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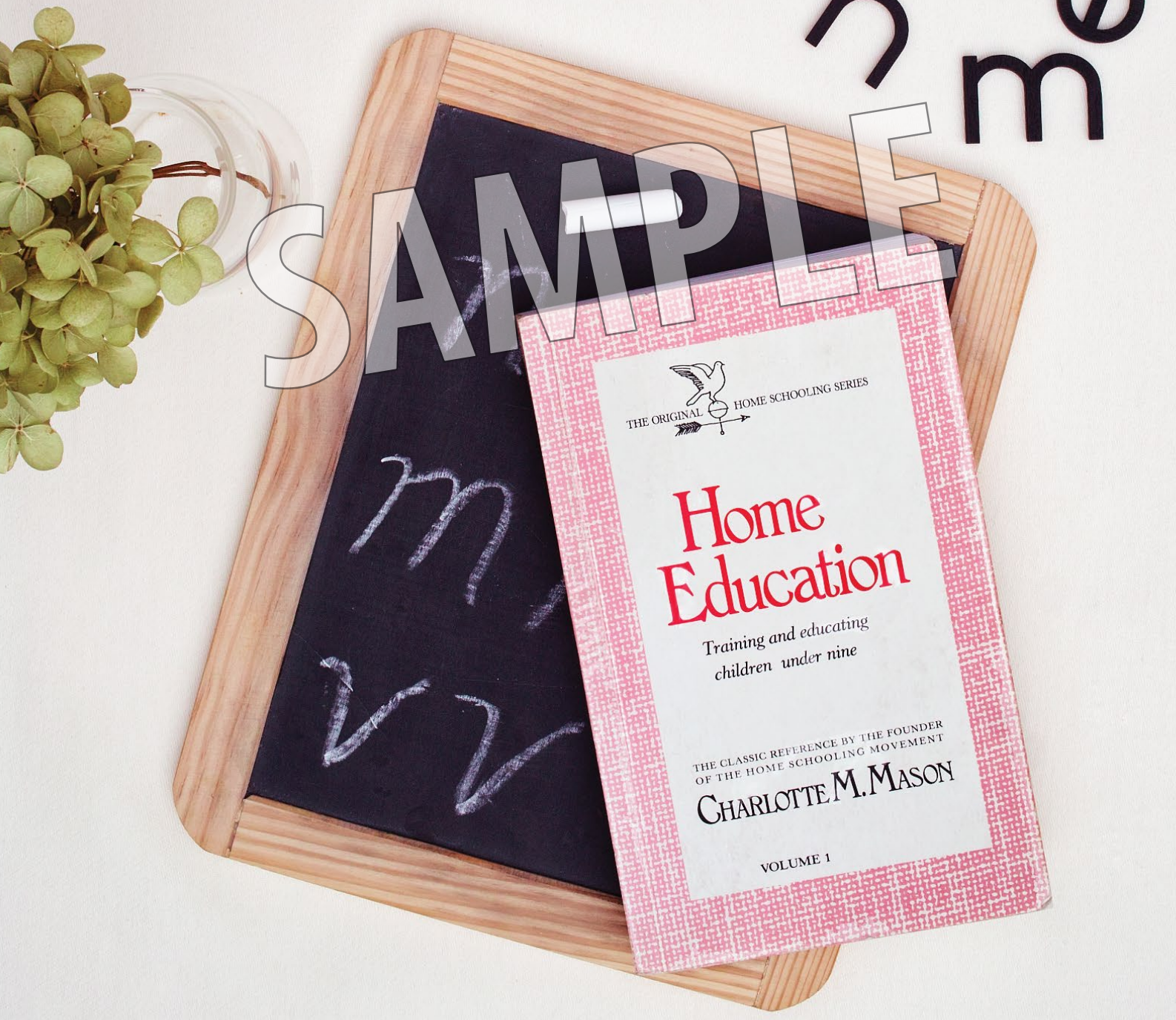
Charlotte Mason's Original Home Schooling Series

Authorized Version • Wide-Margin Study Edition

Home Education

Volume 1



"The work which is of most importance to society is the bringing-up and instruction of the children—more than anything [it is] the home influences brought to bear upon the child that determine the character and career of the future man or woman."

—Charlotte Mason

Home Education focuses on the training and educating of children under nine. In it you will discover

- how to encourage growth in your child mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically;
- practical and simple ideas for enjoying time outdoors;
- the power of good habits and how to cultivate them in your child;
- how to create the best growing ground for your preschooler;
- natural and effective methods for educational lessons in your child's elementary years;
- ideas to help you strengthen your child's will and instruct his conscience.

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Volume 1: Home Education
Volume 2: Parents and Children
Volume 3: School Education
Volume 4: Ourselves
Volume 5: Formation of Character
Volume 6: A Philosophy of Education

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Charlotte Mason's Original Home Schooling Series
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Volume 1
Home Education

by Charlotte M. Mason

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A Note from Simply Charlotte Mason

It is our privilege to be entrusted with the task of preserving and providing Charlotte Mason's original writings. Many inferior versions exist, but you can rest assured that you hold in your hands authentic and accurate page replicas of the complete text of Charlotte Mason's work as originally published.

We present them with pleasure and with gratitude for all who have played a part in the rich history behind them. The material on the following pages will give you a peek into that history.

Foreword to the Simply Charlotte Mason Edition

by Dean Andreola

It is with much gratitude to Simply Charlotte Mason that I pen a foreword to this edition of *The Original Homeschooling Series.*

In 1987 Karen and I were privileged to carry rare copies of Miss Charlotte Mason's writings home with us from England. Our dream was to see Miss Mason's books back in print for the benefit of future generations. The dream became a reality. We kept this six-volume series (you now hold in your hand) in print for 25 years; but book printing alone was not enough to start a movement. My incredibly shy wife became both herald and champion for Miss Mason's ideas—ideas that would lead to a modern revolution in education and child training.

During those ground-breaking pioneering years, Karen plowed ahead with countless hours of study and research, often in the wee hours of the night, after the children were tucked into bed. Charlotte Mason gave Karen a vision for what a delightful education could look like. Day by day, Charlotte Mason's principles took root in our homeschool. Karen was invited to share her modern interpretation of Miss Mason's ideas at conferences and in magazine articles, with topics such as: living books, narration, habit, mother culture, and the atmosphere of home. This was the beginning of what was becoming known as "The Charlotte Mason Approach." Karen collected and published her ideas in *A Charlotte Mason Companion*—one of the first how-to books written and widely read in the homeschool world. As a result, Miss Mason's philosophy of education also took root in many hearts and homes, creating a movement that has spread across the nation and around the world.

The 21st century has brought changes in the way people access, read, and store books. The demand for printed books has diminished while the demand for ebooks has increased. Sadly, we are no longer able to continue our printing of *The Original Homeschooling Series.* Yet thanks to kindred spirits at Simply Charlotte Mason, we have been able to pass the baton, so to speak, and partner with them to see *The Original Homeschooling Series* safely back in print. I say "safely back in print" because this edition is complete, unabridged, and unedited.

It is true to the books we carried home on the plane so many years ago—and so, in keeping with the philosophy of Miss Mason herself.

Now it is your turn to discover afresh the delights of a lifestyle of learning. It is your turn to discover Charlotte Mason.

Dean Andreola
Co-Founder, Charlotte Mason Research Company
CharlotteMason.com
MotherCulture.com

SOMETIMES treasures of unique value are unearthed while rummaging in the past. Charlotte Mason was a distinguished British educator at the turn of the century, whose work had a wide and lasting influence. At that time many of the upper-class children were educated at home, and Mason's insights changed their lives. Her ideas were also brought to life in many schools (mostly private), which gave the children an unusual and rich start in their education and development.

Nearly a hundred years later, a changing society often leaves us disappointed with its tangled, worn-out, and narrow practices in education. We chart a "falling capital" in the product that matters most: the life education and character of our children. Is it not the moment to look at some of the roots? To start again?

At last, after hundreds have searched for these original texts, these seminal books are back in print. Harvard University has Charlotte Mason's books; now, at last, you can too!

These writings will give important priorities and guidelines to parents, teachers, and schools. I believe that once again we need to think of all of life, our culture and heritage, so that our children may be nurtured with the nutrients of life and not sawdust. Welcome back, my dear valued mentor, Charlotte Mason! Our children need you as never before.

Susan Schaeffer Macaulay
director of L'Abri Fellowship, Switzerland, and
author of *For the Children's Sake: Foundations of Education for Home and School* (Crossway Books)

Introduction to the *Original Home Schooling Series*

It was amidst a maze of opinions and conflicting points of view on child education that we were introduced to the life and work of Charlotte Mason.

While working for a literature mission in England, my wife, Karen, and I were home schooling our children. Child raising and schooling at home developed into a stressful and draining process for the whole family. Even after reading much on the subject of child raising and education we still seemed to lack direction. We discussed our dilemma with a coworker. She shared a book with us by Susan Schaeffer Macaulay called *For the Children's Sake.* This book hit close to home in many areas that concerned us. It was an introduction to the works of Charlotte Mason, and this whetted our appetites to learn more about Miss Mason's teachings.

Working in publishing, we thought it would be a simple matter to track down some of these books, especially in England where they were originally published many years ago. However, it took us many months searching secondhand bookshops, libraries, and book search services to find out that her books are not available anymore. They have not been published in a complete six volume set for over eighty years. When we had given up hope of finding them, we were informed about the Charlotte Mason College at Ambleside in the Lake District near Keswick, England. Through the kindness and cooperation of the principal, Dr. John Thorley, the college's copies of these rare books were loaned to us from their archives for this special edition of Charlotte Mason's Home Schooling Series.

This series is unique among other child-raising books because of its broad subject matter and amount of detailed study. Mason's teachings stress that both home and school education should be a learning and growing process for the child, parent, and teacher alike. Reading her works, we discover a great deal about ourselves and realize that we must continue to understand and educate ourselves if we wish to have success in educating our children.

Charlotte Mason is a bright light in the art of illuminating a child's mind. Her ideas are practical; they identify problems and offer well-tested and creative solutions. She gives us sweeping visions of what education could and should be and grave warnings about the neglect and abuse of our responsibility and authority.

Although she wrote generations ago, Mason boldly challenges us today. Many parents seem lost in their own homes, and many teachers and children are floundering in our educational systems. These systems are still seeking to educate our children without any parental and biblical influence; they prepare our youth for examinations and not *life!*

Recent books and magazine articles have referred to Charlotte Mason with information obtained from secondary sources. Now, to a new generation, Charlotte Mason speaks for herself in this brilliant, original series.

May these books offer hope and life to parents, teachers, and children, as Charlotte Mason said, "For the Children's Sake!"

Dean and Karen Andreola
Franklin, Tennessee

Foreword to the *Original Home Schooling Series*

Charlotte Mason founded her "House of Education" in Ambleside, in the heart of the English Lake District, in 1892. "It is far from London," she wrote at the time, "but in view of that fact there is much to be said in its favour. Students will be impressed with the great natural beauty around them, will find a country rich in flowers, mosses and ferns. They will learn to know and love the individuality of great natural features—mountain pass, valley, lake and waterfall." The "House of Education" is now the principal's house, "Springfield," and I am writing this foreword in the room that was Charlotte Mason's own living room. I look out of the window and can confirm all its attractions.

Charlotte Mason came to Ambleside when she was nearly fifty, and the college was to be the main focus of her life's work from then until her death in 1923. Hers was no simple success story. Her early childhood is obscure, and she seems never to have wished to elucidate it. She was probably brought up by her father, a Liverpool merchant who, it seems, went bankrupt and then died when Charlotte was still in her teens. Aided by friends of her family, Charlotte became a pupil teacher in Birkenhead and then attended a training college for teachers in London from 1860 to 1861. After qualifying, she taught in an infant school in Worthing, Sussex, until 1873. She then obtained a post on the staff of Bishop Otter Teacher Training College, Chichester, where she lectured in elementary school teaching method. The college was in the forefront of educational thinking in its dedication to the principle of education for

all—including girls. W. E. Forster's Education Act of 1870, which provided for elementary schools to be set up across the country, was still fresh and needed trained teachers to implement the promises. The Bishop Otter College certainly influenced Charlotte Mason's thinking, but, for reasons that are difficult now to disentangle, in 1878 Charlotte felt dissatisfied with her work, left the college, and went to live with friends in Bradford in Yorkshire.

Apparently with financial help from these friends (she was certainly never rich), Charlotte began to write. In 1880 she published a series of books on the geography of England, which were well received. But it was her book *Home Education*, published in 1886, that sparked off the most interest. In it one can certainly see the influence of other educational thinkers of the nineteenth century, particularly the child-centered views of Pestalozzi and the artistic ideas of John Ruskin. What Charlotte Mason added was a practical, down-to-earth perspective that showed how one could actually set about and *do* it. Her style and her exposition were homely, both in the sense that she wrote in an easy, intelligible way, and in the sense that she stressed the influence and responsibility of the home. She also wrote from a firmly held evangelical perspective.

The book turned out to be a kind of educational "Dr. Spock" avidly bought by women anxious to ensure the best possible upbringing for their offspring. The need was real, especially among middle-class women of modest means. Education was a subject of much debate and discussion, which had led to the Education Act of 1870, though the reality of primary education all too often was but the palest reflection of Pestalozzi, Ruskin, or even W. E. Forster. Many concerned parents, perhaps more particularly concerned mothers, were looking for something better. Charlotte Mason's *Home Education* offered it. It explained how parents could—and should—provide their children with a broad, stimulating, even exciting education, far removed from the common diet of so many elementary schools of the day.

The book sold well and in influential circles. Very soon the Parents National Education Union (PNEU) was established,

with the bishop of London as its first president. Miss Beale, a formidable protagonist in the fight for women's education, was an early member of the organization, as was Anne Clough, the founder of Newnham College, Cambridge. Branches were set up in many major towns and cities, and by 1890 the organization had its own monthly magazine, "The Parents Review," edited by Charlotte Mason herself. Charlotte had quickly become a leading authority on early childhood.

In 1891 Charlotte came to live in Ambleside. A friend of her student days, Selina Healey, had lived in Ambleside, and Charlotte had visited her and had gotten to know the Lake District well. She loved the area, particularly the quiet town of Ambleside. When she moved into Springfield, she was sure she had found the ideal place to train governesses for young children.

So, in January 1892, the House of Education was established. There were four students. Two years later, with thirteen students, the college moved into Scale how, a beautiful Georgian house across the main road from Springfield on a hill amid the trees with fine views of the town and of Loughrigg across the Rothay valley.

Charlotte saw children as thinking, feeling human beings, as spirits to be kindled and not as vessels to be filled. And she demonstrated how it could be done. She believed all children were entitled to a liberal education based upon good literature and the arts. These were in her own day radical thoughts and practices, certainly not just confined to Charlotte Mason, but few of her contemporaries had the sheer practicality that she displayed. The practicing school attached to the House of Education took in local children with no payment; Charlotte firmly believed that her liberal education ideas were applicable to all children regardless of class, status, or ability, and she put her ideas into practice, as she always did.

The college flourished, never larger than fifty students in Charlotte's own lifetime but with a reputation out of proportion to its size. By the 1920s the PNEU had established several schools as well as a correspondence school, run from Ambleside, which sent out lesson notes and advice on educational matters to parents and governesses.

Charlotte died on January 16, 1923; by then she was the object of deep veneration within the movement. She was buried in the churchyard at Ambleside, close to the graves of W. E. Forster and the Arnold family. Educationists flourished—and died—in Ambleside.

The college and the correspondence school continued on the same site until 1966, when the PNEU (now with the added title of "World Education Service") moved to new premises in London and absorbed the correspondence school. PNEU/WES has continued to provide full syllabuses and educational advice to PNEU affiliated schools in the UK and in many countries abroad where English-medium schools have been established. But much of its work is still with parents, mainly with those parents living abroad who need to educate their children at home. The principles established by Charlotte Mason over a hundred years ago are still the guiding principles of all the work of PNEU/WES. They have proved themselves through the many changes in syllabus content and educational demands of the twentieth century.

Meanwhile, the college has undergone its own development. Until 1960 it continued as an independent teacher training institution, but then transferred to the control of the then Westmorland Local Education Authority, and at the same time took over the Kelsick site on Stockghyll Lane, the town's former secondary school. In 1968 the college changed its validating university from Manchester to the newly founded University of Lancaster, some thirty-five miles from Ambleside. Local government reorganization in 1970 resulted in the absorption of Westmorland into the new county of Cumbria. On April 1, 1989, after fifteen years of fruitful partnership with Cumbria, the college became an independent corporation.

John Thorley
Principal
Charlotte Mason College

Preface to the 'Home Education' Series

THE educational outlook is rather misty and depressing both at home and abroad. That science should be a staple of education, that the teaching of Latin, of modern languages, of mathematics, must be reformed, that nature and handicrafts should be pressed into service for the training of the eye and hand, that boys and girls must learn to write English and therefore must know something of history and literature; and, on the other hand, that education must be made more technical and utilitarian—these, and such as these, are the cries of expedience with which we take the field. But we have no unifying principle, no definite aim; in fact, no philosophy of education. As a stream can rise no higher than its source, so it is probable that no educational effort can rise above the whole scheme of thought which gives it birth; and perhaps this is the reason of all the 'fallings from us, vanishings,' failures, and disappointments which mark our educational records.

Those of us, who have spent many years in pursuing the benign and elusive vision of Education, perceive

that her approaches are regulated by a law, and that this law has yet to be evoked. We can discern its outlines, but no more. We know that it is pervasive; there is no part of a child's home-life or school-work which the law does not penetrate. It is illuminating, too, showing the value, or lack of value, of a thousand systems and expedients. It is not only a light, but a measure, providing a standard whereby all things, small and great, belonging to educational work must be tested. The law is liberal, taking in whatsoever things are true, honest, and of good report, and offering no limitation or hindrance save where excess should injure. And the path indicated by the law is continuous and progressive, with no transition stage from the cradle to the grave, except that maturity takes up the regular self-direction to which immaturity has been trained. We shall doubtless find, when we apprehend the law, that certain German thinkers—Kant, Herbart, Lotze, Froebel — are justified; that, as they say, it is 'necessary' to believe in God; that, therefore, the knowledge of God is the principal knowledge, and the chief end of education. By one more character shall we be able to recognise this perfect law of educational liberty when it shall be made evident. It has been said that 'The best idea which we can form of absolute truth is that it is able to meet every condition by which it can be tested.' This we shall expect of our law—that it shall meet every test of experiment and every test of rational investigation.

Not having received the tables of our law, we

fall back upon Froebel or upon Herbart; or, if we belong to another School, upon Locke or Spencer; but we are not satisfied. A discontent, is it a divine discontent? is upon us; and assuredly we should hail a workable, effectual philosophy of education as a deliverance from much perplexity. Before this great deliverance comes to us it is probable that many tentative efforts will be put forth, having more or less of the characters of a philosophy; notably, having a central idea, a body of thought with various members working in vital harmony.

Such a theory of education, which need not be careful to call itself a system of psychology, must be in harmony with the thought movements of the age; must regard education, not as a shut-off compartment, but as being as much a part of life as birth or growth, marriage or work; and it must leave the pupil attached to the world at many points of contact. It is true that educationalists are already eager to establish such contact in several directions, but their efforts rest upon an axiom here and an idea there, and there is no broad unifying basis of thought to support the whole.

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread; and the hope that there may be many tentative efforts towards a philosophy of education, and that all of them will bring us nearer to the *magnum opus*, encourages me to launch one such attempt. The central thought, or rather body of thought, upon

which I found, is the somewhat obvious fact that the child is a *person* with all the possibilities and powers included in personality. Some of the members which develop from this nucleus have been exploited from time to time by educational thinkers, and exist vaguely in the general common sense, a notion here, another there. One thesis, which is, perhaps, new, that *Education is the Science of Relations*, appears to me to solve the question of curricula, as showing that the object of education is to put a child in living touch with as much as may be of the life of Nature and of thought. Add to this one or two keys to self-knowledge, and the educated youth goes forth with some idea of self-management, with some pursuits, and many vital interests. My excuse for venturing to offer a solution, however tentative and passing, to the problem of education is twofold. For between thirty and forty years I have laboured without pause to establish a working and philosophic theory of education; and in the next place, each article of the educational faith I offer has been arrived at by inductive processes; and has, I think, been verified by a long and wide series of experiments. It is, however, with sincere diffidence that I venture to offer the results of this long labour; because I know that in this field there are many labourers far more able and expert than I — the 'angels' who fear to tread, so precarious is the footing!

But, if only *pour encourager les autres*, I append a short synopsis of the educational theory advanced

in the volumes of the 'Home Education Series.' The treatment is not methodic, but incidental; here a little, there a little, as seemed to me most likely to meet the occasions of parents and teachers. I should add that in the course of a number of years the various essays have been prepared for the use of the Parents' National Educational Union in the hope that that Society might witness for a more or less coherent body of educational thought.

> "The consequence of truth is great; therefore the judgment of it must not be negligent."
>
> WHICHCOTE.

1. Children are born *persons*.

2. They are not born either good or bad, but with possibilities for good and evil.

3. The principles of authority on the one hand and obedience on the other, are natural, necessary and fundamental; but—

4. These principles are limited by the respect due to the personality of children, which must not be encroached upon, whether by fear or love, suggestion or influence, or undue play upon any one natural desire.

5. Therefore we are limited to three educational instruments—the atmosphere of environment, the discipline of habit, and the presentation of living ideas.

6. By the saying, EDUCATION IS AN ATMOSPHERE, it is not meant that a child should be isolated in what may be called a 'child environment,'

especially adapted and prepared; but that we should take into account the educational value of his natural home atmosphere, both as regards persons and things, and should let him live freely among his proper conditions. It stultifies a child to bring down his world to the 'child's' level.

7. By EDUCATION IS A DISCIPLINE, is meant the discipline of habits formed definitely and thoughtfully, whether habits of mind or body. Physiologists tell us of the adaptation of brain structure to habitual lines of thought—*i.e.*, to our habits.

8. In the saying that EDUCATION IS A LIFE, the need of intellectual and moral as well as of physical sustenance is implied. The mind feeds on ideas, and therefore children should have a generous curriculum.

9. But the mind is not a receptacle into which ideas must be dropped, each idea adding to an 'apperception mass' of its like, the theory upon which the Herbartian doctrine of interest rests.

10. On the contrary, a child's mind is no mere *sac* to hold ideas; but is rather, if the figure may be allowed, a spiritual *organism*, with an appetite for all knowledge. This is its proper diet, with which it is prepared to deal, and which it can digest and assimilate as the body does foodstuffs.

11. This difference is not a verbal quibble. The Herbartian doctrine lays the stress of education—the preparation of knowledge in enticing morsels, presented in due order—upon the teacher. Children

taught upon this principle are in danger of receiving much teaching with little knowledge; and the teacher's axiom is, 'What a child learns matters less than how he learns it.'

12. But, believing that the normal child has powers of mind that fit him to deal with all knowledge proper to him, we must give him a full and generous curriculum; taking care, only, that the knowledge offered to him is vital — that is, that facts are not presented without their informing ideas. Out of this conception comes the principle that,—

13. EDUCATION IS THE SCIENCE OF RELATIONS; that is, that a child has natural relations with a vast number of things and thoughts: so we must train him upon physical exercises, nature, handicrafts, science and art, and upon *many living* books; for we know that our business is, not to teach him all about anything, but to help him to make valid as many as may be of—

> 'Those first-born affinities
> That fit our new existence to existing things.'

14. There are also two secrets of moral and intellectual self-management which should be offered to children; these we may call the Way of the Will and the Way of the Reason.

15. *The Way of the Will.*—Children should be taught—

(*a*) To distinguish between 'I want and 'I will.'

(*b*) That the way to will effectively is to turn our

thoughts from that which we desire but do not will.

(*c*) That the best way to turn our thoughts is to think of or do some quite different thing, entertaining or interesting.

(*d*) That, after a little rest in this way, the will returns to its work with new vigour.

(This adjunct of the will is familiar to us as *diversion*, whose office it is to ease us for a time from will effort, that we may 'will' again with added power. The use of suggestion—even self-suggestion—as an aid to the will, is to be deprecated, as tending to stultify and stereotype character. It would seem that spontaneity is a condition of development, and that human nature needs the discipline of failure as well as of success.)

16. *The Way of the Reason.* — We should teach children, too, not to 'lean' (too confidently) 'unto their own understanding,' because the function of reason is, to give logical demonstration (*a*) of mathematical truth; and (*b*) of an initial idea, accepted by the will. In the former case reason is, perhaps, an infallible guide, but in the second it is not always a safe one; for whether that initial idea be right or wrong, reason will confirm it by irrefragable proofs.

17. Therefore children should be taught, as they become mature enough to understand such teaching, that the chief responsibility which rests on them as persons is the acceptance or rejection of initial ideas.

To help them in this choice we should give them principles of conduct and a wide range of the knowledge fitted for them.

These three principles (15, 16 and 17) should save children from some of the loose thinking and heedless action which cause most of us to live at a lower level than we need.

18. We should allow no separation to grow up between the intellectual and 'spiritual' life of children; but should teach them that the divine Spirit has constant access to their spirits, and is their continual helper in all the interests, duties and joys of life.

The 'Home Education' Series is so called from the title of the first volume, and not as dealing, wholly or principally, with 'Home' as opposed to 'School' education.

Preface to the Fourth Edition

MY attempt in the following volume is to suggest to parents and teachers *a method of education resting upon a basis of natural law*; and to touch, in this connection, upon a mother's duties to her children. In venturing to speak on this latter subject, I do so with the sincerest deference to mothers, believing that, in the words of a wise teacher of men, "the woman receives from the Spirit of God Himself the intuitions into the child's character, the capacity of appreciating its strength and its weakness, the faculty of calling forth the one and sustaining the other, in which lies the mystery of education, apart from which all its rules and measures are utterly vain and ineffectual."[1] But just in proportion as a mother has this peculiar insight as regards her own children, she will, I think, feel her need of a knowledge of the general principles of education, founded upon the nature and the needs of all children. And this knowledge of the *science of education*, not the best of mothers will get from above, seeing that we do not often receive as a gift that which we have the means of getting by our own efforts.

I venture to hope that teachers of young children,

[1] The Rev. F. D. Maurice.

also, may find this volume of use. The period of a child's life between his sixth and his ninth year should be used to lay the basis of a liberal education, and of the *habit* of reading for instruction. During these years the child should enter upon the domain of knowledge, in a good many directions, in a reposeful, *consecutive* way, which is not to be attained through the somewhat exciting medium of oral lessons. I hope that teachers may find the approach (from a new standpoint), to the hackneyed "subjects of instruction" proper for little children at any rate interesting and stimulating; and possibly the methods which this fresh standpoint indicates may prove suggestive and helpful.

The particular object of this volume, as a member of the 'Home Education' Series, is to show the bearing of the physiology of habit upon education; why certain physical, intellectual, and moral habits are a valuable asset to a child, and what may be done towards the formation of such habits. I beg to acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr Carpenter's *Mental Physiology* for valuable teaching on the subject of habits contained in some two or three chapters of that work. Also, I would renew my grateful thanks to those medical friends who have given careful and able revision to such parts of the work as rest on a physiological basis.

I should add that some twenty years ago (1885) the greater part of this volume was delivered as 'Lectures to Ladies,' in which form the papers were originally published (1886) under the title which is still retained.

Lectures VII. and VIII. and the Appendix of the original volume have been transferred from this to other volumes of the Series. The whole has been very carefully revised, and much new matter introduced, especially in Part V., 'Lessons as Instruments of Education,' which now offers a fairly complete introduction to methods of teaching subjects fit for children between the ages of six and nine.

The rest of the volume attempts to deal with the whole of education from infancy until the ninth year of life.

C. M. MASON.

SCALE HOW, AMBLESIDE,
1905.

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PART I

SOME PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

NOT the least sign of the higher *status* they have gained, is the growing desire for work that obtains amongst educated women. The world wants the work of such women; and presently, as education becomes more general, we shall see all women with the capacity to work falling into the ranks of working women, with definite tasks, fixed hours, and for wages, the pleasure and honour of doing useful work if they are under no necessity to earn money.

Children are a Public Trust.—Now, that work which is of most importance to society is the bringing-up and instruction of the children—in the school, certainly, but far more in the home, because it is more than anything else the home influences brought to bear upon the child that determine the character and career of the future man or woman. It is a great thing to be a parent: there is no promotion, no dignity, to compare with it. The parents of but one child may be cherishing what shall prove a blessing to the world. But then, entrusted with such a charge, they are not

free to say, "I may do as I will with mine own." The children are, in truth, to be regarded less as personal property than as public trusts, put into the hands of parents that they may make the very most of them for the good of society. And this responsibility is not equally divided between the parents: it is upon the mothers of the present that the future of the world depends, in even a greater degree than upon the fathers, because it is the mothers who have the sole direction of the children's early, most impressible years. This is why we hear so frequently of great men who have had good mothers—that is, mothers who brought up their children themselves, and did not make over their gravest duty to indifferent persons.

Mothers owe 'a thinking love' to their Children.—"The mother is qualified," says Pestalozzi, "and qualified by the Creator Himself, to become the principal agent in the development of her child; . . . and what is demanded of her is—*a thinking love*. . . . God has given to thy child all the faculties of our nature, but the grand point remains undecided—how shall this heart, this head, these hands, be employed? to whose service shall they be dedicated? A question the answer to which involves a futurity of happiness or misery to a life so dear to thee. Maternal love is the first agent in education."

We are waking up to our duties, and in proportion as mothers become more highly educated and efficient, they will doubtless feel the more strongly that the education of their children during the first six years of life is an undertaking hardly to be entrusted to any hands but their own. And they will take it up as their profession—that is, with the

diligence, regularity, and punctuality which men bestow on their professional labours.

That the mother may know what she is about, may come thoroughly furnished to her work, she should have something more than a hearsay acquaintance with the theory of education, and with those conditions of the child's nature upon which such theory rests.

The Training of Children 'dreadfully defective.'—"The training of children," says Mr Herbert Spencer—"physical, moral, and intellectual—is dreadfully defective. And in great measure it is so, because parents are devoid of that knowledge by which this training can alone be rightly guided. What is to be expected when one of the most intricate of problems is undertaken by those who have given scarcely a thought to the principle on which its solution depends? For shoemaking or house-building, for the management of a ship or of a locomotive engine, a long apprenticeship is needful. Is it, then, that the unfolding of a human being in body and mind is so comparatively simple a process that any one may superintend and regulate it with no preparation whatever? If not—if the process is, with one exception, more complex than any in Nature, and the task of ministering to it one of surpassing difficulty—is it not madness to make no provision for such a task? Better sacrifice accomplishments than omit this all-essential instruction. . . . Some acquaintance with the first principles of physiology and the elementary truths of psychology is indispensable for the right bringing-up of children. . . . Here are the indisputable facts: that the development of children in mind and body follows certain laws; that unless these laws are in some

degree conformed to by parents, death is inevitable; that unless they are in a great degree conformed to, there must result serious physical and mental defects; and that only when they are completely conformed to, can a perfect maturity be reached. Judge, then, whether all who may one day be parents should not strive with some anxiety to learn what these laws are."[1]

How Parents usually proceed.—The parent begins instinctively by regarding his child as an unwritten tablet, and is filled with great resolves as to what he shall write thereon. By-and-by, traits of disposition appear, the child has little ways of his own; and, at first, every new display of personality is a delightful surprise. That the infant should show pleasure at the sight of his father, that his face should cloud in sympathy with his mother, must always be wonderful to us. But the wonder stales; his parents are used to the fact by the time the child shows himself a complete human being like themselves, with affections, desires, powers; taking to his book, perhaps, as a duck to the water; or to the games which shall make a man of him. The notion of doing *all* for the child with which the parents began gradually recedes. So soon as he shows that he has a way of his own he is encouraged to take it. Father and mother have no greater delight than to watch the individuality of their child unfold as a flower unfolds. But Othello loses his occupation. The more the child shapes his own course, the less do the parents find to do, beyond feeding him with food convenient, whether of love, or thought, or of bodily meat and drink. And

[1] Herbert Spencer, *Education*. Some particulars of the books referred to in this volume will be found in Appendix A.

here, we may notice, the parents need only supply; the child knows well enough how to appropriate. The parents' chief care is, that that which they supply shall be wholesome and nourishing, whether in the way of picture-books, lessons, playmates, bread and milk, or mother's love. This is education as most parents understand it, with more of meat, more of love, more of culture, according to their kind and degree. They let their children alone, allowing human nature to develop on its own lines, modified by facts of environment and descent.

Nothing could be better for the child than this 'masterly inactivity,' so far as it goes. It is well he should be let grow and helped to grow according to his nature; and so long as the parents do not step in to spoil him, much good and no very evident harm comes of letting him alone. But this philosophy of 'let him be,' while it covers a part, does not cover the serious part of the parents' calling; does not touch the strenuous incessant efforts upon lines of law which go to the producing of a human being at his best.

Nothing is trivial that concerns a child; his foolish-seeming words and ways are pregnant with meaning for the wise. It is in the infinitely little we must study the infinitely great; and the vast possibilities, and the right direction of education, are indicated in the open book of the little child's thoughts.

A generation ago, a great teacher amongst us never wearied of reiterating that in the Divine plan "the *family* is the unit of the nation": not the individual, but the family. There is a great deal of teaching in the phrase, but this lies on the surface; the whole is greater than the part, the whole contains the part, owns the part, orders the part; and this being so, the

children are the property of the nation, to be brought up for the nation as is best for the nation, and not according to the whim of individual parents. The law is for the punishment of evil-doers, for the praise of them that do well; so, practically, parents have very free play; but it is as well we should remember that the children are a national trust whose bringing-up is the concern of all—even of those unmarried and childless persons whose part in the game is the rather dreary one of 'looking on.'

I.—A METHOD OF EDUCATION

Traditional Methods of Education.—Never was it more necessary for parents to face for themselves this question of education in all its bearings. Hitherto, children have been brought up upon traditional methods mainly. The experience of our ancestors, floating in a vast number of educational maxims, is handed on from lip to lip; and few or many of these maxims form the educational code of every household.

But we hardly take in how complete a revolution advancing science is effecting in the theory of education. The traditions of the elders have been tried and found wanting; it will be long before the axioms of the new school pass into common currency; and, in the meantime, parents are thrown upon their own resources, and absolutely must weigh principles, and adopt a method, of education for themselves.

For instance, according to the former code, a mother might use her slipper now and then, to good effect and without blame; but now, the person of the child is, whether rightly or wrongly, held sacred,

and the infliction of pain for moral purposes is pretty generally disallowed.

Again, the old rule for the children's table was, 'the plainer the better, and let hunger bring sauce'; now, the children's diet must be at least as nourishing and as varied as that of their elders; and appetite, the craving for certain kinds of food, hitherto a vicious tendency to be repressed, is now within certain limitations the parents' most trustworthy guide in arranging a dietary for their children.

That children should be trained to endure hardness, was a principle of the old régime. "I shall never make a sailor if I can't face the wind and rain," said a little fellow of five who was taken out on a bitter night to see a torchlight procession; and, though shaking with cold, he declined the shelter of a shed. Nowadays, the shed is everything; the children must not be permitted to suffer from fatigue or exposure.

That children should do as they are bid, mind their books, and take pleasure as it offers when nothing stands in the way, sums up the old theory; now, the pleasures of children are apt to be made of more account than their duties.

Formerly, they were brought up in subjection; now, the elders give place, and the world is made for the children.

English people rarely go so far as the parents of that story in *French Home Life*, who arrived an hour late at a dinner-party, because they had been desired by their girl of three to undress and go to bed when she did, and were able to steal away only when the child was asleep. We do not go so far, but that is the direction in which we are moving; and how far the new theories of education are wise and

humane, the outcome of more widely spread physiological and psychological knowledge, and how far they just pander to the child-worship to which we are all succumbing, is not a question to be decided off-hand.

At any rate, it is not too much to say that a parent who does not follow reasonably a method of education, fully thought out, fails—now, more than ever before—to fulfil the claims his children have upon him.

Method a Way to an End.—Method implies two things—a way to an end, and step-by-step progress in that way. Further, the following of a method implies an idea, a mental image, of the end or object to be arrived at. What do you propose that education shall effect in and for your child? Again, method is natural ; easy, yielding, unobtrusive, simple as the ways of Nature herself; yet, watchful, careful, all-pervading, all-compelling. Method, with the *end* of education in view, presses the most unlikely matters into service to bring about that end; but with no more tiresome mechanism than the sun employs when it makes the winds to blow and the waters to flow only by shining. The parent who *sees his way*—that is, the exact force of method—to educate his child, will make use of every circumstance of the child's life almost without intention on his own part, so easy and spontaneous is a method of education based upon Natural Law. Does the child eat or drink, does he come, or go, or play—all the time he is being educated, though he is as little aware of it as he is of the act of breathing. There is always the danger that a method, a *bonâ fide* method, should degenerate into a mere system. The *Kindergarten*

Method, for instance, deserves the name, as having been conceived and perfected by large-hearted educators to aid the many-sided evolution of the living, growing, most complex human being; but what a miserable wooden *system* does it become in the hands of ignorant practitioners!

A System easier than a Method.—A '*system* of education' is an alluring fancy; more so, on some counts, than a *method*, because it is pledged to more definite calculable results. By means of a system certain developments may be brought about through the observance of given rules. Shorthand, dancing, how to pass examinations, how to become a good accountant, or a woman of society, may all be learned upon systems.

System—the observing of rules until the habit of doing certain things, of behaving in certain ways, is confirmed, and, therefore, the art is acquired—is so successful in achieving precise results, that it is no wonder there should be endless attempts to straiten the whole field of education to the limits of a system.

If a human being were a machine, education could do no more for him than to set him in action in prescribed ways, and the work of the educator would be simply to adopt a good working system or set of systems.

But the educator has to deal with a self-acting, self-developing being, and his business is to guide, and assist in, the production of the latent good in that being, the dissipation of the latent evil, the preparation of the child to take his place in the world *at his best*, with every capacity for good that is in him developed into a power.

Though system is highly useful as an instrument of

education, a 'system of education' is mischievous, as producing only mechanical action instead of the vital growth and movement of a living being.

It is worth while to point out the differing characters of a system and a method, because parents let themselves be run away with often enough by some plausible 'system,' the object of which is to produce development in one direction — of the muscles, of the memory, of the reasoning faculty — and to rest content, as if that single development were a complete all-round education. This easy satisfaction arises from the sluggishness of human nature, to which any definite scheme is more agreeable than the constant watchfulness, the unforeseen action, called for when the whole of a child's existence is to be used as the means of his education. But who is sufficient for an education so comprehensive, so incessant? A parent may be willing to undergo any definite labours for his child's sake; but to be always catering for his behoof, always contriving that circumstances shall play upon him for his good, is the part of a god and not of a man! A reasonable objection enough, if one looks upon education as an endless series of independent efforts, each to be thought out and acted out on the spur of the moment; but the fact is, that a few broad essential principles cover the whole field, and these once fully laid hold of, it is as easy and natural to act upon them as it is to act upon our knowledge of such facts as that fire burns and water flows. My endeavour in this and the following chapters will be to put these few fundamental principles before you in their practical bearing. Meantime, let us consider one or two preliminary questions.

II.—THE CHILD'S ESTATE

The Child in the Midst.—And first, let us consider where and what the little being is who is entrusted to the care of human parents. A tablet to be written upon? A twig to be bent? Wax to be moulded? Very likely; but he is much more—a being belonging to an altogether higher estate than ours; as it were, a prince committed to the fostering care of peasants. Hear Wordsworth's estimate of the child's estate:—

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!

. . . . .

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy soul's immensity;
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage; thou eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind—
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find
Thou, over whom thy immortality
Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,
A presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom, on thy being's height"—

and so on, through the whole of that great ode, which, next after the Bible, shows the deepest insight into

what is peculiar to the children in their nature and estate. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." "Except *ye* become as little children ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven." "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" "And He called a little child, and set him in the midst." Here is the Divine estimate of the child's estate. It is worth while for parents to ponder every utterance in the Gospels about the children, divesting themselves of the notion that these sayings belong, in the *first place*, to the grown-up people who have become as little children. What these profound sayings are, and how much they may mean, it is beyond us to discuss here; only they appear to cover far more than Wordsworth claims for the children in his sublimest reach—

> "Trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God, who is our home."

Code of Education in the Gospels.—It may surprise parents who have not given much attention to the subject to discover also a code of education in the Gospels, expressly laid down by Christ. It is summed up in three commandments, and all three have a negative character, as if the chief thing required of grown-up people is that they should do no sort of injury to the children: *Take heed that ye* OFFEND *not*—DESPISE *not*—HINDER *not—one of these little ones.*

So run the three educational laws of the New Testament, which, when separately examined, appear to me to cover all the help we can give the children and all the harm we can save them from—that is, whatever is included in training up a child in the way he should go. Let us look upon these three

great laws as prohibitive, in order to clear the ground for the consideration of a method of education; for if we once settle with ourselves what we may *not* do, we are greatly helped to see what we *may* do, and must do. But, as a matter of fact, the positive is included in the negative, what we are bound to do for the child in what we are forbidden to do to his hurt.

III.—OFFENDING THE CHILDREN

Offences.—The first and second of the Divine edicts appear to include our sins of commission and of omission against the children: we offend them, when we do by them that which we ought not to have done; we despise them, when we leave undone those things which, for their sakes, we ought to have done. An offence, we know, is literally a stumbling-block, that which trips up the walker and causes him to fall. Mothers know what it is to clear the floor of every obstacle when a baby takes his unsteady little runs from chair to chair, from one pair of loving arms to another. The table-leg, the child's toy on the floor, which has caused a fall and a pitiful cry, is a thing to be deplored; why did not somebody put it out of the way, so that the baby should not stumble? But the little child is going out into the world with uncertain tottering steps in many directions. There are causes of stumbling not so easy to remove as an offending footstool; and woe to him who causes the child to fall!

Children are born Law-abiding.—'Naughty baby!' says the mother; and the child's eyes droop, and a flush rises over neck and brow. It is very

wonderful; very 'funny,' some people think, and say, 'Naughty baby!' when the baby is sweetly good, to amuse themselves with the sight of the infant soul rising visibly before their eyes. But what does it mean, this display of feeling, conscience, in the child, before any human teaching can have reached him? No less than this, that he is born a law-abiding being, with a sense of *may*, and *must not*, of right and wrong. That is how the children are sent into the world with the warning, "Take heed that ye offend not one of these little ones." And—this being so—who has not met big girls and boys, the children of right-minded parents, who yet do not know what *must* means, who are not moved by *ought*, whose hearts feel no stir at the solemn name of *Duty*, who know no higher rule of life than 'I want,' and 'I don't want,' 'I like,' and 'I don't like'? Heaven help parents and children when it has come to that!

But how has it been brought about that the babe, with an acute sense of right and wrong even when it can understand little of human speech, should grow into the boy or girl already proving 'the curse of lawless heart'? By slow degrees, here a little and there a little, as all that is good or bad in character comes to pass. 'Naughty!' says the mother, again, when a little hand is thrust into the sugar-bowl; and a pair of roguish eyes seeks hers furtively, to measure, as they do unerringly, how far the little pilferer may go. It is very amusing; the mother 'cannot help laughing'; and the little trespass is allowed to pass: and, what the poor mother has not thought of, an offence, a cause of stumbling, has been cast into the path of her two-year-old child. He has learned already that that which is 'naughty' may yet be done

with impunity, and he goes on improving his know ledge. It is needless to continue; everybody knows the steps by which the mother's 'no' comes to be disregarded, her refusal teased into consent. The child has learned to believe that he has nothing to overcome but his mother's disinclination; if she *choose* to let him do this and that, there is no reason why she should not; he can make her choose to let him do the thing forbidden, and then he may do it. The next step in the argument is not too great for childish wits: if his mother does what she chooses, of course he will do what he chooses, *if he can*; and henceforward the child's life becomes an endless struggle to get his own way; a struggle in which a parent is pretty sure to be worsted, having many things to think of, while the child sticks persistently to the thing which has his fancy for the moment.

They must perceive that their Governors are Law-compelled.—Where is the beginning of this tangle, spoiling the lives of parent and child alike? In this: that the mother began with no sufficient sense of duty; she thought herself free to allow and disallow, to say and unsay, at pleasure, as if the child were hers to do what she liked with. The child has never discovered a background of *must* behind his mother's decisions; he does not know that she *must not* let him break his sister's playthings, gorge himself with cake, spoil the pleasure of other people, because these things are not *right*. Let the child perceive that his parents are law-compelled as well as he, that they simply cannot allow him to do the things which have been forbidden, and he submits with the sweet meekness which belongs to his age. To give reasons to a child is usually out of place, and is a sacrifice of

parental dignity; but he is quick enough to read the 'must' and 'ought' which rule her, in his mother's face and manner, and in the fact that she is not to be moved from a resolution on any question of right and wrong.

Parents may Offend their Children by Disregarding the Laws of Health.—This, of allowing him in what is wrong, is only one of many ways in which the loving mother may offend her child. Through ignorance, or wilfulness, which is worse, she may not only allow wrong in him, but do wrong by him. She may cast a stumbling-block in the way of his physical life by giving him unwholesome food, letting him sleep and live in ill-ventilated rooms, by disregarding any or every of the simple laws of health, ignorance of which is hardly to be excused in the face of the pains taken by scientific men to bring this necessary knowledge within the reach of every one.

And of the Intellectual Life.—Almost as bad is the way the child's intellectual life may be wrecked at its outset by a round of dreary, dawdling lessons in which definite progress is the last thing made or expected, and which, so far from educating in any true sense, stultify his wits in a way he never gets over. Many a little girl, especially, leaves the home schoolroom with a distaste for all manner of learning, an aversion to mental effort, which lasts her her lifetime, and that is why she grows up to read little but trashy novels, and to talk all day about her clothes.

And of the Moral Life.—And her affections—the movements of the outgoing tender child-heart—how are they treated? There are few mothers who do not take pains to cherish the family affections; but when the child comes to have dealings with outsiders,

do no worldly maxims and motives ever nip the buds of childish love? Far worse than this happens when the child's love finds no natural outlets within her home: when she is the plain or the dull child of the family, and is left out in the cold, while the parents' affection is lavished on the rest. Of course she does not love her brothers and sisters, who monopolise what should have been hers too. And how is she to love her parents? Nobody knows the real anguish which many a child in the nursery suffers from this cause, nor how many lives are embittered and spoiled through the suppression of these childish affections. "My childhood was made miserable," a lady said to me a while ago, "by my mother's doting fondness for my little brother; there was not a day when she did not make me wretched by coming into the nursery to fondle and play with him, and all the time she had not a word nor a look nor a smile for me, any more than if I had not been in the room. I have never got over it; she is very kind to me now, but I never feel quite natural with her. And how can we two, brother and sister, feel for each other as we should if we had grown up together in love in the nursery?"

IV.—DESPISING THE CHILDREN

Children should have the best of their Mothers.—Suppose that a mother *may* offend her child, how is it possible that she should despise him? "Despise: to have a low opinion of, to undervalue"—thus the dictionary; and, as a matter of fact, however much we may delight in them, we grown-up people have far too low an opinion of children. if the mother did not undervalue her child, would she leave him to the

society of an ignorant nursemaid during the early years when his whole nature is, like the photographer's sensitive plate, receiving momently indelible impressions? Not but that his nurse is good for the child. Very likely it would not answer for educated people to have their children always about them. The constant society of his parents might be too stimulating for the child; and frequent change of thought, and the society of other people, make the mother all the fresher for her children. But they should have the *best* of their mother, her freshest, brightest hours; while, at the same time, she is careful to choose her nurses wisely, train them carefully, and keep a vigilant eye upon all that goes on in the nursery.

'Nurse.'—Mere coarseness and rudeness in his nurse does the tender child lasting harm. Many a child leaves the nursery with his moral sense blunted, and with an alienation from his heavenly Father set up which may last his lifetime. For the child's moral sense is exceedingly quick; he is all eyes and ears for the slightest act or word of unfairness, deception, shiftiness. His nurse says, "If you'll be a good boy, I won't tell"; and the child learns that things *may* be concealed from his mother, who should be to him as God, knowing all his good and evil. And it is not as if the child noted the slips of his elders with aversion. He *knows* better, it is true, but then he does not trust his own intuitions; he shapes his life on any pattern set before him, and with the fatal taint of human nature upon him he is more ready to imitate a bad pattern than a good. Give him a nurse who is coarse, violent, and tricky, and before the child is able to speak plainly he will have caught these dispositions,

Children's Faults are Serious.—One of many ways in which parents are apt to have too low an opinion of their children is in the matter of their faults. A little child shows some ugly trait—he is greedy, and gobbles up his sister's share of goodies as well as his own; he is vindictive, ready to bite or fight the hand that offends him; he tells a lie;—no, he did not touch the sugar-bowl or the jam-pot. The mother puts off the evil day: she knows she must sometime reckon with the child for those offences, but in the meantime she says, "Oh, it does not matter this time; he is very little, and will know better by-and-by." To put the thing on no higher grounds, what happy days for herself and her children would the mother secure if she would keep watch at the place of the letting out of waters! If the mother settle it in her own mind that the child never does wrong without being aware of his wrong-doing, she will see that he is not too young to have his fault corrected or prevented. Deal with a child on his *first* offence, and a grieved look is enough to convict the little transgressor; but let him go on until a habit of wrong-doing is formed, and the cure is a slow one; then the mother has no chance until she has formed in him a contrary habit of well-doing. To laugh at ugly tempers and let them pass because the child is small, is to sow the wind.

V.—HINDERING THE CHILDREN

A Child's Relationship with Almighty God.—The most fatal way of despising the child falls under the third educational law of the Gospels; it is to overlook and make light of his natural relationship with Almighty God. "Suffer the little children to come

unto Me," says the Saviour, as if that were the natural thing for the children to do, the thing they do when they are not hindered by their elders. And perhaps it is not too beautiful a thing to believe in this redeemed world, that, as the babe turns to his mother though he has no power to say her name, as the flowers turn to the sun, so the hearts of the children turn to their Saviour and God with unconscious delight and trust.

Nursery Theology.—Now listen to what goes on in many a nursery:—'God does not love you, you naughty, wicked boy!' 'He will send you to the bad, wicked place,' and so on; and this is all the practical teaching about the ways of his 'almighty Lover' that the child gets!—never a word of how God does love and cherish the little children all day long, and fill their hours with delight. Add to this, listless perfunctory prayers, idle discussions of Divine things in their presence, light use of holy words, few signs whereby the child can read that the things of God are more to his parents than any things of the world, and the child is hindered, tacitly forbidden to "come unto Me,"—and this, often, by parents who in the depths of their hearts desire nothing in comparison with God. The mischief lies in that same foolish undervaluing of the children, in the notion that the child can have no spiritual life until it please his elders to kindle the flame.

VI.—CONDITIONS OF HEALTHY BRAIN-ACTIVITY

Having just glanced at the wide region of forbidden ground, we are prepared to consider what it is, definitely and positively, that the mother owes to her child under the name of Education.

All Mind Labour means Wear of Brain.—And first of all, the more educable powers of the child—his intelligence, his will, his moral feelings—have their seat in the brain; that is to say, as the eye is the organ of sight, so is the brain, or some part of it, the organ of thought and will, of love and worship. Authorities differ as to how far it is possible to localise the functions of the brain; but this at least seems pretty clear—that none of the functions of mind are performed without real activity in the mass of grey and white nervous matter named 'the brain.' Now, this is not a matter for the physiologist alone, but for every mother and father of a family; because that wonderful brain, by means of which we do our thinking, if it is to act healthily and in harmony with the healthful action of the members, should act only under such conditions of exercise, rest, and nutrition as secure health in every other part of the body.

Exercise.—Most of us have met with a few eccentric and a good many silly persons, concerning whom the question forces itself, Were these people born with less brain power than others? Probably not; but if they were allowed to grow up without the daily habit of appropriate moral and mental *work*, if they were allowed to dawdle through youth without regular and sustained efforts of thought or will, the result would be the same, and the brain which should have been invigorated by daily exercise has become flabby and feeble as a healthy arm would be after being carried for years in a sling. The large active brain is not content with entire idleness; it strikes out lines for itself and works fitfully, and the man or woman becomes eccentric, because wholesome mental effort, like moral, must be carried on under the

discipline of rules. A shrewd writer suggests that mental indolence may have been in some measure the cause of those pitiable attacks of derangement and depression from which poor Cowper suffered; the making of graceful verses when the 'maggot bit' did not afford him the amount of mental *labour* necessary for his well-being.

The outcome of which is—Do not let the children pass a day without distinct *efforts*, intellectual, moral, volitional; let them brace themselves to understand; let them compel themselves to do and to bear; and let them do right at the sacrifice of ease and pleasure: and this for many higher reasons, but, in the first and lowest place, that the mere physical organ of mind and will may grow vigorous with work.

Rest.—Just as important is it that the brain should have due rest; that is, should rest and work alternately. And here two considerations come into play. In the first place, when the brain is actively at work it is treated as is every other organ of the body in the same circumstances; that is to say, a large additional supply of blood is attracted to the head for the nourishment of the organ which is spending its substance in hard work. Now, there is not an indefinite quantity of what we will for the moment call surplus blood in the vessels. The supply is regulated on the principle that only one set of organs shall be excessively active at one time—now the limbs, now the digestive organs, now the brain; and all the blood in the body that can be spared goes to the support of those organs which, for the time being, are in a state of labour.

Rest after Meals.—The child has just had his dinner, the meal of the day which most severely taxes

his digestive organs; for as much as two or three hours after, much labour is going on in these organs, and the blood that can be spared from elsewhere is present to assist. Now, send the child out for a long walk *immediately* after dinner—the blood goes to the labouring extremities, and the food is left half digested; give the child a regular course of such dinners and walks, and he will grow up a dyspeptic. Set him to his books after a heavy meal, and the case is as bad; the blood which should have been assisting in the digestion of the meal goes to the labouring brain.

It follows that the hours for lessons should be carefully chosen, after periods of mental rest—sleep or play, for instance—and when there is no excessive activity in any other part of the system. Thus, the morning, after breakfast (the digestion of which lighter meal is not a severe tax), is much the best time for lessons and every sort of mental work; if the whole afternoon cannot be spared for out-of-door recreation, that is the time for mechanical tasks such as needle-work, drawing, practising; the children's wits are bright enough in the evening, but the drawback to evening work is, that the brain, once excited, is inclined to carry on its labours beyond bed-time, and dreams, wakefulness, and uneasy sleep attend the poor child who has been at work until the last minute. If the elder children *must* work in the evening, they should have at least one or two pleasant social hours before they go to bed; but, indeed, we owe it to the children to abolish evening 'preparation.'

Change of Occupation.—"There is," says Huxley, "no satisfactory proof at present, that the manifes-

tation of any particular kind of mental faculty is especially allotted to, or connected with, the activity of any particular region of the cerebral hemispheres," a dictum against the phrenologists, but coming to us on too high authority to be disputed. It is not possible to localise the 'faculties'—to say you are cautious with this fraction of your brain, and music-loving with another; but this much is certain, and is very important to the educator: the brain, or some portion of the brain, becomes exhausted when any given function has been exercised too long. The child has been doing sums for some time, and is getting unaccountably stupid: take away his slate and let him read history, and you find his wits fresh again. Imagination, which has had no part in the sums, is called into play by the history lesson, and the child brings a lively unexhausted power to his new work. School time-tables are usually drawn up with a view to give the brain of the child variety of work; but the secret of the weariness children often show in the home schoolroom is, that no such judicious change of lessons is contrived.

Nourishment.—Again, the brain cannot do its work well unless it be abundantly and suitably nourished; somebody has made a calculation of how many ounces of brain went to the production of such a work—say *Paradise Lost*—how many to such another, and so on. Without going into mental arithmetic of this nature, we may say with safety that every sort of intellectual activity wastes the tissues of the brain; a network of vessels supplies an enormous quantity of blood to the organ, to make up for this waste of material; and the vigour and health of the brain depend upon the quality and quantity of this blood-supply.

Certain Causes affect the Quality of the Blood.—Now, the quality of the blood is affected by three or four causes. In the first place, the blood is elaborated from the food; the more nutritious and easy of digestion the food, the more *vital* will be the properties of the blood. The food must be varied, too, a mixed diet, because various ingredients are required to make up for the various waste in the tissues. The children are shocking spendthrifts; their endless goings and comings, their restlessness, their energy, the very wagging of their tongues, all mean expenditure of substance: the loss is not appreciable, but they lose something by every sudden sally, out of doors or within. No doubt the gain of power which results from exercise is more than compensation for the loss of substance; but, all the same, this loss must be promptly made good. And not only is the body of the child more active, proportionably, than that of the man: the child's brain as compared with the man's is in a perpetual flutter of endeavour. It is calculated that though the brain of a man weighs no more than a fortieth part of his body, yet a fifth or a sixth of his whole complement of blood goes to nourish this delicate and intensely active organ; but, in the child's case, a considerably larger proportion of the blood that is in him is spent on the sustenance of his brain. And all the time, with these excessive demands upon him, the child has to grow! not merely to make up for waste, but to produce new substance in brain and body.

Concerning Meals.—What is the obvious conclusion? That the child must be well fed. Half the people of low vitality we come across are the victims of low-feeding during their childhood; and that more

often because their parents were not alive to their duty in this respect, than because they were not in a position to afford their children the diet necessary to their full physical and mental development. Regular meals at, usually, *unbroken* intervals—dinner, never more than five hours after breakfast; luncheon, unnecessary; animal food, once certainly, in some lighter form, twice a day—are the suggestions of common sense followed out in most well-regulated households. But it is not the food which is *eaten*, but the food which is *digested*, that nourishes body and brain. And here so many considerations press, that we can only glance at two or three of the most obvious. Everybody knows that children should not eat pastry, or pork, or fried meats, or cheese, or rich, highly-flavoured food of any description; that pepper, mustard, and vinegar, sauces and spices, should be forbidden, with new bread, rich cakes, and jams, like plum or gooseberry, in which the leathery coat of the fruit is preserved; that milk, or milk and water, and that not too warm, or cocoa, is the best drink for children, and that they should be trained not to drink until they have finished eating; that fresh fruit at breakfast is invaluable; that, as serving the same end, oatmeal porridge and treacle, and the fat of toasted bacon, are valuable breakfast foods; and that a glass of water, also, taken the last thing at night and the first thing in the morning, is useful in promoting those regular habits on which much of the comfort of life depends.

Talk at Meals.—All this and much of the same kind it is needless to urge; but again let me say, it is *digested* food that nourishes the system, and people are apt to forget how far mental and moral

conditions affect the processes of digestion. The fact is, that the gastric juices which act as solvents to the viands are only secreted freely when the mind is in a cheerful and contented frame. If the child dislike his dinner, he swallows it, but the digestion of that distasteful meal is a laborious, much-impeded process: if the meal be eaten in silence, unrelieved by pleasant chat, the child loses much of the 'good' of his dinner. Hence it is not a matter of pampering them at all, but a matter of health, of due nutrition, that the children should enjoy their food, and that their meals should be eaten in gladness; though, by the way, joyful *excitement* is as mischievous as its opposite in destroying that even, cheerful tenor of mind favourable to the processes of digestion. No pains should be spared to make the hours of meeting round the family table the brightest hours of the day. This is supposing that the children are allowed to sit at the same table with their parents; and, if it is possible to let them do so at every meal excepting a late dinner, the advantage to the little people is incalculable. Here is the parents' opportunity to train them in manners and in morals, to cement family love, and to accustom the children to habits, such as that of thorough mastication, for instance, as important on the score of health as on that of propriety.

Variety in Meals.—But, given pleasant surroundings and excellent food, and even then the requirements of these exacting little people are not fully met: plain as their food should be, they must have variety. A leg of mutton every Tuesday, the same cold on Wednesday, and hashed on Thursday, may be very good food; but the child who has this diet week after week is inadequately nourished, simply because he is

tired of it. The mother should contrive a rotation for her children that will last at least a fortnight without the same dinner recurring twice. Fish, especially if the children dine off it without meat to follow, is excellent as a change, the more so as it is rich in phosphorus —a valuable brain food. The children's puddings deserve a good deal of consideration, because they do not commonly care for fatty foods, but prefer to derive the warmth of their bodies from the starch and sugar of their puddings. But give them variety; do not let it be 'everlasting tapioca.' Even for tea and breakfast the wise mother does not say, 'I always give my children' so and so. They should not have anything 'always'; every meal should have some little surprise. But is this the way, to make them think overmuch of what they shall eat and drink? On the contrary, it is the underfed children who are greedy, and unfit to be trusted with any unusual delicacy.

Air as important as Food.—The quality of the blood depends almost as much on the air we breathe as on the food we eat; in the course of every two or three minutes, all the blood in the body passes through the endless ramifications of the lungs, for no other purpose than that, during the instant of its passage, it should be acted upon by the oxygen contained in the air which is drawn into the lungs in the act of breathing. But what can happen to the blood in the course of an exposure of so short duration? Just this—the whole character, the very colour, of the blood is changed: it enters the lungs spoiled, no longer capable of sustaining life; it leaves them, a pure and vital fluid. Now, observe, the blood is only fully oxygenated when the air

contains its full proportion of oxygen, and every breathing and every burning object withdraws some oxygen from the atmosphere. Hence the importance of giving the children daily airings and abundant exercise of limb and lung in unvitiated, unimpoverished air.

The Children Walk every Day.—'The children walk every day; they are never out less than an hour when the weather is suitable.' That is better than nothing; so is this:—An East London schoolmistress notices the pale looks of one of her best girls. "Have you had any dinner, Nellie?" "Ye-es" (with hesitation). "What have you had?" "Mother gave Jessie and me a halfpenny to buy our dinners, and we bought a haporth of aniseed drops—they go further than bread"—with an appeal in her eyes against possible censure for extravagance. Children do not develop at their best upon aniseed drops for dinner, nor upon an hour's 'constitutional' daily. Possibly science will bring home to us more and more the fact that animal life, pent under cover, is supported under artificial conditions, just as is plant life in a glass house. Here is where most Continental nations have the advantage over us; they keep up the habit of out-of-door life; and as a consequence, the average Frenchman, German, Italian, Bulgarian, is more joyous, more simple, and more hardy than the average Englishman. Climate? Did not Charles II. —and he knew—declare for the climate of England because you could be abroad "more hours in the day and more days in the year" in England than "in any other country"? We lose sight of the fact that we are *not* like that historical personage who "lived upon nothing but victuals and drink." "You can't

live upon air!" we say to the invalid who can't eat. No; we cannot live upon air; but, if we must choose among the three sustainers of life, air will support us the longest. We know all about it; we are deadly weary of the subject; let but the tail of your eye catch 'oxygenation' on a page, and the well-trained organ skips that paragraph of its own accord. No need to tell Macaulay's schoolboy, or anybody else, how the blood of the body is brought to the lungs and there spread about in a huge extent of innumerable 'pipes' that it may be exposed momentarily to the oxygen in the air; how the air is made to blow upon the blood, so spread out in readiness, by the bellows-like action of breathing; how the air penetrates the very thin walls of the pipes; and then, behold, a magical (or chemical) transmutation; the worthless sewage of the system becomes on the instant the rich vivifying fluid whose function it is to build up the tissues of muscle and nerve. And the Prospero that wears the cloak? Oxygen, his name; and the marvel that he effects within us some fifteen times in the course of a minute is possibly without parallel in the whole array of marvels which we 'tot up' with easy familiarity, setting down 'life,' and carrying —a cypher!

Oxygen has its Limitations.—We know all about it; what we forget, perhaps, is, that even oxygen has its limitation: nothing can act but where it is, and, waste attends work, hold true for this vital gas as for other matters. Fire and lamp and breathing beings are all consumers of the oxygen which sustains them. What follows? Why, that this element, which is present in the ratio of twenty-three parts to the hundred in pure air, is subject to an enormous drain

within the four walls of a house, where the air is more or less stationary. I am not speaking just now of the vitiation of the air—only of the drain upon its life-sustaining element. Think, again, of the heavy drain upon the oxygen which must support the multitudinous fires and many breathing beings congregated in a large town! 'What follows?' is a strictly vital question. Man can enjoy the full measure of vigorous joyous existence possible to him only when his blood is fully aërated; and this takes place when the air he inhales contains its full complement of oxygen. Is it too much to say that vitality is reduced, other things being equal, in proportion as persons are house-dwellers rather than open-air dwellers? The impoverished air sustains life at a low and feeble level; wherefore, in the great towns, stature dwindles, the chest contracts, men hardly live to see their children's children. True, we must needs have houses for shelter from the weather by day and for rest at night; but in proportion as we cease to make our houses 'comfortable,' as we regard them merely as necessary shelters when we cannot be out of doors, shall we enjoy to the full the vigorous vitality possible to us.

Unchanged Air.—Parents of pale-faced town children, think of these things! The gutter children who feed on the pickings of the streets are better off (and healthier looking) in this one respect than your cherished darlings, because they have more of the first essential of life—air. There is some circulation of air even in the slums of the city, and the child who spends its days in the streets is better supplied with oxygen than he who spends most of his hours in the unchanged air of a spacious apartment. But it is not

the air of the streets the children want. It is the delicious life-giving air of the country. The outlay of the children in living is enormously in excess of the outlay of the adult. The endless activity of the child, while it develops muscle, is kept up at the expense of very great waste of tissue. It is the blood which carries material for the reparation of this loss. The child must *grow*, every part of him, and it is the blood which brings material for the building up of new tissues. Again, we know that the brain is, out of all proportion to its size, the great consumer of the blood supply, but the brain of the child, what with its eager activity, what with its twofold growth, is insatiable in its demands!

'I feed Alice on beef tea.'—'I feed Alice on beef tea, cod-liver oil, and all sorts of nourishing things; but it's very disheartening, the child doesn't gain flesh!' It is probable that Alice breathes for twenty-two of the twenty-four hours the impoverished and more or less vitiated air pent within the four walls of a house. The child is practically starving; for the food she eats is very imperfectly and inadequately converted into the aërated blood that feeds the tissues of the body.

And if she is suffering from bodily inanition, what about the eager, active, curious, hungering mind of the little girl? 'Oh, she has her lessons regularly every day.' Probably: but lessons which deal with words, only the *signs* of things, are not what the child wants. There is no knowledge so appropriate to the early years of a child as that of the name and look and behaviour *in situ* of every natural object he can get at. "He hath so done His marvellous works that they ought to be had in remembrance.

"Three years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, 'A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown:
This child I to myself will take:
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own.

. . . . .

"'She shall be sportive as the fawn,
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute, insensate things.

. . . . .

"'The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.'"

Indoor Airings.—About out-of-door airings we shall have occasion to speak more fully; but *indoor* airings are truly as important, because, if the tissues be nourished upon impure blood for all the hours the child spends in the house, the mischief will not be mended in the shorter intervals spent out of doors. Put two or three breathing bodies, as well as fire and gas, into a room, and it is incredible how soon the air becomes vitiated unless it be constantly renewed; that is, unless the room be well ventilated. We know what it is to come in out of the fresh air and complain that a room feels stuffy; but sit in the room a few minutes, and you get accustomed to its stuffiness; the senses are no longer a safe guide.

Ventilation.—Therefore, regular provision must be made for the ventilation of rooms regardless of the

feelings of their inmates: *at least* an inch of window open at the top, day and night, renders a room tolerably safe, because it allows of the escape of the vitiated air, which, being light, ascends, leaving room for the influx of colder, fresher air by cracks and crannies in doors and floors. An open chimney is a useful, though not a sufficient, ventilator; it is needless to say that the stopping-up of chimneys in sleeping-rooms is suicidal. It is particularly important to accustom children to sleep with an inch or two, or more, of open window all through the year —as much more as you like in the summer.

Night Air Wholesome.—There is a popular notion that night air is unwholesome; but if you reflect that wholesome air is that which contains its full complement of oxygen, and no more than its very small complement of carbonic acid gas, and that all *burning* objects—fire, furnace, gas-lamp—give forth carbonic acid gas and consume oxygen, you will see that night air is, in ordinary circumstances, more wholesome than day air, simply because there is a less exhaustive drain upon its vital gas. When the children are out of a room which they commonly occupy, day nursery or breakfast-room, then is the opportunity to air it thoroughly by throwing windows and doors wide open and producing a thorough draught.

Sunshine.—But it is not only air, and pure air, the children must have if their blood is to be of the 'finest quality,' as the advertisements have it. Quite healthy blood is exceedingly rich in minute, red disc-like bodies, known as red corpuscles, which in favourable circumstances are produced freely in the blood itself. Now, it is observed that people who live much in the sunshine are of a ruddy countenance—that is, a

great many of these red corpuscles are present in their blood; while the poor souls who live in cellars and sunless alleys have skins the colour of whity-brown paper. Therefore, it is concluded that light and sunshine are favourable to the production of red corpuscles in the blood; and, *therefore*—to this next 'therefore' is but a step for the mother—the children's rooms should be on the sunny side of the house, with a south aspect if possible. Indeed, the whole house should be kept light and bright for their sakes; trees and outbuildings that obstruct the sunshine and make the children's rooms dull should be removed without hesitation.

Free Perspiration.—Another point must be attended to, in order to secure that the brain be nourished by healthy blood. The blood receives and gets rid of the waste of the tissues, and one of the most important agents by means of which it does this necessary scavenger's work is the skin. Millions of invisible pores perforate the skin, each the mouth of a minute many-folded tube, and each such pore is employed without a moment's cessation, while the body is in health, in discharging *perspiration*—that is, the waste of the tissues—upon the skin.

Insensible Perspiration.—When the discharge is excessive, we are aware of moisture upon the skin; but, aware of it or not, the discharge is always going on; and, what is more, if it be checked, or if a considerable portion of the skin be glazed, so that it becomes impervious, death will result. This is why people die in consequence of scalds or burns which injure a large surface of the skin, although they do not touch any vital organ; multitudes of minute tubes which should carry off injurious matters from

the blood are closed, and, though the remaining surface of the skin and the other excretory organs take extra work upon them, it is impossible to make good the loss of what may be called efficient drainage over a considerable area. Therefore, if the brain is to be duly nourished, it is important to keep the whole surface of the skin in a condition to throw off freely the excretions of the blood.

Daily Bath and Porous Garments.—Two considerations follow: of the first, the necessity for the daily bath, followed by vigorous rubbing of the skin, it is needless to say a word here. But possibly it is not so well understood that children should be clothed throughout in porous garments which admit of the instant passing off of the exhalations of the skin. Why did delicate women faint, or, at any rate, 'feel faint,' when it was the custom to go to church in sealskin coats? Why do people who sleep under down, or even under silk or cotton quilts, frequently rise unrefreshed? From the one cause: their coverings have impeded the passage of the insensible perspiration, and so have hindered the skin in its function of relieving the blood of impurities. It is surprising what a constant loss of vitality many people experience from no other cause than the unsuitable character of their clothing. The children cannot be better dressed throughout than in loosely woven woollen garments, flannels and serges, of varying thicknesses for summer and winter wear. Woollens have other advantages over cotton and linen materials besides that of being porous. Wool is a bad conductor, and therefore does not allow of the too free escape of the animal heat; and it is absorbent, and therefore relieves the skin of the clammy sensa-

tions which follow sensible perspiration. We should be the better for it if we could make up our minds to sleep in wool, discarding linen or cotton in favour of sheets made of some lightly woven woollen material.

We might say much on this one question, the due nutrition of the brain, upon which the very possibility of healthy education depends. But something will have been effected if the reason why of only two or three practical rules of health is made so plain that they cannot be evaded without a sense of law-breaking.

I fear the reader may be inclined to think that I am inviting his attention for the most part to a few physiological matters—the lowest round of the educational ladder. The lowest round it may be, but yet it *is* the lowest round, the necessary step to all the rest. For it is not too much to say that, in our present state of being, intellectual, moral, even spiritual life and progress depend greatly upon physical conditions. That is to say, not that he who has a fine physique is necessarily a good and clever man; but that the good and clever man requires much animal substance to make up for the expenditure of tissue brought about in the exercise of his virtue and his intellect. For example, is it easier to be amiable, kindly, candid, with or without a headache or an attack of neuralgia?

VII.—'THE REIGN OF LAW' IN EDUCATION

Common Sense and Good Intentions.—Besides, though this physical culture of the brain may be only the groundwork of education, the method of it

indicates what should be the method of all education ; that is, orderly, regulated progress under the guidance of Law. The reason why education effects so much less than it should effect is just this—that in nine cases out of ten, sensible good parents trust too much to their common sense and their good intentions, forgetting that common sense must be at the pains to instruct itself in the nature of the case, and that well-intended efforts come to little if they are not carried on in obedience to divine laws, to be read in many cases, not in the Bible, but in the facts of life.

Law-abiding Lives often more blameless than Pious Lives.—It is a shame to believing people that many whose highest profession is that they do not know, and therefore do *not* believe, should produce more blameless lives, freer from flaws of temper, from the vice of selfishness, than do many sincerely religious people. It is a fact that will confront the children by-and-by, and one of which they will require an explanation ; and what is more, it is a fact that will have more weight, should it confront them in the person of a character which they cannot but esteem and love, than all the doctrinal teaching they have had in their lives. This appears to me the threatening danger to that confessed dependence upon and allegiance to Almighty God which we recognise as religion—not the wickedness, but the *goodness* of a school which refuses to admit any such dependence and allegiance.

My sense of this danger is my reason for offering the little I have to say upon the subject of education, —my sense of the danger, and the assurance I feel that it is no such great danger after all, but one that parents of the cultivated class are competent to deal

with, and are precisely the only persons who *can* deal with it.

'Mind' and 'Matter' equally governed by Law.—As for this superior morality of some non-believers, supposing we grant it, what does it amount to? Just to this, that the universe of mind, as the universe of matter, is governed by unwritten laws of God; that the child cannot blow soap-bubbles or think his flitting thoughts otherwise than in obedience to divine laws; that all safety, progress, and success in life come of obedience to law, to the laws of mental, moral, or physical science, or of that spiritual science which the Bible unfolds; that it is possible to ascertain laws and keep laws without recognising the Lawgiver, and that those who do ascertain and keep *any* divine law inherit the blessing due to obedience, whatever be their attitude towards the Lawgiver; just as the man who goes out into blazing sunshine is warmed, though he may shut his eyes and decline to see the sun. Conversely, that they who take no pains to study the principles which govern human action and human thought miss the blessings of obedience to certain laws, though they may inherit the better blessings which come of acknowledged relationship with the Lawgiver.

Antagonism to Law shown by some Religious Persons.—These last blessings are so unspeakably satisfying, that often enough the believer who enjoys them wants no more. He opens his mouth and draws in his breath for the delight he has in the law, it is true; but it is the law of the spiritual life only. Towards the other laws of God which govern the universe he sometimes takes up an attitude of antagonism, almost of resistance, worthy of an infidel.

It is nothing to him that he is fearfully and wonderfully made; he does not care to know how the brain works, nor how the more subtle essence we call mind evolves and develops in obedience to laws. There are pious minds to which a desire to look into these things savours of unbelief, as if it were to dishonour the Almighty to perceive that He carries on His glorious works by means of glorious laws. They will have to do with no laws excepting the laws of the kingdom of grace. In the meantime, the non-believer, who looks for no supernatural aids, lays himself out to discover and conform to all the laws which regulate natural life—physical, mental, moral; all the laws of God, in fact, excepting those of the spiritual life which the believer appropriates as his peculiar inheritance. But these laws which are left to Esau are laws of God also, and the observance of them is attended with such blessings, that the children of the believers say, "Look, how is it that these who do not acknowledge the Law as of God are better than we who do?"

Parents must acquaint themselves with the Principles of Physiology and Moral Science.—Now, believing parents have no right to lay up this crucial difficulty for their children. They have no right, for instance, to pray that their children may be made truthful, diligent, upright, and at the same time neglect to acquaint themselves with those principles of moral science the observance of which will guide into truthfulness, diligence, and uprightness of character. For this, also, is the law of God. Observe, not into the knowledge of God, the thing best worth living for: no mental science, and no moral science, is pledged to reveal that. What I contend for is, that these sciences have their part to play in the educa-