea with it. If they come not to their books with some kind of liking and relish, it is no wonder their thoughts should be perpetually shifting from what disgusts them, and seek better entertainment in more pleasing objects, after which they will unavoidably be gadding. It is, I know, the usual method of tutors to endeavor to procure attention in their scholars, and to fix their minds to the business in hand by rebukes and corrections, if they find them over so little wandering. But such treatment is sure to produce the quite contrary effect. Passionate words or blows from the tutor, fill the child's mind with terror and affrightment, which immediately takes it wholly up, and leaves no room for other impressions....

It is true, parents and governors ought to settle and establish their authority, by an awe over the minds of those under their tuition; and to rule them by that: but when they have got an ascendant over them, they should use it with great moderation, and not make themselves such scarecrows, that their scholars should always tremble in their sight. Such an austerity may make their government easy to themselves, but of very little use to their pupils. It is impossible children should learn anything whilst their thoughts are possessed and disturbed with any passion, especially fear, which makes the strongest impression on their yet tender and weak spirits. Keep the mind in an easy, calm temper, when you would have it receive your instructions, or any increase of knowledge. It is as impossible to draw fair and regular characters on a trembling mind, as on a shaking paper. The great skill of a teacher is to get and keep the attention of his scholar: whilst he has that, he is sure to advance as fast as the learner's abilities will carry him, and without that, all his bustle and bother will be to little or no purpose. To attain this, he should make the child comprehend (as much as may be) the usefulness of what he teaches him; and let him see, by what he has learned, that he can do something which he could not do before, something which gives him some power and real advantage above others who are ignorant of it. To this he should add sweetness in all his instructions; and by a certain tenderness in his whole carriage, make the child sensible that he loves him, and designs nothing but his good; the only way to beget love in the child, which will make him hearken to his lessons, and relish what he teaches him. Nothing but obstinacy should meet with any imperiousness or rough usage. All other faults should be corrected with a gentle hand; and kind, encouraging words will work better and more effectually upon a willing mind, and even prevent a good deal of that perverseness which rough and imperious usage often produces in well-disposed and generous minds. It is true, obstinacy and willful neglects must be mastered, even though it cost blows to do it: but I am apt to think perverseness in the pupils is often the effect of frowardness in the tutor; and that most children would seldom have deserved blows, if needless and misapplied roughness had not taught them ill-nature, and given them an aversion to their teacher, and all that comes from him...

Let the awe he has got upon their minds be so tempered with the constant marks of tenderness and good-will, that affection may spur them to their duty, and make them find a pleasure in complying with his dictates. This will bring them with satisfaction to their tutor make them hearken to him, as to one who is their friend, that cherishes them, and takes pains for their good; this will keep their thoughts easy and free, whilst they are with him, the only temper wherein the mind is capable of receiving new information, and of admitting into itself those impressions, which if not taken and retained, all that they and their teacher do together, is lost labor; there is much uneasiness, and little learning.

...That if grammar ought to be taught at any time, it must be to one that can speak the language already: how else can he be taught the grammar of it? ...

...But whatever you are teaching him, have a care still, that you do not clog him with too much at once, or make anything his business, but downright virtue, or reprove him for anything but vice, or some apparent tendency to it...

I hear it is said, That children should be employed in getting things by heart, to exercise and improve their memories. I could wish this were said with as much authority of reason, as it is with forwardness of assurance; and that this practice were established upon good observation, more than old custom; for it is evident, that strength of memory is owing to a happy constitution, and not to any habitual improvement got by exercise. It is true, what the mind is intent upon, and for fear of letting it slip, often imprints afresh on itself by frequent reflection, that it is apt to retain, but still according to its own natural strength of retention. An impression made on bees-wax or lead will not last so long as on brass or steel. Indeed, if it be renewed often, it may last the longer; but every new reflecting on it is a new impression, is from thence one is to reckon, if one would know how long the mind retains it...

I do not mean hereby, that there should be no exercise given to children's memories. I think their memories should be employed, but not in learning by rote whole pages out of books, which, the lesson being once said, and that task over, are delivered up again to oblivion, and neglected forever. This mends neither the memory nor the mind. What they should learn by heart out of authors, I have above mentioned: and such wise and useful sentences being once given in charge to their memories, they should never be suffered to forget again, but be often called to account for them: whereby, besides the use those sayings may be to them in their future life, as so many good rules and observations, they will be taught to reflect often... and therefore, I think, it may do well, to give them something every day to remember; but something still, that is in itself worth the remembering, and what you would never have out of mind, whenever you call, or they themselves search for it. This will oblige them often to turn their thoughts inwards, than which you cannot wish them a better intellectual habit.

But under whose care soever a child is put to be taught, during the tender and flexible years of his life, this is certain, it should be one who thinks Latin and language the least part of education; one, who knowing how much virtue, and a well-tempered soul, is to be preferred to any sort of learning or language, makes it his chief business to form the mind of his scholars, and give that a right disposition: which, if once got, though all the rest should be neglected, would, in due time, produce all the rest; and which, if it be not got, and settled, so as to keep out ill and vicious habits, languages and sciences, and all the other accomplishments of education, will be to no purpose, but to make the worse or more dangerous man...

But to return to what I was saying: he that takes on him the charge of bringing up young men, especially young gentlemen, should have something more in him than Latin, more than even a knowledge in the liberal sciences; he should be a person of eminent virtue and prudence, and with good sense have good humor, and the skill to carry himself with gravity, ease, and kindness, in a constant conversation with his pupils.

At the same time that he is learning French and Latin, a child, as has been said, may also be entered in arithmetic, geography, chronology, history, and geometry, too. For if these be taught him in French or Latin, when he begins once to understand either of these tongues, he will get a knowledge in these sciences, and the language to boot. Geography, I think, should be begun with; for the learning of the figure of the globe, the situation and boundaries of the four parts of the world, and that of particular kingdoms and countries, being only an exercise of the eyes and memory, a child with pleasure will learn and retain them...



When he has the natural parts of the globe well fixed in his memory, it may then be time to begin arithmetic...

Arithmetic is the easiest, and consequently the first sort of abstract reasoning, which the mind commonly bears, or accustoms itself to: and is of so general use in all parts of life and business, that scarce any thing is to be done without it. This is certain, a man cannot have too much of it, nor too perfectly; he should therefore begin to be exercised in counting, as soon, and as far, as he is capable of it; and do something in it every day, till he is master of the art of numbers. When he understands addition and subtraction, he may then be advanced farther in geography, and after he is acquainted with the poles, zones, parallel circles, and meridians, be taught longitude and latitude, and the use of maps...

When that is done, and he knows pretty well the constellations of this our hemisphere, it may be time to give him some notions of this our planetary world, and to that purpose it may not be amiss to make him a draught of the Copernican system; and therein explain to him the situation of the planets, their respective distances from the sun, the center of their revolutions... but also the likeliest to be true in itself. But in this, as in all other parts of instruction, great care must be taken with children, to begin with that which is plain and simple, and to teach them as little as can be at once, and settle that well in their heads, before you proceed to the next, or anything new in that science. Give them first one simple idea, and see that they take it right, and perfectly comprehend it, before you go any farther; and then add some other simple idea, which lies next in your way to what you aim at; and so proceeding by gentle and insensible steps, children, without confusion and amazement, will have their understandings opened, and their thoughts extended, farther than could have been expected. And when any one has learned anything himself, there is no such way to fix it in his memory, and to encourage him to go on as to set him to teach it others.

When he has once got such an acquaintance with the globes, as is above-mentioned, he may be fit to be tried a little in geometry...

With geography, chronology ought to go hand in hand; I mean the general part of it, so that he may have in his mind a view of the whole current of time, and the several considerable epochs that are made use of in history. Without these two, history, which is the great mistress of prudence, and civil knowledge; and ought to be the proper study of a gentleman, or man of business in the world; without geography and chronology, I say, history, will be very ill retained, and very little useful...

As nothing teaches, so nothing delights, more than history. The first of these recommends it to the study of grown men, the latter makes me think it the fittest for a young lad... and thus by a gradual progress from the plainest and easiest historians, he may at last come to read the most difficult and sublime of the Latin authors, such as are Tully, Virgil, and Horace.

The knowledge of virtue, all along from the beginning, in all the instances he is capable of, being taught him, more by practice than rules; and the love of reputation, instead of satisfying his appetite, being made habitual in him; I know not whether he should read any other discourses of morality but what he finds in the Bible; or have any system of ethics put into his hand, till he can read Tully's Offices, not as a school-boy to learn Latin, but as one that would be informed in the principles and precepts of virtue for the conduct of his life.

... A virtuous and well-behaved young man, that is well versed in the general part of the civil law (which concerns not the chicane of private cases, but the affairs and intercourse of civilized nations in general, grounded upon principles of reason), understands Latin well, and can write a good hand, one may turn loose into the world, with great assurance that he will find employment and esteem every where...

Rhetoric and logic being the arts, that in the ordinary method usually follow immediately after grammar, it may perhaps be wondered that I have said so little of them. The reason is, because of the little advantage young people receive by them; for I have seldom or never observed any one to get the skill of reasoning well, or speaking handsomely by studying those rules which pretend to teach it...

If the use and end of right reasoning be to have right notions, and a right judgment of things, to distinguish betwixt truth and falsehood, right and wrong, and to act accordingly, be sure not to let your son be bred up in the art and formality of

disputing, either practicing it himself, or admiring it in others; unless, instead of an able man, you desire to have him an insignificant wrangler, opiniator in discourse, and priding himself in contradicting others; or which is worse, questioning everything, and thinking there is no such thing as truth to be sought, but only victory, in disputing. There cannot be anything so disingenuous, so mis-becoming a Gentleman, or anyone who pretends to be a rational creature, as not to yield to plain reason, and the conviction of arguments...

Truth is to be found and supported by a mature and due consideration of things themselves, and not by artificial terms and ways of arguing: which lead not men so much into the discovery of truth, as into a captious and fallacious use of doubtful words, which is the most useless and disingenuous way of talking, and most unbecoming a gentleman or a lover of truth of anything in the world.

There can scarce be a greater defect in a gentleman than not to express himself well, either in writing or speaking. But yet, I think, I may ask my reader, Whether he does not know a great many, who live upon their estates, and so, with the name, should have the qualities of gentlemen, who cannot so much as tell a story as they should, much less speak clearly and persuasively in any business? This I think not to be so much their fault, as the fault of their education...

Agreeable hereunto, perhaps it might not be amiss, to make children, as soon as they are capable of it, often to tell a story of any thing they know; and to correct at first the most remarkable fault they are guilty of, in their way of putting it together. When that fault is cured, then to show them the next, and so on, till one after another, all, at least the gross ones, are mended. When they can tell tales pretty well, then it may be time to make them write them. The fables of Aesop, the only book almost that I know fit for children, may afford them matter for this exercise of writing English...

When they understand how to write English with due connection, propriety, and order, and are pretty well masters of a tolerable narrative style, they may be advanced to writing of letters; wherein they should not be put upon any strains of wit or compliment, but taught to express their own plain easy sense, without any incoherence, confusion, or roughness...

I am not here speaking against Greek and Latin: I think they ought to be studied, and the Latin, at least, understood well by every gentleman. But whatever foreign languages a young man meddles with (and the more he knows the better), that which he should critically study, and labor to get a facility, clearness, and elegancy to express himself in, should be his own, and to this purpose he should daily be exercised in it.

Natural philosophy, as a speculative science, I imagine we have none, and perhaps I may think I have reason to say we never shall. The works of nature are contrived by a wisdom, and operate by ways too far surpassing our faculties to discover, or capacities to conceive, for us ever to be able to reduce them into a science. Natural philosophy being the knowledge of the principles, properties, and operations of things, as they are in themselves, I imagine there are two parts of it, one comprehending Spirits with their nature and qualities; and the other Bodies. The first of these is usually referred to metaphysics: but under what title soever the consideration of spirits comes, I think it ought to go before the study of matter and body, not as a science that can be methodized into a system, and treated of upon principles of knowledge; but as an enlargement of our minds towards a truer and fuller comprehension of the intellectual world, to which we are led both by reason and revelation. And since the clearest and largest discoveries we have of other spirits, besides God and our own souls, is imparted to us from heaven by revelation, I think the information that at least young people should have of them, should be taken from that revelation. To this purpose, I conclude it would be well if there were made a good history of the Bible for young people to read; wherein everything that is fit to be put into it being laid down in its due order of time, and several things omitted which were suited only to riper age, that confusion which is usually produced by promiscuous reading of the Scripture, as it lies now bound up in our Bibles, would be avoided; and also this other good obtained, that by reading of it constantly, there would be instilled into the minds of children a notion and belief of spirits, they having so much to do, in all the transactions of that history, which will be a good preparation to the study of bodies. For without the notion and allowance of spirit, our philosophy will be lame and defective in one main part of it, when it leaves out the contemplation of the most excellent and powerful part of the creation.

...matter being a thing that all our senses are constantly conversant with, it is so apt to possess the mind, and exclude all other beings but matter, that prejudice, grounded on such principles, often leaves no room for the admittance of spirits, or the allowing any such things as immaterial beings, "in rerum natura," when yet it is evident, that by mere matter and motion, none of the great phenomena of nature can be resolved to instance but in that common one of gravity; which I think impossible to be explained by any natural operation of matter, or any other law of motion, but the positive will of a superior Being so ordering it...

...To conclude this part, which concerns a young gentleman's studies, his tutor should remember, that his business is not so much to teach him all that is knowable, as to raise in him a love and esteem of knowledge; and to put him in the right way of knowing and improving himself, when he has a mind to it...

Order and constancy are said to make the great difference between one man and another; this I am sure, nothing so much clears a learner's way, helps him so much on in it, and makes him go so easy and so far in any inquiry, as a good method. His governor should take pains to make him sensible of this, accustom him to order, and teach him method in all the applications of his thoughts; show him wherein it lies, and the advantages of it; acquaint him with the several sorts of it, either from general to particulars, or from particulars to what is more general; exercise him in both of them; and make him see, in what cases each different method is most proper, and to what ends it best serves...

...Dancing being that which gives graceful motions all the life, and, above all things, manliness and a becoming confidence to young children, I think it cannot be learned too early, after they are once of an age and strength capable of it. But you must be sure to have a good master, that knows, and can teach, what is graceful and becoming, and what gives a freedom and easiness to all the motions of the body. One that teaches not this is worse than none at all...

Music is thought to have some affinity with dancing, and a good hand, upon some instruments, is by many people mightily valued. But it wastes so much of a young man's time, to gain but a moderate skill in it, and engages often in such odd company, that many think it much better spared... and he that will make a good use of any part of his life, must allow a large portion of it to recreation. At least this must not be denied to young people, unless, whilst you with too much haste make them old, you have the displeasure to set them in their graves, or a second childhood, sooner than you could wish. And therefore I think that the time and pains allotted to serious improvements should be employed about things of most use and consequence...

Fencing, and riding the great horse, are looked upon as so necessary parts of breeding, that it would be thought a great omission to neglect them...

As for fencing, it seems to me a good exercise for health, but dangerous to the life, the confidence of their skill being apt to engage in quarrels those that think they have some skill, and to make them often more touchy than needs, on points of honor, and slight provocations... I had much rather mine should be a good wrestler, than an ordinary fencer; which is the most a gentleman can attain to in it, unless he will be constantly in the fencing school, and every day exercising...

These are my present thoughts concerning learning and accomplishments. The great business of all is virtue and wisdom. *Nullum numen abest, si sit prudentia* [No heavenly powers will lack where wisdom is]. Teach him to get a mastery over his inclinations, and submit his appetite to reason. This being obtained, and by constant practice settled into habit, the hardest part of the task is over. To bring a young man to this, I know nothing which so much contributes as the love of praise and commendation, which should therefore be instilled into him by all arts imaginable. Make his mind as sensible of credit and shame as may be: and when you have done that, you have put a principle into him which will influence his actions, when you are not by, to which the fear of a little smart of a rod is not comparable, and which will be the proper stock, whereon afterwards to graft the true principles of morality and religion.

I have one more thing to add, which as soon as I mention I shall run the danger to be suspected to have forgot what I am about, and what I have above written concerning education, which has all tended towards a gentleman's calling, with which a trade seems wholly to be inconsistent. And yet, I cannot forbear to say, I would have him learn a trade, a manual trade; nay, two or three, but one more particularly.

The busy inclination of children being always to be directed to something that may be useful to them, the advantage may be considered of two kinds: 1. Where the skill itself, that is got by exercise, is worth the having... Other manual arts, which are both got and exercised by labor, do many of them by their exercise contribute to our health too, especially such as employ us in the open air. In these, then, health and improvement may be joined together, and of these should some fit ones be chosen, to be made the recreations of one, whose chief business is with books and study...

...A gentleman's more serious employment I look on to be study; and when that demands relaxation and refreshment, it should be in some exercise of the body, which unbends the thought and confirms the health and strength...

...For since the mind endures not to be constantly employed in the same thing or way; and sedentary or studious men should have some exercise, that at the same time might divert their minds and employ their bodies... diversion from his other more serious thoughts and employments by useful and healthy manual exercise being what I chiefly aim at in it.

...This has been that which has given cards, dice, and drinking so much credit in the world; and a great many throw away their spare hours in them, through the prevalency of custom, and want of some better employment to pass their time, more than from any real delight [that] is to be found in them, only because it being very irksome and uneasy to do nothing at all, they had never learned any laudable manual art wherewith to divert themselves; and so they betake themselves to those foolish or ill ways in use, to help off their time, which a rational man, till corrupted by custom, could find very little pleasure in.

...nothing is likelier to keep a man within compass than the having constantly before his eyes the state of his affairs in a regular course of accounts.

The last part usually in education is travel, which is commonly thought to finish the work, and complete the gentleman. I confess, travel into foreign countries has great advantages; but the time usually chosen to send young men abroad, is, I think, of all other, that which renders them least capable of reaping those advantages... The time therefore I should think the fittest for a young gentleman to be sent abroad would be either when he is younger, under a tutor, whom he might be the better for; or when he was some years older, when he is of age to govern himself, and make observations of what he finds in other countries worthy his notice, and that might be of use to him after his return...

...Nor must he stay at home till that dangerous heady age be over, because he must be back again by one and twenty, to marry and propagate. The father cannot stay any longer for the portion, nor the mother for a new set of babies to play with; and so my young master, whatever comes on it, must have a wife looked out for him, by that time he is of age; though it would be no prejudice to his strength, his parts, nor his issue, if it were respited for some time, and he had leave to get, in years and knowledge, the start a little of his children, who are often found to tread too near upon the heels of their fathers, to the no great satisfaction either of son or father. But the young gentleman being got within view of matrimony, 'tis time to leave him to his mistress.

...There are a thousand other things that may need consideration; especially if one should take in the various tempers, different inclinations, and particular defaults, that are to be found in children; and prescribe proper remedies. The variety is so great, that it would require a volume; nor would that reach it. Each man's mind has some peculiarity, as well as his face, that distinguishes him from all others; and there are possibly scarce two children who can be conducted by exactly the same method... But having had here only some general views, in reference to the main end and aims in education, and those designed for a gentleman's son, whom being then very little, I considered only as white paper, or wax, to be molded and fashioned as one pleases, I have touched little more than those heads, which I judged necessary for the breeding of a young gentleman of his condition in general; and have now published these my occasional thoughts, with this hope, that, though this be far from being a complete treatise on this subject, or such as that every one may find what will just fit his child in it; yet it may give some small light to those, whose concern for their dear little ones makes them so irregularly bold, that they dare venture to consult their own reason, in the education of their children, rather than wholly to rely upon old custom.



This content is provided to you freely by EdTech Books.

Access it online or download it at [https://edtechbooks.org/philosophy\\_of\\_education/locke\\_1693](https://edtechbooks.org/philosophy_of_education/locke_1693).

