

1 Many Sana m Corpore Sano
is a short but full description of a happy
state. he who has these two has little
more to wish for & he who wants either
of them is but little better for anything
else. Men's happiness or misery is
most part of their own making. He
whose mind directly not wisely will never
take the right way, & he whose body is craz-
zy & feeble will never be able to maintain
it. I confess there are some men
contributions of body & mind so vigor-
ous & well framed by nature that they
need not much assistance from others
but by the strength of their natural genius
are from their cradles carried towards
to is excellent & by the ^{vigour} ~~strength~~ of their
contributions are able to do wonders but
these examples are but few, & I think

Facsimile page of the original draft of
Some Thoughts concerning Education.

SOME THOUGHTS CONCERNING EDUCATION

(Including Of the Conduct of the Understanding)

John Locke

Edited by
John William Adamson

DOVER PUBLICATIONS, INC.
Mineola, New York

ספריית הר-הצופים
למדעי הרוח והחברה

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SOME THOUGHTS CONCERNING
EDUCATION

THE text here followed is that of the first edition, supplemented by passages from later editions which are historically interesting, or of special educational value at the present time: such passages are enclosed in square brackets. Summaries of insertions in later editions are here printed in italic type. Sections 3-28 deal with the care of health; modern medical opinion does not endorse all their recommendations, and they are therefore represented here by Locke's summary, sections 29, 30. The sections are numbered as in the latest editions, for convenience of reference. It has not been thought advisable to retain the original spelling and punctuation.

Locke's original draft, which extends to sections 1 to 166 only, was acquired by the British Museum in 1913 from a descendant of Edward Clarke. It is Additional MS. 38,771, "Some Directions concerning ye Education of his son sent to his worthy Freind, Mr. Edward Clarke of Chipley, 1684." The manuscript contains one hundred pages, each measuring 4½ inches by 3½ inches. Apologizing for the "disjoynted parts" observable in "these papers," Locke continues, "I began them before my ramble this sommer about these provinces and thinking it convenient you should have them as soon as might be, I writ severall parts of them as stay gave me leasure and oportunity any where in my journey soe yt [that] great distance of place and time intervening between the severall parts often broke the thread of my thoughts and discourse and therefor you must not wonder if yt they be not well put together and yis must be my excuse for ye faults in ye method, order and connection."

TO
EDWARD CLARKE,
OF
CHIPLEY, Esq.;

SIR,

These Thoughts concerning Education, which now come abroad into the world, do of right belong to you, being written several years since for your sake, and are no other than what you have already by you in my letters. I have so little varied any thing, but only the order of what was sent you at different times, and on several occasions, that the reader will easily find, in the familiarity and fashion of the style, that they were rather the private conversation of two friends, than a discourse designed for public view.

The importunity of friends is the common apology for publications men are afraid to own themselves forward to. But you know I can truly say, that if some, who, having heard of these papers of mine, had not pressed to see them, and afterwards to have them printed, they had lain dormant still in that privacy they were designed for. But those whose judgment I defer much to, telling me, that they were persuaded, that this rough draft of mine might be of some use, if made more public, touched upon what will always be very prevalent with me: for I think it every man's indispensable duty, to do all the service he can to his country; and I see not what difference he puts between himself and his cattle, who lives without that thought. This subject is of so great concernment, and a right way of education is of so general advantage, that did I find my abilities answer my wishes, I should not have needed exhortations or importunities from others. However, the meanness of these papers, and my just distrust of them, shall not keep me, by the shame

of doing so little, from contributing my mite, when there is no more required of me than my throwing it into the public receptacle. And if there be any more of their size and notions, who liked them so well, that they thought them worth printing, I may flatter myself they will not be lost labour to every body.

I myself have been consulted of late by so many, who profess themselves at a loss how to breed their children, and the early corruption of youth is now become so general a complaint, that he cannot be thought wholly impertinent, who brings the consideration of this matter on the stage, and offers something, if it be but to excite others, or afford matter for correction; for errors in education should be less indulged than any. These, like faults in the first concoction, that are never mended in the second or third, carry their afterwards-incorrigible taint with them through all the parts and stations of life.

I am so far from being conceited of anything I have here offered, that I should not be sorry, even for your sake, if some one abler and fitter for such a task would in a just treatise of education, suited to our English gentry, rectify the mistakes I have made in this, it being much more desirable to me, that young gentlemen should be put into (that which every one ought to be solicitous about) the best way of being formed and instructed, than that my opinion should be received concerning it. You will, however, in the meantime bear me witness, that the method here proposed has had no ordinary effects upon a gentleman's son¹ it was not designed for. I will not say the good temper of the child did not very much contribute to it; but this I think you and the parents are satisfied of, that a contrary usage, according to the ordinary disciplining of

¹ A reference, perhaps, to Francis Cudworth Masham (b. 1686), son of Sir Francis Masham, the owner of Oates, Locke's home from 1691.

children, would not have mended that temper, nor have brought him to be in love with his book, to take a pleasure in learning, and to desire, as he does, to be taught more than those about him think fit always to teach him.

But my business is not to recommend this treatise to you, whose opinion of it I know already; nor it to the world, either by your opinion or patronage. The well educating of their children is so much the duty and concern of parents, and the welfare and prosperity of the nation so much depends on it, that I would have every one lay it seriously to heart; and after having well examined and distinguished what fancy, custom, or reason advises in the case, set his helping hand to promote that way in the several degrees of men, which is the easiest, shortest, and likeliest to produce virtuous, useful, and able men in their distinct callings. Though that most to be taken care of is the gentleman's calling;¹ for if those of that rank are by their education once set right, they will quickly bring all the rest into order.

I know not whether I have done more than shewn my good wishes towards it in this short discourse; such as it is, the world now has it, and if there be any thing in it worth their acceptance, they owe their thanks to you for it. My affection to you gave the first rise to it, and I am pleased, that I can leave to posterity this mark of the friendship that has been between us. For I know no greater pleasure in this life, nor a better remembrance to be left behind one, than a long-continued friendship with an honest, useful, and worthy man, and lover of his country.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble and most faithful servant.

¹ A phrase reminiscent of such "courtesy" books as *The Gentleman's Calling* (1659), *The Lady's Calling*, *The Courtier's Calling*. See Introduction.

SOME THOUGHTS CONCERNING EDUCATION

1. 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 the better for any thing 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 these 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 take 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.

2. *Health*.—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 myself to;¹ and that also, which will be soonest dispatched, as lying, if I guess not amiss, in a very little compass.

Sections 3 to 28 treat of health. For reasons already given, they are replaced by the author's summary, section 30; but sections 6 and 9 are retained for their references to girls. See note on p. 21.

6. 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.

9. *Air*.—Another thing that is of great advantage to every one'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. Thus the body may be brought to bear almost anything. If I should advise him to play in the wind and sun without a hat, I doubt whether it could be borne. There would a thousand objections be made against it, which at last would amount to no more, in truth, than being sun-burnt. And if my young master be to be kept always in the shade, and never exposed to the sun and wind, for fear of his complexion, it may be a good way to make him a beau, but not a man of business.²

¹ Cf. sec. 29. Locke practised medicine at Oxford in 1667, and in London with his friend, Dr. Sydenham, between that year and 1670. Though commonly known as "Dr. Locke," he never proceeded beyond the M.B. degree.

² *I.e.*, a man of affairs.

And although greater regard be to be had to beauty in the daughters, yet I will take the liberty to say, that the more they are in the air, without prejudices to their faces, the stronger and healthier they will be; and the nearer they come to the hardships of their brothers in their education, the greater advantage will they receive from it all the remaining part of their lives.¹

29. *Physic*.—This is all I have to trouble you with, concerning his management, in the ordinary course of his health; and perhaps it will be expected from me, that I should give some directions of physic, to prevent diseases: for which, I have only this one very sacredly to be observed: Never to give children any physic for prevention. The observation of what I have already advised, will, I suppose, do that better than apothecary's drugs and medicines. Have a great care of tampering that way, lest, instead of preventing, you draw on diseases. Nor even upon every little indisposition is physic to be given, or the physician to be called to children; especially if he be a busy man, that will presently fill their windows with gally-pots, and their stomachs with drugs. It is safer to leave them wholly to nature, than to put them into the hands of one forward to tamper, or that thinks children are to be cured in ordinary distempers, by anything but diet, or by a method very little distant from it. It seeming suitable both to my reason and experience, that the tender constitutions of children should have as little done to them as is possible, and as the absolute necessity of the case requires. A little cold-stilled red poppy-water, which is the true surfeit-water, with ease and abstinence from flesh, often puts an end to several distempers in the beginning, which, by too forward applications, might have been made lusty diseases. When such a gentle treatment will not stop the growing mischief, but that it will turn into a formed disease, it will be time to seek the advice of some sober and discreet physician. In this part, I hope, I shall find an easy belief; and nobody can have a pretence to doubt the advice of one, who has spent some

¹ Cf. end of secs. 119 and 165.

time in the study of physic, when he counsels you not to be too forward in making use of physic and physicians.

30. 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 strait clothing; especially the head and feet kept cold, and the feet often used to cold water and exposed to wet.

31. *Mind.*—Due care being had to keep the body in strength and vigour, 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 do nothing but what may be suitable to the dignity and excellency of a rational creature.

32. 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 any thing 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 any thing is done untowardly, the common saying will pass upon them, that it is suitable to their breeding.

33. As the strength of the body lies chiefly in being 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.

34. *Early.*—The great mistake I have 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 rules, 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 not that natural affection very warily; are apt, I say, to let it run into fondness.¹ 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 well replied, 'Ay, but custom is a great one.'²

35. The fondling must be taught to strike, and call names; must have what he cries for, and do what he pleases. Thus parents, by humouring 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. For when their children are grown up, and these ill habits with them; when they are now too big to be dandled, and their parents can no longer make use of them as playthings; then they complain, that the brats are untoward and perverse; then they are offended to see them wilful, and are troubled with those ill humours, which they themselves inspired and cherished in them. And then, perhaps too late, would be glad to get out those weeds which their own hands have planted, and which now have taken too deep root to be easily extirpated. For he that has been used to have his will in every thing, as long as he was in coats, why should we think it strange that he should desire it, and contend for it still, when he is in breeches? Indeed, as he grows more towards a man, age shows his faults the more, so that there be few parents then so blind, as not to see them; few so insensible as

¹ *I.e.*, foolishness.

² Quoted by Montaigne in the essay, *De la Coustume*, i., chap. xxii.

not to feel the ill effects of their own indulgence. He had the will of his maid before he could speak or go; he had the mastery of his parents ever since he could prattle; and why, now he is grown up, is stronger and wiser than he was then, why now of a sudden must he be restrained and curbed? Why must he at seven, fourteen, or twenty years old, lose the privilege which the parents' indulgence, till then, so largely allowed him? Try it in a dog, or an horse, or any other creature, and see whether the ill and resty¹ tricks they have learned when young, are easily to be mended when they are knit: and yet none of those creatures are half so wilful and proud, or half so desirous to be masters of themselves and others, as man.

36. We are generally wise enough to begin with them, when they are very young, and discipline betimes those other creatures we would make useful to us. They are only our own offspring, that we neglect in this point; and having made them ill children, we foolishly expect they should be good men. For if the child must have grapes, or sugar-plums, when he has a mind to them, rather than make the poor baby cry, or be out of humour, why, when he is grown up, must he not be satisfied too, if his desires carry him to wine or women? They are objects as suitable to the longing of one of more years, as what he cried for, when little, was to the inclinations of a child. The having desires suitable to the apprehensions and relish of those several ages, is not the fault; but the not having them subject to the rules and restraints of reason: the difference lies not in the having or not having appetites, but in the power to govern, and deny our selves in them. And he that is not used to submit his will to the reason of others, when he is young, will scarce hearken or submit to his own reason, when he is of an age to make use of it. And what a kind of a man such an one is like to prove, is easy to foresee.

Section 37.—Parents, by example and incitement, commonly teach children to be violent, to love finery, to lie and be gluttonous. Cf. Section 116.

¹ Restive, restless.

38.¹ *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 them. 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 it 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.

39. I say not this, as if children were not to be indulged in any thing, or that I expected they should, in hanging sleeves, have the reason and conduct of counsellors. I consider them as children that must be tenderly used, that must play, and have playthings. That which I mean is, that whenever they craved what was not fit for them to have, or do, they should not be permitted it, because they were little and desired it: nay, whatever they were importunate for, they should be sure, for that very reason, to be denied. I have seen children at a table, who, whatever was there, never asked for anything, but contentedly took what was given them; and at another place, I have seen others cry for every thing they saw, must be served out of every dish, and that first too. What made this vast difference, but this; that one was accustomed to have what they called or cried for, the other to go without it? The younger they are, the less, I think,

¹ Sec. 37 in first edition.

are their unruly and disorderly appetites to be complied with; and the less reason they have of their own, the more are they to be under the absolute power and restraint of those, in whose hands they are. From which I confess, it will follow, that none but discreet people should be about them. If the world commonly does otherwise, I cannot help that: I am saying what I think should be; which, if it were already in fashion, I should not need to trouble the world with a discourse on this subject. But yet I doubt not, but when it is considered, there will be others of opinion with me, that the sooner this way is begun with children, the easier it will be for them, and their governors too. 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.

40. *Early*.—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 methinks they mightily misplace the treatment due to their children, who are indulgent and familiar when they are little, but severe to them, and keep them at a distance when they are grown up. 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?"¹

41. I imagine every one will judge it reasonable, that their children, when little, should look upon their parents as their lords, their absolute governors; and, as such, stand in awe of them: and that, when they come to riper years, they should look on them as their best, as their only sure friends; and, as such, love and reverence them. The way I have mentioned, if I mistake not, is the only one to obtain this. We must look upon our children, when grown up, to be like ourselves, with the same passions, the same desires. We would be thought rational creatures, and have our freedom; we love not to be uneasy under constant rebukes and brow-beatings; nor can we bear severe humours, and great distance, in those we converse with. Whoever has such treatment when he is a man, will look out other company, other friends, other conversation, with whom he can be at ease. If therefore a strict hand be kept over children from the beginning, they will in that age be tractable, and quietly submit to it, as never having known any other: and if, as they grow up to the use of reason, the rigour of government be, as they deserve it, gently relaxed, the father's brow more smooth to them, and the distance by degrees abated, his former restraints will increase their love, when they find it was only a kindness to them, and a care to make them capable to deserve the favour of their parents, and the esteem of every body else.

42. 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

¹ The thought occurs in Montaigne, ii., chap. viii., "On the affection of fathers for their children," with which these earlier sections of the *Thoughts* should be compared.

upon them, to turn them to it? Indeed, fear of having a scanty portion, if they displease you, may make them slaves to your estate, but they will be never the less ill and wicked in private; and that restraint will not last always. Every man must some time or other be trusted to himself, and his own conduct; and he that is a good, a virtuous, and able man, must be made so within. And therefore, what he is to receive from education, what is to sway and influence his life, must be something put into him betimes, habits woven into the very principles of his nature; and not a counterfeit carriage, and dissembled outside, put on by fear, only to avoid the present anger of a father, who perhaps may disinherit him.

43. *Punishments.*—This being laid down in general, as the course ought to be taken, 'tis fit we now come to consider the parts of the discipline to be used, a little more particularly. I have spoken so much of carrying a strict hand over children, that perhaps I shall be suspected of not considering enough, what is due to their tender age and constitutions. But that opinion will vanish, when you have heard me a little farther. 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, *cæteris paribus*, those children who have been most chastised, seldom make the best men. All that I have hitherto contended for, is, that whatsoever rigour is necessary, it is more to be used the younger children are; and having by a due application wrought its effect, it is to be relaxed, and changed into a milder sort of government.

44. *Awe.*—A compliance and suppleness of their wills, being by a steady hand introduced by parents, before children have memories to retain the beginnings of it, will seem natural to them, and work afterwards in them, as if it were so, preventing all occasions of struggling or repining. The only care is, that it be begun early, and inflexibly kept to, till awe and respect be grown familiar, and there appears not the least reluctance in the sub-

mission, and ready obedience of their minds. When this reverence is once thus established (which it must be early, or else it will cost pains and blows to recover it, and the more, the longer it is deferred), 'tis by it, mixed still with as much indulgence, as they make not an ill use of, and not by beating, chiding, or other servile punishments, [that] they are for the future to be governed as they grow up to more understanding.

45. That this is so, will be easily allowed, when it is but considered what is to be aimed at in an ingenious education, and upon what it turns.

1. *Self-denial.*—He that has not a mastery over his inclinations, he that knows not how to resist the importunity of present pleasure or pain, for the sake of what reason tells him is fit to be done, wants the true principle of virtue and industry, and is in danger never to be good for any thing. This temper, therefore, so contrary to unguided nature, is to be got betimes; and this habit, as the true foundation of future ability and happiness, is to be wrought into the mind, as early as may be, even from the first dawns of any knowledge or apprehension in children; and so to be confirmed in them, by all the care and ways imaginable, by those who have the oversight of their education.

46. 2. *Dejected.*—On the other side, if the mind be curbed, and humbled too much in children; if their spirits be abased and broken much, by too strict an hand over them, they lose all their vigour and industry, and are in a worse state than the former. For extravagant young fellows, that have liveliness and spirit, come sometimes to be set right, and so make able and great men: but dejected minds, timorous and tame, and low spirits, are hardly ever to be raised, and very seldom attain to any thing. To avoid the danger that is on either hand, is the great art; and he that has found a way, how to keep up a child's spirit, easy, active, and free; and yet, at the same time, to restrain him from many things he has a mind to, and to draw him to things that are uneasy to him; he, I say, that knows how to reconcile these seem-

ing contradictions, has, in my opinion, got the true secret of education.

47. *Beating*.¹—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.

48. 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.

49. 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 haleed to it, when he had no mind? Or be constantly so treated, for some

¹ Cf. Montaigne, ii., chap. viii.

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.

50. 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,

51. 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 a 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.

52. *Rewards*.—Beating then, 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.

53. 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.¹

54. 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.

55. Rewards, 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

¹ Locke here proposes a real discipline of *moral* consequences, which Rousseau and Herbert Spencer afterwards perverted to a so-called discipline of natural consequences (see secs. 56-60, 72, 84, 107, 124).

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 any thing 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 themselves, they cannot but dislike, and be ashamed of, when it is set before them in another.

83. *Whipping*.—It may be doubted concerning whipping, when, as the last remedy, it comes to be necessary, at what times, and by whom it should be done: whether presently upon the committing the fault, whilst it is yet fresh and hot; and whether parents themselves should beat their children. As to the first, I think it should not be done presently, lest passion mingle with it and so, though it exceed the just proportion, yet it lose the authority; for even children discern when we do things in passion. But, as I said before, that has most weight with them, that appears sedately to come from their parents' reason; and they are not without this distinction.¹ Next, if you have any discreet servant capable of it, and has the place of governing your child (for if you have a tutor, there is no doubt) I think it is best the smart should come more immediately from another's hand, though by the parent's order, who should see it done; whereby the parent's authority will be preserved,² and the child's aversion for the pain it suffers rather be

¹ *I.e.*, this power of distinguishing.

² "Preferred" in text.

turned on the person that immediately inflicts it. For I would have a father seldom strike his child, but upon very urgent necessity, and as the last remedy: and then perhaps it will be fit to do it so that the child should not quickly forget it.

84. But, as I said before, beating is the worst, and therefore the last, means to be used in the correction of children; and that only in cases of extremity, after all gentler ways have been tried, and proved unsuccessful: which, if well observed, there will be very seldom any need of blows. For, it not being to be imagined that a child will often, if ever, dispute his father's present command in any particular instance; and the father not rigorously interposing his absolute authority in positive rules, concerning childish or indifferent actions, wherein his son is to have his liberty: nor concerning his learning or improvement wherein there is no compulsion to be used,¹ there remains only the prohibition of some vicious actions, wherein a child is capable of obstinacy, and consequently can deserve beating: and so there will be but very few occasions of that discipline to be used by any one, who considers well, and orders his child's education as it should be. For the first seven years, what vices can a child be guilty of, but lying, or some ill-natured tricks; the repeated commission whereof, after his father's direct command against it, shall bring him into the condemnation of obstinacy, and the chastisement of the rod? If any vicious inclination in him be, in the first appearance and instances of it, treated as it should be, first with your wonder, and then, if returning again a second time, discountenanced with the severe brow of the father, tutor, and all about him, and a treatment suitable to the state of discredit before-mentioned,² and this continued till he be made sensible and ashamed of his fault, I imagine there will be no need of any other correction, nor ever any occasion to come to blows. The necessity of such chastisement is usually the consequence

¹ See Introduction, p. 15.

² See secs. 53, 56-60, 72, 107, 124-129.

only of former indulgencies or neglects. If vicious inclinations were watched from the beginning, and the first irregularities which they caused corrected by those gentler ways, we should seldom have to do with more than one disorder at once, which would be easily set right without any stir or noise, and not require so harsh a discipline as beating. Thus, one by one, as they appeared, they might all be weeded out without any signs or memory that ever they had been there. But we letting their faults (by indulging and humouring our little ones) grow up till they are sturdy and numerous, and the deformity of them makes us ashamed and uneasy, we are fain to come to the plough and the harrow; the spade and the pick-ax must go deep to come at the roots, and all the force, skill, and diligence we can use, is scarce enough to cleanse the vitiated seed-plat overgrown with weeds, and restore us the hopes of fruits to reward our pains in its season.

85. This course, if observed, will spare both father and child the trouble of repeated injunctions, and multiplied rules of doing and forbearing. For I am of opinion, that of those actions which tend to vicious habits (which are those alone that a father should interpose his authority and commands in), none should be forbidden children till they are found guilty of them. For such untimely prohibitions, if they do nothing worse, do at least so much towards teaching and allowing them, that they suppose that children may be guilty of them, who would possibly be safer in the ignorance of any such faults. And the best remedy to stop them, is, as I have said, to show wonder and amazement at any such action as hath a vicious tendency, when it is first taken notice of in a child. For example, when he is first found in a lie, or any ill-natured trick, the first remedy should be, to talk to him of it as a strange, monstrous matter, that it could not be imagined he would have done; and so shame him out of it.

86. It will be ('tis like) objected, That whatever I fancy of the tractableness of children, and the prevalency

of those softer ways of shame and commendation; yet there are many, who will never apply themselves to their books, and to what they ought to learn, unless they are scourged to it. This I fear is nothing but the language of ordinary schools and fashion, which have never suffered the other to be tried as it should be, in places where it could be taken notice of. Why, else, does the learning of Latin and Greek need the rod, when French and Italian needs it not? Children learn to dance and fence without whipping: nay, arithmetic, drawing, etc.; they apply themselves well enough to, without beating: which would make one suspect that there is something strange, unnatural, and disagreeable to that age, in the things required in Grammar-Schools, or the methods used there, that children cannot be brought to, without the severity of the lash, and hardly with that too; or else that it is a mistake, that those tongues could not be taught them without beating.

87. But let us suppose some so negligent or idle, that they will not be brought to learn by the gentle ways proposed; for we must grant, that there will be children found of all tempers, yet it does not thence follow, that the rough discipline of the cudgel is to be used at all. Nor can any one be concluded unmanageable by the milder methods of government, till they have been thoroughly tried upon him; and, if they will not prevail with him to use his endeavours, and do what is in his power to do, we make no excuse for the obstinate: blows are the proper remedies for those: but blows laid on in a way different from the ordinary. He that wilfully neglects his book, and stubbornly refuses any thing he can do, required of him by his father expressing himself in a positive serious command, should not be corrected with two or three angry lashes, for not performing his task, and the same punishment repeated again and again, upon every the like default. But, when it is brought to that pass, that wilfulness evidently shows itself, and makes blows necessary, I think the chastisement should be a little more sedate, and a little more severe, and the