

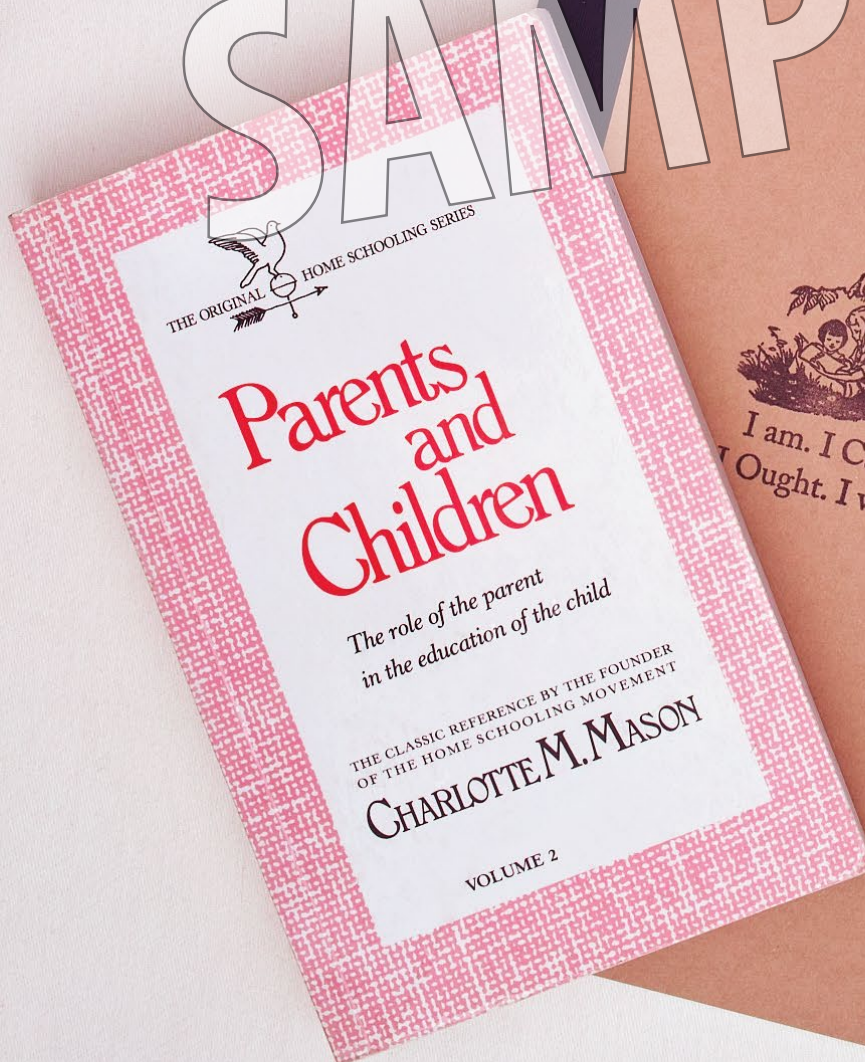
Simply Charlotte Mason presents  
Charlotte Mason's Original Home Schooling Series  
Authorized Version • Wide-Margin Study Edition

# Parents and Children

## Volume 2



SAMPLE



*“The child brings with him into the world, not character, but disposition. His character . . . is original disposition, modified, directed, expanded by education; by circumstances; later, by self-control and self-culture; above all, by the supreme agency of the Holy Ghost.”*

—Charlotte Mason

**Parents and Children** explores the important role of the parent in the education of the child. In it you will be reminded of the role of parents as

- rulers, using your God-given authority to establish a secure family environment;
- inspirers, nourishing your child's mind and heart with ideas;
- schoolmasters, equipping your child with the discipline of good habits;
- trainers, shaping and correcting your child's character;
- instructors, educating your child morally, spiritually, physically, and mentally.



Read the entire Original Home Schooling Series by Charlotte Mason with confidence. Collect all of the authorized volumes, with accurate replicas of the original pages, available from Simply Charlotte Mason.

- 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

Simply  
**Charlotte Mason**  
.com

Charlotte Mason's Original Home Schooling Series  
*Authorized Version*

Volume 2  
Parents and Children

by Charlotte M. Mason

Charlotte Mason's Original Home Schooling Series

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

This Simply Charlotte Mason edition presents authentic and accurate page replicas of the complete text of Charlotte Mason's work as originally published.

Parents and Children (Volume 2)

Originally published in 1904

By Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd.,  
London, England

This edition © 2017 Simply Charlotte Mason

All rights reserved. However, we grant permission to make printed copies or use this work on multiple electronic devices for members of your immediate household. Quantity discounts are available for classroom and co-op use. Please contact us for details.

Cover Photo: Richele Baburina

Cover Design: John Shafer

ISBN 978-1-61634-322-4 printed

ISBN 978-1-61634-323-1 electronic download (with notes column)

ISBN 978-1-61634-386-6 electronic download (without notes column)

Published by

Simply Charlotte Mason, LLC

930 New Hope Road #11-892

Lawrenceville, Georgia 30045

[simplycharlottesmason.com](http://simplycharlottesmason.com)

Printed by PrintLogic, Inc.

Monroe, Georgia, USA

## 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 . . . . .	iv
<i>In which the mantle is passed to Simply Charlotte Mason to publish this authorized version</i>	
Endorsement by Susan Schaeffer Macaulay . . . . .	vi
<i>On the occasion of Charlotte Mason's writings being rediscovered</i>	
Introduction to the <i>Original Home Schooling Series</i> by Dean and Karen Andreola . .	vii
<i>In which Charlotte Mason's original writings come to the United States</i>	
Foreword to the <i>Original Home Schooling Series</i> by John Thorley . . . . .	ix
<i>In which a brief biography of Charlotte Mason and her work is given</i>	
Preface to the Home Education Series . . . . .	xiii
<i>In which Charlotte Mason gives her reasons for writing the series</i>	
Preface to the Third Edition . . . . .	xxii
<i>In which Charlotte Mason explains her objectives for Volume 2: Parents and Children</i>	
Contents to Volume 2: Parents and Children . . . . .	xxiv

# 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](http://CharlotteMason.com)

[MotherCulture.com](http://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)



## *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

## PREFACE TO THE 'HOME EDUCATION' SERIES

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



## PREFACE TO THE 'HOME EDUCATION' SERIES

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

## PREFACE TO THE 'HOME EDUCATION' SERIES

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

## PREFACE TO THE 'HOME EDUCATION' SERIES

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' 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."

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,'

## PREFACE TO THE 'HOME EDUCATION' SERIES

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

## PREFACE TO THE 'HOME EDUCATION' SERIES

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

## PREFACE TO THE 'HOME EDUCATION' SERIES

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.

## PREFACE TO THE 'HOME EDUCATION' SERIES

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 Third Edition

OUR conduct is the outcome of our principles, even if these be only such as—‘It does not matter’; ‘What’s the good?’

Every office implies the observance of certain fundamental principles in its discharge.

These two considerations lead me to think that a careful examination of the principles which naturally and necessarily underlie the office of parents may be of some little use to those who take their great work seriously.

Believing that the individuality of parents is a great possession for their children, and knowing that when an idea possesses the mind, ways of applying it suggest themselves, I have tried not to weight these pages with many directions, practical suggestions, and other such crutches, likely to interfere with the free relations of parent and child. Our greatness as a nation depends upon how far parents take liberal and enlightened views of their high office and of the means to discharge it which are placed in their hands.

The following essays have appeared in the *Parents’ Review*, and were addressed, from time to time, to a body of parents who are making a practical study of



## PREFACE

the principles of education—the ‘Parents’ National Educational Union.’ The Parents’ Union exists to advance, with more or less method and with more or less steadfastness, a definite school of educational thought of which the two main principles are—the recognition of the physical basis of habit, *i.e.*, of the material side of education; and of the inspiring and formative power of ideas, *i.e.*, of the immaterial, or spiritual, side of education. These two guiding principles, covering as they do the whole field of human nature, should enable us to deal rationally with all the complex problems of education; and the object of the following essays is, not to give an exhaustive application of these principles—the British Museum itself would hardly contain all the volumes needful for such an undertaking—but to give an example or a suggestion, here and there, as to how such and such a habit may be formed, such and such a formative idea be implanted and fostered. The intention of the volume will account to the reader for the iteration of the same principles in various connections. The author ventures to hope that the following hints and suggestions will not prove the less practically useful to busy parents, because they rest on profound educational principles; and also, that they may prove in some degree, suggestive and inspiring to teachers.

AMBLESIDE,  
*May 1904.*

# Contents

## CHAPTER I

### THE FAMILY

	PAGE
Rousseau succeeded in arousing parents—The family a commune—The family must be social—The family must serve poorer neighbours—The family must serve the nation—The Divine order for the family as regards other nations—The family should (a) learn languages; (b) show courtesy abroad—The restoration of the family, . . . .	1

## CHAPTER II

### PARENTS AS RULERS

The family government an absolute monarchy—The rule of parents cannot be deputed—Causes which lead to the abdication of parents—The majesty of parenthood—Children a public trust and a divine trust—The limitations and scope of parental authority, . . . .	10
---	----

## CHAPTER III

### PARENTS AS INSPIRERS

<i>Children must be born again into the Life of Intelligence</i>	
Parents owe a second birth to their children—Science supports this contention—Processes and methods of this second birth—Dr Maudsley on heredity—Disposition and character—Dr Maudsley on the structural effects of 'particular life experiences'—Our age has acquired a great educational charter—Some articles of this charter, . . . .	19



## CONTENTS

	PAGE
side'; why not?—Logical certainty and moral right— The conscientious Jew and the Crucifixion—The patriotic Jew and the Crucifixion—Primal ideas derived from parents —First approaches to God—Communing out loud before the children—A child's gratitude—Archaic forms in chil- dren's prayers—'The shout of a King'—'The fight of Christ against the devil'—'Oh dear! it's very hard to do God's work!' . . . . .	50

## CHAPTER VII

### THE PARENT AS SCHOOLMASTER

'The schoolmaster will make him sit up!'—Why this, left to the schoolmaster—His successes, with children who have been trained at home—The habits of school-life are mechanical— Mental 'sprawling' exemplified in 'Edward Waverley'— Parents are apt to leave <i>training</i> to the schoolmaster—We are not meant to grow up in a state of Nature—The first function of the parent is that of discipline—Education is a discipline—Discipline is not punishment—How disciples are lured—Steady progress on a careful plan, . . . . .	60
--	----

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CULTURE OF CHARACTER

#### *Parents as Trainers*

How far does <i>heredity</i> count?—For education, children want only opportunity—An experiment in art education—Character is an achievement—Two ways of preserving sanity—The development of character the main work of education— Plausible reasons for doing nothing towards character train- ing—But the laws by which body and mind flourish, revealed by science—The race is advancing—The duty of cherishing a lovely family trait—Distinctive qualities require culture—Four conditions of culture—Exercise—Nourish- ment—Change—Rest—Work, and waste of brain tissue, necessary—Danger of eccentricity—Causes of oddity in children—The dreariness of a motiveless life—We must save our 'splendid failures,' . . . . .	69
--	----

CONTENTS

CHAPTER IX

THE CULTURE OF CHARACTER

*The Treatment of Defects*

	PAGE
The ultimate object of education—'The defects of their qualities' —Children with a defect—A malicious child—Special treat- ment—Moral ailments need prompt attention—Automatic brain-action—One custom overcometh another—A material register of educational efforts—Mother-love is not sufficient for child-training, . . . . .	83

CHAPTER X

BIBLE LESSONS

*Parents as Instructors in Religion*

Sunday Schools are necessary—But educated parents should instruct their children in religion—An Australian outcome of the Parents' Union—Parents are the fit instructors— Report of a Committee on the religious education of the upper and middle classes—Why do not parents instruct their children in religion?—Discredit thrown upon the Bible—'Miracles do not happen'—Our conception of God depends upon 'miracles'—'Natural law' and miracle— How fit are the miracles of Christ! . . . . .	92
--	----

CHAPTER XI

FAITH AND DUTY (*Review*)

*Parents as Teachers of Morals*

'Laws of nature and ways of men'—The moral instruction of children—No infallible sense of 'ought'—The Bible a classic literature—The Bible tabooed in 'education' —A mother's diary—Fairy tales, and how to use them— Fables—Bible stories—The cadence of Bible phraseology is charming to a child—Shall the stories of miracles be used in moral instruction?—Should the whole Bible be put into the hands of a child?—Moral rules from the Pentateuch— The 'Odyssey' and the 'Iliad'—The initial weakness of	
--	--

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
'secular' morality—Lessons on duty—A child's inducements to learn—Moral value of manual training—Slipshod moral teaching—Importance of ethical instruction, . . .	101

## CHAPTER XII

### FAITH AND DUTY (*Review*)

#### *Claims of Philosophy as an Instrument of Education*

English educational thought tends towards naturalism—Madame de Staël on 'Locke'—Our educational efforts lack definite aim—We are on the verge of chaos—But also in the throes of an educational revolution—Is our system of education to be the issue of naturalism or idealism?—M. Fouillée's candour—The ethical view in education—No attempt has been made to unify education—Claims of philosophy as an educational agent—A nation should be educated for its proper functions—M. Fouillée neglects the physiological basis of education—The minor moralities become matters of habit—The idea which initiates a habit—Can spirit act upon matter?—There is no middle way open—The individuality of children is safeguarded—Importance of salient ideas—A scientific spirit, . . .	117
--	-----

## CHAPTER XIII

### FAITH AND DUTY (*Review*)

#### *Man lives by Faith, Godward and Manward*

Things 'sacred' and things 'secular,' an irreligious classification—Every man develops his own philosophy—All intercourse of thought belongs to the realm of ideas—It is obvious and natural that the Father of spirits should keep open access to the spirits of men—Easy tolerance commends itself to many minds—Thackeray on the easy and sceptical attitude—Man lives by faith, Godward and manward—Faith is the simple trust of persons in a Person—Faith, a lore of the soul which demands study—The naturalness of faith—Faith is no self-originated impulse—The compassion of Christ—The worship of faith—Righteousness a certain disposition of the spirit of man to the spirit of God—The teaching of these (Canon Beeching's) sermons should be helpful to parents, . . .	129
--	-----

## CONTENTS

### CHAPTER XIV

#### THE HEROIC IMPULSE (*Review*)

##### *Parents are concerned to give this Impulse*

	PAGE
Heroic poetry inspires to noble living—Beowulf, our English Ulysses—Beowulf is prudent and patient—‘Have patience of thy woes’—‘I swore no false oaths’—‘Bear thyself well’—The English ideal—Children should be in touch with Beowulf—Outline of the poem—Our gentle forefathers—Old English riddles, . . . . .	141

### CHAPTER XV

#### IS IT POSSIBLE? (*Review*)

##### *The Attitude of Parents towards Social Questions*

A moral crisis—We, too, love our brother—The ‘idol of size’— <i>Cui bono?</i> —Can character be changed?—The question of the age—The essential miracle—The honest sceptic—The vicious by inheritance—The vicious by inveterate habit—Thoughts think themselves—Vicious imaginations—Acquired modifications not transmitted—Education stronger than Nature— <i>Natural</i> preparation for salvation—Conversion no miracle—‘Conversion’ is not contrary to natural law—Many ‘conversions’ in a lifetime—Conditions of the potency of an idea—Fitness of the ideas included in Christianity—Curative <i>treatment</i> necessary—The relief of being included in a strong organisation—Work and fresh air are powerful agents, . . . . .	150
---	-----

### CHAPTER XVI

#### DISCIPLINE

##### *A Consideration for Parents*

‘Discipline’ a euphuism for punishment—A method is not a system—A ‘wise passiveness’—Punishment by consequences—Children rather enjoy punishment—Heroism in bearing penalties—Wrongdoing followed by penalties—Punishment

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
is not reformative—Good habits the best schoolmasters— 'Always telling'—Some practical counsels—An inquisitive child—A defect of her quality, . . . . .	168

## CHAPTER XVII

### SENSATIONS AND FEELINGS

#### *Sensations educable by Parents*

Common sense—Origin of sensations—Sensations should be treated as of objective interest—Object-lessons in disfavour —A baby's object-lessons—Nature's teaching—Education of the senses—Advantage of home teaching—Positive and comparative terms—Indiscriminate use of epithets—Judg- ments as to weight—Judgments as to size—Discrimination of sounds—Discrimination of odours—Discrimination of flavours—Sensory gymnastics—Sensory games, . . . . .	178
---	-----

## CHAPTER XVIII

### SENSATIONS AND FEELINGS

#### *Feelings educable by Parents*

Reflected sensations—'Open-air' memories should be stored— Memories of delight a source of physical well-being and of mental restoration—Sensations and feelings distinguished— The feelings should be objective, not subjective—What the feelings are and are not—Every feeling has its positive and its negative—The feelings not moral nor immoral—Con- nection between unremembered feelings and acts—These trifling acts, the best portion of a good man's life—The perception of character, one of our finest feelings—The orator plays upon feelings—Enthusiasm—The genesis of our activities— In educating the feelings we modify the character—The sixth sense of <i>tact</i> —Beware of words—A feeling is com- municated by sympathy—Persons are differentiated by their power of appreciation or depreciation—Some danger in persiflage—To deal with the feelings of the young, a delicate task, . . . . .	191
---	-----



## CONTENTS

### CHAPTER XIX

#### 'WHAT IS TRUTH?'

##### *Moral Discrimination required by Parents*

	PAGE
We, as a nation, are losing and gaining in truthfulness—The child a human being, perhaps at his best—In the matter of lying, two theories—A child is born without virtue or vice—Lying is not elemental—But a secondary symptom (Dr Stanley Hall's Classification): 1. Pseudophobia—treatment; 2. The lie heroic—how to deal with it; 3. Truth for friends, lies for enemies—due to moral ignorance; 4. Lies inspired by selfishness—the selfishness must be dealt with; 5. The deceptions of imagination and play—due to an unfed imagination—lessons in truth-telling; 6. Pseudomania—calls for curative treatment—signs of pseudomania—children must be trained to truthfulness,	204

### CHAPTER XX

#### SHOW CAUSE WHY

##### *Parents responsible for Competitive Examinations*

We have been asking 'Why?'—Tom goes to school to get a good place in class—Tom passes his 'Exams'—So do the girls—The tendency of 'grind'—No choice as to the matter or manner of studies—Tyranny of competitive examinations supported by parents—The evil lies in the competition—Examinations necessary—But should include the whole school—The primary desires—Neither virtuous nor vicious—They stimulate to effort—Curiosity as active as emulation—Extent of a child's knowledge—Why the schoolboy is no longer curious—Everybody wants to excel—Emulation an easier spring to work than curiosity—But the boy no longer wants to know—An examination-ridden Empire, . . .	214
---	-----

### CHAPTER XXI

#### A THEORY OF EDUCATION PROPOSED TO PARENTS

Each class in society should have its ideal—Poor children need a vocabulary—Children of educated parents do not—This,

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
true of imagination—The development of 'faculties' important for ignorant or deficient children—But not for children of educated parents—The educator should form habits—Should nourish with ideas—Our main objects—We recognise material and spiritual principles of human nature—We recognise the supreme Educator—Studies are valued as they present fruitful ideas—Nature knowledge—'Object-lessons'—We trust much to good books—We do not recognise 'child-nature'—We are tenacious of individuality—We consider proportion—We think that children have a right to knowledge, . . . . .	225

## CHAPTER XXII

### A CATECHISM OF EDUCATIONAL THEORY

Character, an achievement—Origin of conduct—Means of modifying disposition—Genesis of a habit—Correction of bad habit—Conduct depends on unconscious cerebration—Benevolence—Malevolence—Habits of 'well-brought-up' person—Time should be given to the forming of a habit—Thoughts follow in sequence—Into new developments—The initial thought—Makes for logical conclusions—Reason exercised without volition—Not an infallible guide to conduct—Confusion as to logical and moral right—Error from mistaken sense of duty—A child should know what he is as a human being—This knowledge a safeguard—Against 'honest doubt'—Life sustained upon ideas—Volition in the reception of ideas—How ideas are conveyed—The supreme Educator—In things natural and spiritual—This view throws light on Christian doctrine—Divine co-operation in education—Part of lessons in education—A curriculum, . . .	233
---	-----

## CHAPTER XXIII

### WHENCE AND WHITHER

#### *A Question for Parents. Whence*

Progress of the Parents' National Educational Union—Its importance—The legacy of the past—Children responsible persons—Now, we are not sure—Intellectual labour of the child's first years—Intelligence of children—Children highly en-	
---	--

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
dowed, but ignorant—Happy and good, or good and happy—Our conception of the child is old, of education new—Divine co-operation—Two educational labours—A test of systems—Advance with the tide, . . . . .	249

## CHAPTER XXIV

### WHENCE AND WHITHER

#### *Whither*

Physical and psychical evolution—The greatness of children—Wisdom, the recognition of relations—Wisdom increases, intelligence does not—Difference in men—Ignorance is not impotence—All possibilities present in a child—We live for the advancement of the race—Our <i>whence</i> in the potency of the child—Our <i>whither</i> in the thought of the day—All men are interested in science—Children trained to observe—A new conception of art—Great ideas demand great art—Children should learn to care for books—Children must be nurtured on the best—The solidarity of the race—Children should be brought up to care for all men—Children should not hear of ‘impostors’—To serve is promotion—No considerations of expediency, . . . . .	257
---	-----

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE GREAT RECOGNITION REQUIRED OF PARENTS

Ruskin on the <i>Vaulted Book</i> —The seven natural sciences—Education not religious and secular—The great recognition—Knowledge, like virtue, divine—Science, art and poetry ‘by the Spirit’—Ideas of common things—‘God doth instruct’—‘Subjects’ divinely taught—Our co-operation indispensable—Teaching that invites and that repels divine co-operation—Discord in our lives resolved—We are safeguarded from intellectual as from moral sin—Harmony in our efforts—Conditions of divine co-operation—Teaching must be fresh and living—Books must be living—No neat system is of use—Children must use the best books, . . . . .	268
---	-----

CONTENTS

CHAPTER XXVI

THE ETERNAL CHILD

*The Highest Counsel of Perfection for Parents*

	PAGE
Children are necessary to Christmas joy—Every babe bears an evangel—A child is humble—Humility not relative—But absolute—Children do not make self-depreciatory remarks—Humility unconscious of self—The Christian religion objective—Children are objective in tendency—Every faculty may have subjective or objective development—Fortitude—The self-regardful child is no longer humble—No Spartan regimen—The altruistic or egoistic direction—‘It’s not fair’—Humility, the highest counsel of perfection, . . .	280
INDEX, . . . . .	309

# Parents and Children



## CHAPTER I

### THE FAMILY

‘The family is the unit of the nation.’—F. D. MAURICE.

Rousseau succeeded in awaking Parents.—It is probable that no other educational thinker has succeeded in affecting parents so profoundly as did Rousseau. *Emile* is little read now, but how many current theories of the regimen proper for children have there their unsuspected source? Everybody knows—and his contemporaries knew it better than we—that Jean Jacques Rousseau had not enough sterling character to warrant him to pose as an authority on any subject, least of all on that of education. He sets himself down a poor thing, and we see no cause to reject the evidence of his *Confessions*. We are not carried away by the charm of his style; his ‘forcible febleness’ does not dazzle us. No man can *say* beyond that which he *is*, and there is a want of grit in his philosophic theories that removes most of them from the category of available thought.

But Rousseau had the insight to perceive one of those patent truths which, somehow, it takes a genius to discover; and, because truth is indeed prized above rubies, the perception of that truth gave him rank as a great teacher. Is *Jean Jacques* also among the prophets? people asked, and ask still; and that he had thousands of fervent disciples amongst the educated parents of Europe, together with the fact that his teaching has filtered into many a secluded home of our own day, is answer enough. Indeed, no other educationalist has had a tithe of the influence exercised by Rousseau. Under the spell of his teaching, people in the fashionable world, like that Russian Princess Galitzin, forsook society, and went off with their children to some quiet corner where they could devote every hour of the day, and every power they had, to the fulfilment of the duties which devolve upon parents. Courtly mothers retired from the world, sometimes even left their husbands, to work hard at the classics, mathematics, sciences, that they might with their own lips instruct their children. 'What else am I for?' they asked; and the feeling spread that the bringing-up of their children was the one work of primary importance for men and women.

Whatever extravagance he had seen fit to advance, Rousseau would still have found a following, because he had chanced to touch a spring that opened many hearts. He was one of the few educationalists who made his appeal to the parental instincts. He did not say, 'We have no hope of the parents, let us work for the children!' Such are the faint-hearted and pessimistic things we say to-day. What he said was, in effect, 'Fathers and mothers, this is your work,

and you only can do it. It rests with you, parents of young children, to be the saviours of society unto a thousand generations. Nothing else matters. The avocations about which people weary themselves are as foolish child's play compared with this one serious business of bringing up our children in advance of ourselves.'

People listened, as we have seen ; the response to his teaching was such a letting out of the waters of parental enthusiasm as has never been known before nor since. And Rousseau, weak and little worthy, was a preacher of righteousness in this, that he turned the hearts of the fathers to the children, and so far made ready a people prepared for the Lord. But alas! having secured the foundation, he had little better than wood, hay, and stubble to offer to the builders.

Rousseau succeeded, as he deserved to succeed, in awaking many parents to the binding character, the vast range, the profound seriousness of parental obligations. He failed, and deserved to fail, as he offered his own crude conceits by way of an educational code. But his success is very cheering. He perceived that God placed the training of every child in the hands of two, a father and a mother; and the response to his teaching proved that, as the waters answer to the drawing of the moon, so do the hearts of parents rise to the idea of the great work committed to them.

Though it is true, no doubt, that every parent is conscious of unwritten laws, more or less definite and noble according to his own status, yet an attempt, however slight, to codify these laws may be interesting to parents.

**The Family a Commune.**—‘The family is the unit of the nation.’ This pregnant saying suggests some aspects of the parents’ calling. From time to time, in all ages of the world, communistic societies have arisen, sometimes for the sake of co-operation in a great work, social or religious, more recently by way of protest against inequalities of condition; but, in every case, the fundamental rule of such societies is, that the members shall have all things in common. We are apt to think, in our careless way, that such attempts at communistic association are foredoomed to failure. But that is not the case. In the United States, perhaps because hired labour is less easy to obtain than it is with us, they appear to have found a congenial soil, and there many well-regulated communistic bodies flourish. There are failures, too, many and disastrous, and it appears that these may usually be traced to one cause, a government enfeebled by the attempt to combine democratic and communistic principles; that is, to dwell together in a common life, while each does what is right in his own eyes. A communistic body can thrive only under a vigorous and absolute rule.

A favourite dream of socialism is—or was until the idea of collectivism obtained—that each State of Europe should be divided into an infinite number of small self-contained communes. Now, it sometimes happens that the thing we desire is already realised had we eyes to see. The family is, practically, a commune. In the family the undivided property is enjoyed by all the members in common, and in the family there is equality of social condition, with diversity of duties. In lands where patriarchal practices still obtain, the family merges into the tribe, and the



head of the family is the chief of the tribe—a very absolute sovereign indeed. In our own country, families are usually small, parents and their immediate offspring; with the attendants and belongings which naturally gather to a household, and, let it not be forgotten, *form part of the family*. The smallness of the family tends to obscure its character, and we see no force in the phrase at the head of this chapter; we do not perceive that, if the unit of the nation is the natural commune, the family; then, is the family pledged to carry on within itself all the functions of the State, with the delicacy, precision, and fulness of detail proper to work done on a small scale.

**The Family must be Social.**—It by no means follows from this communistic view of the family that the domestic policy should be a policy of isolation; on the contrary, it is not too much to say that a nation is civilised in proportion as it is able to establish close and friendly relations with other nations; and that, not with one or two, but with many; and, conversely, that a nation is barbarous in proportion to its isolation; and does not a family decline in intelligence and virtue when from generation to generation it 'keeps itself to itself'?

**The Family must serve Neighbours.**—Again, it is probable that a nation is healthy in proportion as it has its own proper outlets, its colonies and dependencies, which it is ever solicitous to include in the national life. So of the nation in miniature, the family: the struggling families at 'the back,' the orphanage, the mission, the necessitous of our acquaintance, are they not for the sustenance of the family in the higher life?

**The Family must serve the Nation.**—But it is not enough that the family commune maintain neighbourly relations with other such communes, and towards the stranger within the gates. The family is the unit of the nation; and the nation is an organic whole, a living body, built up, like the natural body, of an infinite number of living organisms. It is only as it contributes its quota towards the national life that the life of the family is complete. Public interests must be shared, public work taken up, the public welfare cherished—in a word, its integrity with the nation must be preserved, or the family ceases to be part of a living whole, and becomes positively injurious, as decayed tissue in the animal organism.

**The Divine Order for the Family as regards other Nations.**—Nor are the interests of the family limited to those of the nation. As it is the part of the nation to maintain wider relations, to be in touch with all the world, to be ever in advance in the great march of human progress, so is this the attitude which is incumbent on each unit of the nation, each family, as an integral part of the whole. Here is the simple and natural realisation of the noble dream of *Fraternity*: each individual attached to a family by ties of love where not of blood; the families united in a federal bond to form the nation; the nations confederate in love and emulous in virtue, and all, nations and their families, playing their several parts as little children about the feet and under the smile of the Almighty Father. Here is the divine order which every family is called upon to fulfil: a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, and, therefore, it matters infinitely that every family should realise

the nature and the obligations of the family bond, for as water cannot rise above its source, neither can we live at a higher level than that of the conception we form of our place and use in life.

The Family should (*a*) learn Languages; (*b*) show Courtesy abroad.—Let us ask the question: Has this, of regarding all education and all civil and social relations from the standpoint of the *family*, any practical outcome? So much so, that perhaps there is hardly a problem of life for which it does not contain the solution. For example: What shall we teach our children? Is there one subject that claims our attention more than another? Yes, there is a subject or class of subjects which has an imperative *moral* claim upon us. It is the duty of the nation to maintain relations of brotherly kindness with other nations; therefore it is the duty of every family, as an integral part of the nation, to be able to hold brotherly speech with the families of other nations as opportunities arise; therefore to acquire the speech of neighbouring nations is not only to secure an inlet of knowledge and a means of culture, but is a duty of that higher morality (the morality of the family) which aims at universal brotherhood; therefore every family would do well to cultivate two languages besides the mother tongue, even in the nursery.

Again; a fair young Englishwoman was staying with her mother at a German *Kurhaus*. They were the only English people present, and probably forgot that the Germans are better linguists than we. The young lady sat through the long meals with her book, hardly interrupting her reading to eat, and addressing no more than one or two remarks to her mother, as

—‘I wonder what that mess is!’ or, ‘How much longer shall we have to sit with these tiresome people?’ Had she remembered that no family can live to itself, that she and her mother represented England, *were* England for that little German community, she would have imitated the courteous greetings which the German ladies bestowed on their neighbours.

**The Restoration of the Family.**—But we must leave further consideration of this great subject, and conclude with a striking passage from Mr Morley’s *Appreciation of Emile*. “Education slowly came to be thought of in connection with the family. The improvement of ideas upon education was only one phase of the great general movement towards the restoration of the family, which was so striking a spectacle in France after the middle of the century. Education now came to comprehend the whole system of the relations between parents and their children, from earliest infancy to maturity. The direction of such wider feeling about those relations tended strongly towards an increased closeness in them, more intimacy, and a more continuous suffusion of tenderness and long attachment.”

His labours in this great cause, ‘the restoration of the family,’ give Rousseau a claim upon the gratitude and respect of mankind. It has proved a lasting, solid work. To this day, family relations in France are more gracious, more tender, more close and more inclusive, than they are with us. They are more expansive too, leading to generally benign and friendly behaviour; and so strong and satisfying is the family bond, that the young people find little necessity to ‘fall in love.’ The mother lays herself out for the

friendship of her young daughters, who respond with entire loyalty and devotion ; and, Zola notwithstanding, French maidens are wonderfully pure, simple, and sweet, because their affections are abundantly satisfied.

Possibly 'the restoration of the family' is a labour that invites us here in England, each within the radius of our own hearth ; for there is little doubt that the family bond is more lax amongst us than it was two or three generations ago. Perhaps nowhere is family life of more idyllic loveliness than where we see it at its best in English homes. But the wise ever find some new thing to learn. Though a nation, as an individual, must act on the lines of its own character, and we are, on the whole, well content with our English homes, yet we might learn something from the inclusiveness of the French family, where mother-in-law and father-in-law, aunt and cousins, widow and spinster, are cherished ; and a hundred small offices devised for dependants who would be in the way in an English home. The result is that the children have a wider range for the practice of the thousand sweet attentions and self-restraints which make home life lovely. No doubt the medal has its obverse ; there is probably much in French home life which we should shrink from ; nevertheless, it offers object-lessons which we should do well to study. Again, where family life is most beautiful with us, is not the family a little apt to become self-centred and self-sufficient, rather than to cultivate that expansiveness towards other families which is part of the family code of our neighbours ?

## CHAPTER II

### PARENTS AS RULERS

**The Family Government an Absolute Monarchy.**— Let us continue our consideration of the family as the nation in miniature, with the responsibilities, the rights, and the requirements of the nation. The parents represent the 'Government'; but, here, the government is ever an absolute monarchy, conditioned very loosely by the law of the land, but very closely by that law more or less of which every parent bears engraved on his conscience. Some attain the levels of high thinking, and come down from the Mount with beaming countenance and the tables of the law intact; others fail to reach the difficult heights, and are content with such fragments of the broken tables as they pick up below. But be his knowledge of the law little or much, no parent escapes the call to rule.

**The Rule of Parents cannot be Deputed.**— Now, the first thing we ask for in a ruler is, 'Is he able to rule? Does he know how to maintain his authority?' A ruler who fails to govern is like an unjust judge, an impious priest, an ignorant teacher; that is, he fails in the essential attribute of his office. This is even more true in the family than in the State;

the king may rule by deputy; but, here we see the exigent nature of the parent's functions; he can have no deputy. Helpers he may have, but the moment he makes over his functions and authority to another, the rights of parenthood belong to that other, and not to him. Who does not know of the heart-burnings that arise when Anglo-Indian parents come home, to find their children's affections given to others, their duty owing to others; and they, the parents, sources of pleasure like the godmother of the fairy tale, but having no authority over their children? And all this, nobody's fault, for the guardians at home have done their best to keep the children loyal to the parents abroad.

**Causes which lead to the Abdication of Parents.**—Here is indicated a rock upon which the heads of families sometimes make shipwreck. They regard parental authority as inherent in them, a property which may lie dormant, but is not to be separated from the state of parenthood. They may allow their children from infancy upwards to do what is right in their own eyes; and then, Lear turns and makes his plaint to the winds, and cries—

‘Sharper than a serpent's tooth it is  
To have a thankless child!’

But Lear has been all the time divesting himself of the honour and authority that belong to him, and giving his rights to his children. Here he tells us why; the biting anguish is the ‘*thankless*’ child. He has been laying himself out for the thanks of his children. That they should think him a fond father has been more to him than the duty he owes them; and in proportion as he omits his duty are they

oblivious of theirs. Possibly the unregulated love of approbation in devoted parents has more share in the undoing of families than any other single cause. A writer of to-day represents a mother as saying—

“‘But you are not afraid of me, Bessie?’

“‘No indeed; who could be afraid of a dear, sweet, soft, little mother like you?’”

And such praise is sweet in the ears of many a fond mother hungering for the love and liking of her children, and not perceiving that words like these in the mouth of a child are as treasonable as words of defiance.

Authority is laid down at other shrines than that of popularity. Prospero describes himself as,

‘all dedicate

To study, and the bettering of my mind.’

And, meantime, the exercise of authority devolves upon Antonio; is it any wonder that the habit of authority fits the usurper like a glove, and that Prospero finds himself ousted from the office he failed to fill? Even so, the busy parent, occupied with many cares, awakes to find the authority he has failed to wield has dropped out of his hands; perhaps has been picked up by others less fit, and a daughter is given over to the charge of a neighbouring family, while father and mother hunt for rare prints.

In other cases, the love of an easy life tempts parents to let things take their course; the children are good children, and won't go far wrong, we are told; and very likely it is true. But however good the children be, the parents owe it to society to make them better than they are, and to bless the world with people, not merely good-natured and well-disposed, but good of set purpose and endeavour.



The love of ease, the love of favour, the claims of other work, are only some of the causes which lead to a result disastrous to society—the *abdication of parents*. When we come to consider the nature and uses of the parents' authority, we shall see that such abdication is as immoral as it is mischievous. Meantime, it is well worth while to notice that the causes which lead parents to resign the position of domestic rulers are resolvable into one—the office is too troublesome, too laborious. The temptation which assails parents is the same which has led many a crowned head to seek ease in the cloister—

‘Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown,’

even if it be the natural crown of parenthood.

**The Majesty of Parenthood.**—The apostolic counsel of ‘diligence’ in ruling throws light upon the nature and aim of authority; it is no longer a matter of personal honour and dignity; authority is for use and service, and the honour that goes with it is only for the better service of those under authority. The arbitrary parent, the exacting parent, who claims this and that of deference and duty because he is a parent, all for his own honour and glory, is more hopelessly in the wrong than the parent who practically abdicates; the majesty of parenthood is hedged round with observances only because it is good for the children to ‘faithfully serve, honour, and humbly obey’ their natural rulers. Only at home can children be trained in the chivalrous temper of ‘proud submission and dignified obedience’; and if the parents do not inspire and foster deference, reverence, and loyalty, how shall these crowning graces of character thrive in a hard and emulous world?

It is perhaps a little difficult to maintain an attitude of authority in these democratic days, when even educationists counsel that children be treated on equal terms from the very beginning ; but the children themselves come to our aid ; the sweet humility and dependence natural to them fosters the gentle dignity, the *soupeçon* of reserve, which is becoming in parents. It is not open to parents either to lay aside or to sink under the burden of the honour laid upon them ; and, no doubt, we have all seen the fullest, freest flow of confidence, sympathy, and love between parent and child where the mother sits as a queen among her children and the father is honoured as a crowned head. The fact that there are two parents, each to lend honour to the other, yet free from restraint in each other's presence, makes it the easier to maintain the impalpable 'state' of parenthood. And the presence of the slight, sweet, undefined feeling of dignity in the household is the very first condition for the bringing-up of loyal, honourable men and women, capable of reverence and apt to win respect.

**Children are a Public Trust and a Divine Trust.**  
—The foundation of parental authority lies in the fact that parents hold office as deputies ; and that in a two-fold sense. In the first place, they are the immediate and personally appointed deputies of the Almighty King, the sole Ruler of men ; they have not only to fulfil his counsels regarding the children, but to represent his Person ; his parents are as God to the little child ; and, yet more constraining thought, *God is to him what his parents are.*; he has no power to conceive a greater and lovelier personality than that of the royal heads of his own home ; he makes his first approach to the Infinite through them ; they are

his measure for the highest; if the measure be easily within his small compass, how shall he grow up with the reverent temper which is the condition of spiritual growth?

More; parents hold their children in trust for society. 'My own child' can only be true in a limited sense; the children are held as a public trust to be trained as is best for the welfare of the community; and in this sense also the parents are persons in authority with the dignity of their office to support; and are even liable to deposition. The one State whose name has passed into a proverb, standing for a group of virtues which we have no other word to describe, is a State which practically deprived parents of the functions which they failed to fulfil to the furtherance of public virtue. No doubt the State reserves to itself virtually the power to bring up its own children in its own way, with the least possible co-operation of parents. Even to-day, a neighbouring nation has elected to charge itself with the training of its infants. So soon as they can crawl, or sooner, before ever they run or speak, they are to be brought to the 'Maternal School,' and carefully nurtured, as with mother's milk, in the virtues proper for a citizen. The scheme is as yet but in the experimental stage, but will doubtless be carried through, because the nation in question has long ago discovered—and acted consistently upon the discovery—that what you would have the man become, that you must train the child to be.

Perhaps such public deposition of parents is the last calamity that can befall a nation. These poor little ones are to grow up in a world where the name of God is not to be named; to grow up, too, without

the training in filial duty and brotherly love and neighbourly kindness which falls to the children of all but the few unnatural parents. They may be returned to their parents at certain hours or after certain years ; but once alienation has been set up, once the strongest and sweetest tie has been loosened and the parents have been publicly delivered from their duty, the desecration of the home is complete, and we shall have the spectacle of a people growing up orphaned almost from their birth. This is a new thing in the world's history, for even Lycurgus left the children to the parents for the first half-dozen years of life. Certain newspapers commend the example for our imitation, but God forbid that we should ever lose faith in the blessedness of family life. Parents who hold their children as at the same time a public trust and a divine trust, and who recognise the authority they hold as *deputed* authority, not to be trifled with, laid aside, or abused—such parents preserve for the nation the immunities of home, and safeguard the privileges of their order.

**The Limitations and Scope of Parental Authority.**—Having seen that it does not rest with the parents to use, or to forego the use of, the authority they hold, let us examine the limitations and the scope of this authority. In the first place, it is to be maintained and exercised solely for the advantage of the children, whether in mind, body, or estate. And here is room for the nice discrimination, the delicate intuitions, with which parents are blessed. The mother who makes her growing-up daughter take the out-of-door exercise she needs, is acting within her powers. The father of quiet habits, who discourages society for his young people, is considering

his own tastes, and not their needs, and is making unlawful use of his authority.

Again, the authority of parents, though the deference it begets remains to grace the relations of parents and child, is itself a provisional function, and is only successful as it encourages the *autonomy*, if we may call it so, of the child. A single decision made by the parents which the child is, or should be, capable of making for itself, is an encroachment on the rights of the child, and a transgression on the part of the parents.

Once more, the authority of parents rests on a secure foundation only as they keep well before the children that it is deputed authority; the child who knows that he is being brought up for the service of the nation, that his parents are acting under a Divine commission, will not turn out a rebellious son.

Further, though the emancipation of the children is gradual, they acquiring day by day more of the art and science of self-government, yet there comes a day when the parents' right to rule is over; there is nothing left for them but to abdicate gracefully, and leave their grown-up sons and daughters free agents, even though these still live at home; and although, in the eyes of their parents, they are not fit to be trusted with the ordering of themselves: if they fail in such self-ordering, whether as regards time, occupations, money, friends, most likely their parents are to blame for not having introduced them by degrees to the full liberty which is their right as men and women. Anyway, it is too late now to keep them in training; fit or unfit, they must hold the rudder for themselves.

As for the employment of authority, the highest

art lies in ruling without seeming to do so. The law is a terror to evil-doers, but for the praise of them that do well; and in the family, as in the State, the best government is that in which peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, are maintained without the intervention of the law. Happy is the household that has few rules, and where 'Mother does not like this,' and, 'Father wishes that,' are all-constraining.

## CHAPTER III

### PARENTS AS INSPIRERS

*Children must be born again into the Life of Intelligence*

**Parents owe a Second Birth to their Children.**  
—M. Adolf Monod claims that the child must owe to his mother a second birth—the first into the natural, the second into the spiritual life of the intelligence and moral sense. Had he not been writing of women and for women, no doubt he would have affirmed that the long travail of this second birth must be undergone equally by both parents. Do we ask how he arrives at this rather startling theory? He observes that great men have great mothers; mothers, that is, blest with an infinite capacity of taking pains with their work of bringing up children. He likens this labour to a second bearing which launches the child into a higher life; and as this higher life is a more blessed life, he contends that every child has a right to this birth into completer being *at the hands of his parents*. Did his conclusions rest solely upon the deductive methods he pursues, we might afford to let them pass, and trouble ourselves very little about this second birth, which parents may, and oftentimes do, withhold from their natural offspring. We, too, could bring forward our con-

trary instances of good parents with bad sons, and indifferent parents with earnest children ; and, pat to our lips, would come the *Cui bono?* which absolves us from endeavour.

Science supports this Contention.—Be a good mother to your son because great men have had good mothers, is inspiring, stimulating ; but is not to be received as a final word. For an appeal of irresistible urgency, we look to natural science with her inductive methods ; though we are still waiting her last word, what she has already said is law and gospel for the believing parent. The parable of Pandora's box is true to-day ; and a woman may in her heedlessness let fly upon her offspring a thousand ills. But is there not also 'a glass of blessings standing by,' into which parents may dip, and bring forth for their children health and vigour, justice and mercy, truth and beauty ?

'Surely,' it may be objected, 'every good and perfect gift comes from God above, and the human parent sins presumptuously who thinks to bestow gifts divine.' Now this lingering superstition has no part nor lot with true religion, but, on the contrary, brings upon it the scandal of many an ill-ordered home and ill-regulated family. When we perceive that God uses men and women, parents above all others, as vehicles for the transmission of his gifts, and that it is in the keeping of his law He is honoured—rather than in the attitude of the courtier waiting for exceptional favours—then we shall take the trouble to comprehend the law written not only upon tables of stone and rolls of parchment, but upon the fleshly tablets of the living organisms of the children ; and, understanding the law, we shall see with thanksgiving and enlarge-



ment of heart in what *natural* ways God does indeed show mercy unto thousands of them that love Him and keep his commandments.

But his commandment is exceeding broad; becomes broader year by year with every revelation of science; and we had need gird up the loins of our mind to keep pace with this current revelation. We shall be at pains, too, to keep ourselves in that attitude of expectant attention wherein we shall be enabled to perceive the unity and continuity of this revelation with that of the written word of God. For perhaps it is only as we are able to receive the two, and harmonise the two in a willing and obedient heart, that we shall enter on the heritage of glad and holy living which is the will of God for us.

**Processes and Methods of this Second Birth.**  
—Let us, for example, consider, in the light of current scientific thought, the processes and the methods of this second birth, which the child claims at the hands of his parents. ‘Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it,’ is not only a pledge, but is a statement of a result arrived at by deductive processes. The writer had great opportunities for collecting data; he had watched many children grow up, and his experience taught him to divide them into two classes—the well-brought-up who turned out well; and the ill-brought-up who turned out ill. No doubt, then, as now, there were startling exceptions, and—the exception proves the rule.

But, here as elsewhere, the promises and threatenings of the Bible will bear the searching light of inductive methods. We may ask, Why should this be so?

and not content ourselves with a general answer, that this is natural and right; we may search until we discover that this result is inevitable, and no other result conceivable (except for alien influences), and our obedience will be in exact proportion to our perception of the inevitableness of the law.

**Dr Maudsley on Heredity.**—The vast sum of what we understand by heredity is not to be taken into account in the consideration of this second birth; by the first natural birth it is, that “his father and mother, his grandfather and grandmother, are latent or declare themselves in the child; and it is on the lines thus laid down in his nature that his development will proceed. It is not by virtue of education so much as by virtue of inheritance that he is brave or timid, generous or selfish, prudent or reckless, boastful or modest, quick or placid in temper; the ground tone of his character is original in him, and it colours all the subsequently formed emotions and their sympathetic ideas. . . . The influence of systematic culture upon anyone is no doubt great, but that which determines the limit, and even in some degree the nature, of the effects of culture, that which forms the foundations upon which all the modifications of art must rest, is the inherited nature.”

**Disposition and Character.**—If heredity means so much—if, as would seem at the first glance, the child comes into the world with his character ready-made—what remains for the parents to do but to enable him to work out his own salvation without let or hindrance of their making, upon the lines of his individuality? The strong naturalism, shall we call it, of our day, inclines us to take this view of the objects and limitations of education; and without doubt it is a gospel;

it is the truth ; but it is not the whole truth. The child brings with him into the world, not character, but disposition. He has tendencies which may need only to be strengthened, or, again, to be diverted or even repressed. His character—the efflorescence of the man wherein the fruit of his life is a-preparing—is original disposition, modified, directed, expanded by education ; by circumstances ; later, by self-control and self-culture ; above all, by the supreme agency of the Holy Ghost, even where that agency is little suspected, and as little solicited.

How is this great work of character-making, the single effectual labour possible to human beings, to be carried on ? We shall rest our inquiries on a physiological basis ; the lowest, doubtless, but therefore the foundation of the rest. The first-floor chambers of the psychologist are pleasant places, but who would begin to build with the first floor ? What would he rear it upon ? Surely the arbitrary distinction between the grey matter of the brain and the 'mind' which plays upon it—even as the song upon the vocal chords of the singer—is more truly materialistic than is the recognition of the pregnant truth that the brain is the mere organ of the spiritual part ; registering and effecting every movement of thought and feeling, whether conscious or unconscious, by appreciable molecular movement ; and sustaining the infinite activities of mind by corresponding enormous activity and enormous waste ; that it is the organ of mind which, under present conditions, is absolutely inseparable from, and indispensable to, the quickening spirit. Once we recognise that in the thinking of a thought there is as distinct motion set

up in some tract of the brain as there is in the muscles of the hand employed in writing a sentence, we shall see that the behaviour of the grey nerve-substance of the cerebrum should afford the one possible key to certitude and system in our attempts at education, using the word in the most worthy sense—as its concern is the formation of character.

Having heard Dr Maudsley on the subject of heredity, let us hear him again on this other subject, which practically enables us to define the possibilities of education.

Dr Maudsley on the Structural Effects of 'Particular Life Experiences.'—"That which has existed with any completeness in consciousness leaves behind it, after its disappearance therefrom, in the mind or brain, a functional disposition to its reproduction or reappearance in consciousness at some future time. Of no mental act can we say that it is 'writ in water'; something remains from it, whereby its recurrence is facilitated. Every impression of sense upon the brain, every current of molecular activity from one to another part of the brain, every cerebral action which passes into muscular movement, leaves behind it some modification of the nerve elements concerned in its function, some after-effect, or, so to speak, memory of itself in them which renders its reproduction an easier matter, the more easy the more often it has been repeated, and makes it impossible to say that, however trivial, it shall not under some circumstances recur. Let the excitation take place in one of two nerve cells lying side by side, and between which there was not any original specific difference, there will be ever afterwards a

difference between them. This physiological process, whatever be its nature, is the physical basis of memory, and it is the foundation of the development of all our mental functions.

“That modification which persists, or is retained, in structure after functions, has been differently described as a residuum, or relic, or trace, or disposition, or vestige; or again as potential, latent, or dormant idea. Not only definite ideas, but all affections of the nervous system, feelings of pleasure and pain, desire, and even its outward reactions, thus leave behind them their structural effects, and lay the foundation of modes of thought, feeling, and action. Particular talents are sometimes formed quite, or almost quite, involuntarily; and complex actions, which were first consciously performed by dint of great application, become automatic by repetition; ideas which were at first consciously associated, ultimately coalesce and call one another up without any consciousness, as we see in the quick perception or intuition of the man of large worldly experience; and feelings, once active, leave behind them their large unconscious residua, thus affecting the generation of the character, so that, apart from the original or inborn nature of the individual, contentment, melancholy, cowardice, bravery, and even moral feeling, are generated as the results of particular life-experiences.”

**Our Age has acquired a great Educational Charter.**—Here we have sketched out a magnificent educational charter. It is as well, perhaps, that we do not realise the extent of our liberties; if we did, it may be, such a fervour of educational enthusiasm would seize us that we should behave as did those early Christians who every day expected the coming of

the Lord. How should a man have patience to buy and sell and get gain had it been revealed to him that he was able to paint the greatest picture ever painted? And we, with the enthralling vision of what our little child might become under our hands, how should we have patience for common toils? That science should have revealed the *rationale* of education in our day is possibly the Divine recognition that we have become more fit for the task, because we have come to an increasing sense of moral responsibility. What would it be for an immoral people to discern fully the possibilities of education? But how slow we are! how—

‘Custom lies upon us with a weight,  
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!’

A generation has passed away since these words of Dr Maudsley, and many of like force by other physiologists, were published to the world. We have purposely chosen words that have stood the test of time; for to-day a hundred eminent scientific men, at home and abroad, are proclaiming the same truths. Every scientist believes them! And we? We go on after our use and wont, as if nothing had been said; dropping, hour by hour, out of careless hands, seeds of corn and hemlock, of bramble and rose.

Let us run over the charter of our liberties, as Dr Maudsley has summed them up in the passage quoted above.

**Some Articles of this Charter.**—We may lay the physical basis of memory: while the wide-eyed babe stretches his little person with aimless kickings on his rug, he is receiving unconsciously those first impressions which form his earliest memories; and

we can order those memories for him: we can see that the earliest sights he sees are sights of order, neatness, beauty; that the sounds his ear drinks in are musical and soft, tender and joyous; that the baby's nostrils sniff only delicate purity and sweetness. These memories remain through life, engraved on the unthinking brain. As we shall see later, memories have a certain power of accretion—where there are some, others of a like kind gather, and all the life is ordered on the lines of these first pure and tender memories.

We may lay the foundation for the development of all the mental functions. Are there children who do not wonder, or revere, or care for fairy tales, or think wise child-thoughts? Perhaps there are not; but if there are, it is because the fertilising pollen grain has never been conveyed to the ovule waiting for it in the child's soul.

These are some of the things that—according to the citations we have given from Dr Maudsley's *Physiology of Mind*—his parents may settle for the future man, even in his early childhood:—

His definite ideas upon particular subjects, as, for example, his relations with other people.

His habits, of neatness or disorder, of punctuality, of moderation.

His general modes of thought, as affected by altruism or egoism.

His consequent modes of feeling and action.

His objects of thought—the small affairs of daily life, the natural world, the operations or the productions of the human mind, the ways of God with men.

His distinguishing talent—music, eloquence, invention.

His disposition or tone of character, as it shows itself in and affects his family and other close relations in life—reserved or frank, morose or genial, melancholy or cheerful, cowardly or brave.



## CHAPTER IV

### PARENTS AS INSPIRERS

#### *The Life of the Mind grows upon Ideas*

‘Sow an act, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny.’

**Summary of the Preceding Chapter.**—The last chapter closed with an imperfect summary of what we may call the educational functions of parents. We found that it rests with the parents of the child to settle for the future man his ways of thinking, behaving, feeling, acting; his disposition, his particular talent; the manner of things upon which his thoughts shall run. Who shall fix limitations to the power of parents? The destiny of the child is ruled by his parents, because they have the virgin soil all to themselves. The first sowing must be at their hands, or at the hands of such as they choose to depute.

**Educational Conceptions of the Past.**—What do parents sow? *Ideas*. We cannot too soon recognise what is the sole educational seed in our hands, or how this seed is to be distributed. But how radically wrong is all our thought upon education! We cannot use the fit words because we do not think the right thing. We have perhaps got over the educational misconception of the *tabula rasa*. No

one now looks on the child's white soul as a tablet prepared for the exercise of the educator's supreme art. But the conception which has succeeded this time-honoured heresy rests on the same false bases of the august office and the infallible wisdom of the educator. Here it is in its cruder form :

**Pestalozzi's Theory.**—'Pestalozzi aimed more at harmoniously developing the faculties than at making use of them for the acquirement of knowledge ; he sought to prepare the vase rather than to fill it.'

**Froebel's Theory.**—In the hands of Froebel the figure gains in boldness and beauty ; it is no longer a mere vase to be shaped under the potter's fingers ; but a flower, say, a perfect rose, to be delicately and consciously and methodically moulded, petal by petal, curve and curl ; for the perfume and living glory of the flower, why, these will come ; do you your part and mould the several petals ; wait, too, upon sunshine and shower, give space and place for your blossom to expand. And so we go to work with a touch to 'imagination' here, and to 'judgment' there ; now, to the 'perceptive faculties,' now, to the 'conceptive' ; in this, aiming at the moral, and in this, at the intellectual nature of the child ; touching into being, petal by petal, the flower of a perfect life under the genial influences of sunny looks and happy moods.

**The Kindergarten a Vital Conception.**—This reading of the meaning of education and of the work of the educator is very fascinating, and it calls forth singular zeal and self-devotion on the part of those gardeners whose plants are the children. Perhaps, indeed, this of the Kindergarten is the one vital conception of education we have had hitherto.

**But Science is changing Front.**—But in these days of revolutionary thought, when all along the line—in geology and anthropology, chemistry, philology, and biology—science is changing front, it is necessary that we should reconsider our conception of Education.

**As to Heredity.**—We are taught, for example, that ‘heredity’ is by no means the simple and direct transmission, from parent or remote ancestor, to child of power and proclivity, virtue and defect; and we breathe freer, because we had begun to suspect that if this were so, it would mean to most of us an inheritance of exaggerated defects: imbecility, insanity, congenital disease—are they utterly removed from any one of us?

**Is Education Formative?**—So of education, we begin to ask, Is its work so purely formative as we thought? Is it directly formative at all? How much is there in this pleasing and easy doctrine, that the drawing forth and strengthening and directing of the several ‘faculties’ is education? Parents are very jealous over the individuality of their children; they mistrust the tendency to develop all on the same plan; and this instinctive jealousy is right; for, supposing that education really did consist in systematised efforts to draw out every power that is in us, why, we should all develop on the same lines, be as like as ‘two peas,’ and (should we not?) die of weariness of one another! Some of us have an uneasy sense that things are tending towards this deadly sameness; but, indeed, the fear is groundless.

We may believe that the personality, the individuality, of each of us, is too dear to God, and too

necessary to a complete humanity, to be left at the mercy of empirics. We are absolutely safe, and the tenderest child is fortified against a battering-ram of educational forces.

‘Education’ an Inadequate Word.—The problem of education is more complex than it seems at first sight, and well for us and the world that it is so. ‘Education is a life’; you may stunt and starve and kill, or you may cherish and sustain; but the beating of the heart, the movement of the lungs, and the development of the faculties (are there any ‘faculties’?) are only indirectly our care. The poverty of our thought on the subject of education is shown by the fact that we have no word which at all implies the sustaining of a *life*: education (*e*, out, and *ducere*, to lead, to draw) is very inadequate; it covers no more than those occasional gymnastics of the mind which correspond with those by which the limbs are trained: training (*trahere*) is almost synonymous, and upon these two words rests the misconception that the development and the exercise of the ‘faculties’ is the object of education (we must needs use the word for want of a better).

‘Bringing-up’?—Our homely Saxon ‘bringing-up’ is nearer the truth, perhaps because of its very vagueness; any way, ‘up’ implies an *aim*, and ‘bringing’ an *effort*.

The happy phrase of Mr Matthew Arnold<sup>1</sup>—‘Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life’—is perhaps the most complete and adequate definition of education we possess. It is a great thing to have said it; and our wiser posterity may see in that

<sup>1</sup> The writer has not been able to trace the phrase in question, but this attribution persists in her memory.

'profound and exquisite remark' the fruition of a lifetime of critical effort.

**An Adequate Definition.**—Observe how it covers the question from the three conceivable points of view. Subjectively, in the child, education is a life; objectively, as affecting the child, education is a discipline; relatively, if we may introduce a third term, as regards the environment of the child, education is an atmosphere.

We shall examine each of these postulates later; at present we shall attempt no more than to clear the ground a little, with a view to the subject of this chapter, 'Parents as Inspirers'—not 'modellers,' but 'inspirers.'

**Method, a Way to an End.**—It is only as we recognise our limitations that our work becomes effective: when we see definitely what we are to do, what we can do, and what we cannot do, we set to work with confidence and courage; we have an end in view, and we make our way intelligently towards that end, and a *way to an end is method*. It rests with parents not only to give their children birth into the life of intelligence and moral power, but to sustain the higher life which they have borne.

**The Life of the Mind grows upon Ideas.**—Now that life, which we call education, receives only one kind of sustenance; it grows upon *ideas*. You may go through years of so-called 'education' without getting a single vital idea; and that is why many a well-fed body carries about a feeble, starved intelligence; and no society for the prevention of cruelty to children cries shame on the parents. Some years ago I heard of a girl of fifteen who had spent two years at a school without taking part in

a single lesson, and this by the express desire of her mother, who wished all her time and all her pains to be given to 'fancy needlework.' This, no doubt, is a survival (not of the fittest), but it is possible to pass even the Universities Local Examinations with credit, without ever having experienced that vital stir which marks the inception of an idea; and, if we have succeeded in escaping this disturbing influence, why, we have 'finished our education' when we leave school; we shut up our books and our minds, and remain pigmies in the dark forest of our own dim world of thought and feeling.

What is an Idea?—A live thing of the mind, according to the older philosophers, from Plato to Bacon, from Bacon to Coleridge. We say of an idea that it strikes us, impresses us, seizes us, takes possession of us, rules us; and our common speech is, as usual, truer to fact than the conscious thought which it expresses. We do not in the least exaggerate in ascribing this sort of action and power to an idea. We form an *ideal*—a, so to speak, embodied idea—and our ideal exercises the very strongest formative influence upon us. Why do you devote yourself to this pursuit, that cause? 'Because twenty years ago such and such an idea *struck* me,' is the sort of history which might be given of every purposeful life—every life devoted to the working out of an idea. Now is it not marvellous that, recognising as we do the potency of ideas, both the word and the conception it covers enter so little into our thought of education?

Coleridge brings the conception of an 'idea' within the sphere of the scientific thought of to-day; not as that thought is expressed in *Psychology*—a term which he himself launched upon the world with an

apology for it as an *insolens verbum*,<sup>1</sup> but in that science of the correlation and interaction of mind and brain, which is at present rather clumsily expressed in such terms as 'mental physiology' and 'psychophysiology.'

In his *Method* Coleridge gives us the following illustration of the rise and progress of an idea:—

**Rise and Progress of an Idea.**—"We can recall no incident of human history that impresses the imagination more deeply than the moment when Columbus, on an unknown ocean, first perceived that startling fact, the change of the magnetic needle. How many such instances occur in history when the ideas of Nature (presented to chosen minds by a Higher Power than Nature herself) suddenly unfold, as it were, in prophetic succession, systematic views destined to produce the most important revolutions in the state of man! The clear spirit of Columbus was doubtless eminently *methodical*. He saw distinctly that great leading *idea* which authorised the poor pilot to become a 'promiser of kingdoms.'"

**Genesis of an Idea.**—Notice the genesis of such ideas—'presented to chosen minds by a Higher Power than Nature'; notice how accurately this history of an idea fits in with what we know of the history of great inventions and discoveries, with that of the *ideas* which rule our own lives; and how well does it correspond with that key to the origin of 'practical' ideas which we find elsewhere:—

"Doth the plowman plow continually to . . . open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad

<sup>1</sup> 'We beg pardon for the use of this *insolens verbum*, but it is one of which our language stands in great need' (*Method*—S. T. Coleridge).

the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and put in the wheat in rows, and the barley in the appointed place, and the spelt in the border thereof? For his God doth instruct him aright, and doth teach him. . . .

“Bread corn is ground; for he will not ever be threshing it. . . . This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel and excellent in wisdom.”<sup>1</sup>

An Idea may exist as an ‘Appetency.’— Ideas may invest as an atmosphere, rather than strike as a weapon. ‘The idea may exist in a clear, distinct, definite form, as that of a circle in the mind of a geometrician; or it may be a mere instinct, a vague appetency towards something, . . . like the impulse which fills the young poet’s eyes with tears, he knows not why.’ To excite this ‘appetency towards something’—towards things lovely, honest, and of good report, is the earliest and most important ministry of the educator. How shall these indefinite ideas which manifest themselves in appetency be imparted? They are not to be given of set purpose, nor taken at set times. They are held in that thought-environment which surrounds the child as an atmosphere, which he breathes as his breath of life; and this atmosphere in which the child inspires his unconscious ideas of right living emanates from his parents. Every look of gentleness and tone of reverence, every word of kindness and act of help, passes into the thought-environment, the very atmosphere which the child breathes; he does not think of these things, may never think of them, but all his life long they excite that ‘vague appetency towards something’ out of which most of his actions spring. Oh,

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah xxviii.



the wonderful and dreadful presence of the little child in the midst!

**A Child draws Inspiration from the Casual Life around him.**—That he should take direction and inspiration from all the casual life about him, should make our poor words and ways the starting-point from which, and in the direction of which, he develops—this is a thought which makes the best of us hold our breath. There is no way of escape for parents; they must needs be as ‘inspirers’ to their children, because about them hangs, as its atmosphere about a planet, the thought-environment of the child, from which he derives those enduring ideas which express themselves as a life-long ‘appetency’ towards things sordid or things lovely, things earthly or divine.

**Order and Progress of Definite Ideas.**—Let us now hear Coleridge on the subject of those *definite* ideas which are not inhaled as air, but conveyed as meat to the mind:—<sup>1</sup>

“From the first, or initiative idea, as from a seed, successive ideas germinate.”

“Events and images, the lively and spirit-stirring machinery of the external world, are like light and air and moisture to the seed of the mind, which would else rot and perish.”

“The paths in which we may pursue a methodical course are manifold, and at the head of each stands its peculiar and guiding idea.”

“Those ideas are as regularly subordinate in dignity as the paths to which they point are various and eccentric in direction. The world has suffered much, in modern times, from a subversion of the natural

<sup>1</sup> *Method*—S. T. Coleridge.

and necessary order of Science . . . . from summoning reason and faith to the bar of that limited physical experience to which, by the true laws of method, they owe no obedience."

"Progress follows the path of the idea from which it sets out; requiring, however, a constant wakefulness of mind to keep it within the due limits of its course. Hence the orbits of thought, so to speak, must differ among themselves as the initiative ideas differ."

**Platonic Doctrine of Ideas.**—Have we not here the corollary to, and the explanation of, that law of unconscious cerebration which results in our 'ways of thinking,' which shapes our character, rules our destiny? Thoughtful minds consider that the new light which biology is throwing upon the laws of mind is bringing to the front once more the Platonic doctrine, that "An idea is a distinguishable power, self-affirmed, and seen in its unity with the Eternal Essence."

**Ideas alone matter in Education.**—The whole subject is profound, but as practical as it is profound. We must disabuse our minds of the theory that the functions of education are, in the main, gymnastic. In the early years of the child's life it makes, perhaps, little apparent difference whether his parents start with the notion that to educate is to fill a receptacle, inscribe a tablet, mould plastic matter, or nourish a life; but in the end we shall find that only those *ideas* which have fed his life are taken into the being of the child; all the rest is thrown away, or worse, is like sawdust in the system, an impediment and an injury to the vital processes.

**How the Educational Formula should run.**—This is, perhaps, how the educational formula should

run: Education is a life; that life is sustained on ideas; ideas are of spiritual origin; and,

‘God has made us so’

that we get them chiefly as we convey them to one another. The duty of parents is to sustain a child’s inner life with ideas as they sustain his body with food. The child is an eclectic; he may choose this or that; therefore, in the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not which shall prosper, whether this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.

The child has affinities with evil as well as with good; therefore, hedge him about from any chance lodgment of evil ideas.

The initial idea begets subsequent ideas; therefore, take care that children get right primary ideas on the great relations and duties of life.

Every study, every line of thought, has its ‘guiding idea’; therefore, the study of a child makes for living education in proportion as it is quickened by the guiding idea ‘which stands at the head.’

‘Infallible Reason’; what is it?—In a word, our much boasted ‘infallible reason’—is it not the involuntary thought which follows the initial idea upon necessary logical lines? Given, the starting idea, and the conclusion may be predicated almost to a certainty. We get into the *way* of thinking such and such manner of thoughts, and of coming to such and such conclusions, ever further and further removed from the starting-point, but on the same lines. There is structural adaptation in the brain tissue to the manner of thoughts we think—a place and a way for them to run in. Thus we see how the

destiny of a life is shaped in the nursery, by the reverent naming of the Divine Name; by the light scoff at holy things; by the thought of duty the little child gets who is made to finish conscientiously his little task; by the hardness of heart that comes to the child who hears the faults or sorrows of others spoken of lightly.