



Education

Immanuel Kant

Chapter 1

Introduction

1. Man is the only being who needs education. For by education we must understand nurture (the tending and feeding of the child), discipline (Zucht), and teaching, together with culture. According to this, man is in succession infant (requiring nursing), child (requiring discipline), and scholar (requiring teaching).

2. Animals use their own powers, as soon as they are possessed of them, according to a regular plan – that is, in a way not harmful to themselves.

It is indeed wonderful, for instance, that you swallows, when newly hatched and still blind, are careful not to defile their nests.

Animals therefore need no nurture, but at the most, food, warmth, and guidance, or a kind of protection. It is true, most animals need feeding, but they do not require nurture. For by nurture we mean the tender care and attention which parents must bestow upon their children, so as to prevent them from using their powers in a way which would be harmful to themselves. For instance, should an animal cry when it comes into the world, as children do, it would surely become prey to wolves and other wild animals, which would gather around, attracted by its cry.

3. Discipline changes animal nature into human nature. Animals are by their instinct all that they ever can be; some other reason has provided everything for them at the outset. But man needs a reason of his own. Having no instinct, he has to work out a plan of conduct for himself. Since, however, he is not able to do this all at once, but comes into the world undeveloped, others have to do it for him.

4. All the natural endowments of mankind must be developed little by little out of man himself through his own effort.

One generation educates the next. The first beginnings of this process of educating may be looked for either in a rude and unformed, or in a fully developed condition of man. If we assume the latter to have come first, man must at all events afterwards have generated and lapsed into barbarism.

It is discipline, which prevents man from being turned aside by his animal impulses from humanity, his appointed end. Discipline, for instance, must restrain him from venturing wildly and rashly into danger. Discipline, thus, is merely negative, its action being to counteract man's natural unruliness. The positive part of education is instruction.

Unruliness consists in independence of law. By discipline men are placed in subjection to the laws of mankind, and brought to feel their constraint. This, however, must be accomplished early. Children, for instance, are first sent to school, not so much with the object of their learning something, but rather that they may become used to sitting still and doing exactly as they are told. And this to the end that in later life they should not wish to put actually and instantly into practice anything that strikes them.

5. The love of freedom is naturally so strong in man, that when once he has grown accustomed to freedom, he will sacrifice everything for its sake. For this very reason discipline must be brought into play very early; for when this has not been done, it is difficult to alter character later in life. Undisciplined men are apt to follow every caprice.

We see this also among savage nations, who, though they may discharge functions for some time like Europeans, yet can never become accustomed to Europeans, yet can never become accustomed to European manners. With them, however, it is not the noble love of freedom which Rousseau and others imagine, but a kind of barbarism – the animal, so to speak, not having yet developed its human nature. Men should therefore accustom themselves early to yield to the commands of reason, for if a man be allowed to follow his own will in his youth, without opposition, a certain lawlessness will cling to him throughout his life. And it is no advantage to such a man that in his youth he has been spared through an

over-abundance of motherly tenderness, for later on all the more will he have to face opposition from all sides, and constantly receive rebuffs, as soon as he enters into the business of the world.

It is a common mistake made in the education of those of high rank, that because they are hereafter to become rulers they must on that account receive no opposition in their youth. Owing to his natural love of freedom it is necessary that man should have his natural roughness smoothed down; with animals, their instinct renders this unnecessary.

6. Man needs nurture and culture. Culture includes discipline and instruction. These, as far as we know, no animal needs, for none of them learn anything from their elders, except birds, who are taught by them to sing; and it is a touching sight to watch the mother bird singing with all her might to her young ones, who, like children at school, stand round and try to produce the same tones out of their tin throats. In order to convince ourselves that birds do not sing by instinct, but that they are actually taught to sing, it is worthwhile to make an experiment. Suppose we take away half the eggs from a canary, and put sparrow's eggs in their place, or exchange young sparrows for young canaries; if the young birds are then brought into a room where they cannot hear the sparrows outside, they will learn the canary's song and we thus get singing sparrows. It is, indeed, very wonderful that each species of bird has its own peculiar song, which is preserved unchanged through all its generations; and the tradition of the song is probably the most faithful in the world.

7. Man can only become man by education. He is merely what education makes of him. It is noticeable that man is only educated by man – that is, by men who have themselves been educated. Hence with some people it is want of discipline and instruction on their own part, which makes them in turn unfit educators of their pupils. Were some being of higher nature than man to undertake our education, we should then be able to see what man might become. It is, however, difficult for us accurately to estimate man's natural capabilities, since some things are imparted to man by education, while other things are only developed by education. Were it possible, by the help of those in high rank, and through the united forces of many people, to make an experiment on this question, we might even by this means be able to gain some information as to the degree of eminence which it is possible for man to attain. But it is as important to the speculative mind, as it is sad to one who loves his fellow-men, to see how those in high rank generally care only for their own concerns, and take no part in the important experiments of education, which bring our nature one step nearer to perfection.

There is no one who, having been neglected in his youth, can come to years of discretion without knowing whether the defect lies in discipline or culture (for so we may call instruction). The uncultivated man is crude, the undisciplined is unruly. Neglect of discipline is a greater evil than neglect of culture, for this last can be remedied later in life, but unruliness cannot be done away with, and a mistake in discipline can never be repaired. It may be that education will be constantly improved, and that each succeeding generation will advance one step towards the perfecting of mankind; for with education is involved the great secret of the perfection of human nature. It is only now that something may be done in this direction, since for the first time people have begun to judge rightly, and understand clearly, what actually belongs to a good education. It is delightful to realise that through education human nature will be continually improved, and brought to such a condition as is worthy of the nature of man. This opens out to us the prospect of a happier human race in the future.

Chapter II

Physical Education

47. With regard to the training of character – which we may indeed call also, in a certain sense, physical culture – we must chiefly bear in mind that discipline should not be slavish. For a child ought always to be conscious of his freedom, but always in such a way as not to interfere with the liberty of others – in which case he must be met with opposition. Many parents refuse their children everything they ask, in order that they may exercise their patience, but in doing so they require from their children more patience than they have themselves. This is cruel. One ought rather to give a child as much as will agree with him, and then tell him 'that enough is enough'; but this decision must be absolutely final. No attention should ever be given to a child when he cries for anything, and children's wishes should never be complied with if they try to extort something by crying; but if they ask properly, it should be given then, provided it is for their good. By this the child will also become accustomed to being open-minded; and since he does not annoy anyone by his crying, everybody will be friendly towards him.

Providence seems indeed to have given children happy, winning ways, in order that they may gain people's hearts. Nothing does children more harm than to exercise a vexatious and slavish discipline over

them with a view to breaking their self-will.

48. During the first eight months of a child's life its sense of sight is not fully developed. It experiences, it is true, the sensation of light, but cannot as yet distinguish one object from another. To convince ourselves of this, we have only to hold up a glittering object before the child's eyes and then remove it; we may at once notice that he does not follow it with his eyes.

At the same time as the sense of sight, the power of laughing and crying is developed. When the child has once reached that stage, *there is always some reasoning*, however vague it may be, *connected with his crying*. He cries with the idea that some harm has been done him. Rousseau says that if you merely tap a child of six months on the hand, it will scream as if a bit of burning wood had touched it. Here the child has actually a sense of grievance besides the mere bodily hurt. Parents talk a great deal about breaking the will of their children, but there is no need to break their will unless they have already been spoiled. The spoiling begins when a child has but to cry to get his own way. It is very difficult to repair this evil later on; indeed, it can scarcely be done. We may keep the child from crying or otherwise worrying us, but he swallows his vexation, and is inwardly nursing anger all the more. In this way the child becomes accustomed to dissembling and agitation of mind. It is, for instance, very strange that parents should expect their children to turn and kiss their hand (vide p.89) after they have just beaten them. That is the way to teach them dissembling and falsehood. For the child surely does not look on the rod with any special favour, so that he should feel any gratitude for its chastisement, and one can easily imagine with what feelings the child kisses the hand which has punished him.

49. We often say to a child: 'Fie, for shame! You shouldn't do that, ' &c. But such expressions are futile in this early stage of education; for the child has, as yet, no sense of shame or of seemliness. He has nothing to be ashamed of, and ought not to be ashamed. These expressions therefore will simply make him timid. He will become embarrassed before others, and inclined to keep away from their company – and from this arises reserve and harmful concealment. He is afraid to ask for all he wants. He conceals his true character, and always appears to be other than he is, when he ought to be able to speak frankly and freely. Instead of being always near his parents he shuns them, preferring to make friends with the servants of the house.

50. No better than his vexatious system of bringing up children is that of perpetually *playing with* and *caressing* the child; this makes him self-willed and deceitful, and by betraying to him their weakness, parents lose the necessary respect in the eyes of the child. If, on the other hand, he is so trained that he gets nothing by crying for it, he will be frank without being bold, and modest without being timid. *Boldness*, or, what is almost the same thing, *insolence*, is insufferable. There are many men whose constant insolence has given them such an expression that their very look leads one to expect rudeness from them, while you have only to look at others to see at once that they are incapable of being rude to anyone. Now we can always be frank in our demeanour, provided our frankness be united with a certain kindness. People often speak of men of rank having royal air, but this is nothing but a certain self-sufficient manner in consequence of having met with no opposition all their life.

51. It may be said with truth that the children of the *working classes* are more spoiled than the children of those of *higher rank*, for the working classes play with their children like monkeys, singing to them, caressing, kissing, and dancing with them. They think indeed they are doing a kindness to their child in always running to him when he cries, and playing with him, &c.; but he only cries the oftener. If, on the other hand, no notice is taken of the child's crying, he will leave off at last – for no one cares to continue a fruitless task. Once a child has become accustomed to having all his whims gratified, it is afterwards too late to begin to cross his will. On the other hand, if you do not mind the child's crying, he will soon get tired of it. But should his fancies always be gratified, both his character and his manners will be spoiled.

The child has as yet, indeed, no idea of manners, but it goes far towards spoiling his natural disposition, so that afterwards sharp measures are necessary to undo the evil caused by early indulgence. When attempts are made later on to break off the habit of giving way to all the child's wishes, his crying is then accompanied by a rage as fierce as any of which grown-up people are capable, only that he has not the physical strength to exercise it. This is but what we must expect, for children who have been for so long accustomed merely to cry to her what they want, become veritable despots, and are naturally aggrieved when their rule comes suddenly to an end; for even grown-up people who have been for some time in a high position find it very difficult if they are suddenly called upon to abdicate.

52. Here we have also to discuss the training of the *sense of pleasure or pain*. In this our work must

be negative; we must see that the child's sensibility be not spoiled but over-indulged. Love of ease does more harm than all the ills of life. Therefore it is of the utmost importance that children should be taught early to work. If they have not been over-indulged, children are naturally fond of amusements which are attended with fatigue, and occupations which require exercise of strength. With regard to pleasures, it is best not to let them be dainty, nor allow them to pick and choose. As a rule, mothers spoil their children in this way and indulge them altogether too much. In spite of this we very often notice that children, and especially boys, are fonder of their father than of their mother. This is probably because mothers are timid, and do not allow them to use their limbs as freely as they would wish, for fear of the children hurting themselves. While fathers, on the other hand, although they are stern to them, and perhaps punish them severely when they are naughty, yet take them out sometimes into the fields and do not try to hinder their boyish games.

53. Some people believe that in making children wait a long time for what they want they teach them *patience*. This is, however, hardly necessary, though doubtless in times of illness, &c. patience is needed. Patience is two-fold, consisting either in giving up all hope or in gaining new courage to go on. The first is not necessary, provided what we hope to gain is possible; the second we should always desire, as long as what we strive for is right. In cases of illness, however, hopelessness spoils what has been made good by cheerfulness. But he who is still capable of taking courage with regard to his physical or moral condition is not likely to give up all hope.

54. The *will* of children, as has been already remarked, must not be broken, but merely bent in such a way that it may yield to natural obstacles. At the beginning, it is true, the child must obey blindly. It is unnatural that a child should command by his crying, and that the strong should obey the weak. Children should never, even in their earliest childhood, be humored because they cry, nor allowed to extort anything by crying. Parents often make a mistake in this, and then, wishing to undo the result of their over-indulgence, they deny their children in later life whatever they ask for. It is, however, very wrong to refuse them without cause what they may naturally expect from the kindness of their parents, merely for the sake of opposing them, and that they, being the weaker, should be made to feel the superior power of their parents.

55. To grant children their wishes is to spoil them; to thwart them purposely is an utterly wrong way of bringing them up. The former generally happens as long as they are the playthings of their parents, and especially during the time when they are beginning to talk. By spoiling a child, however, very great harm is done, affecting its whole life. Those who thwart the wishes of children prevent them (and must necessarily prevent them) at the same time from showing their anger; but their inward rage will be all the stronger, for children have not yet learned to control themselves.

The following rules should accordingly be observed with children from their earliest days: - When they cry, and we have reason to believe they are hurt, we should go to their help. On the other hand, when they cry simply from temper, they should be left alone. And this way of dealing with them should be continued as they grow older. In this case the opposition the child meets with is quite natural, and, properly speaking, merely negative, consisting simply in his not being indulged. Many children, on the other hand, get all they want from their parents by persistent asking. If children are allowed to get whatever they want by crying, they become ill-tempered; while if they are allowed to get whatever they want by asking, their characters are weakened. Should there, then, be no important reason to the contrary, a child's request should be granted; should the contrary, it should not be granted, no matter how often the request is repeated. A refusal should always be final. This will shortly have the effect of making its repetition unnecessary.

56. Supposing – what is of extremely rare occurrence – that a child should be naturally inclined to be stubborn, it is best to deal with him in this way: - If he refuses to do anything to please us, we must refuse to do anything to please him.

Breaking a child's will makes him a slave, while natural opposition makes him docile.

Chapter V **Moral Culture**

77. Moral culture must be based upon 'maxims,' not upon discipline; the one prevents evil habits, the

other trains the mind to think. We must see, then, that the child should accustom himself to act in accordance with 'maxims,' and not from certain ever-changing springs of action. Through discipline we form certain habits, moreover, the force of which becomes lessened in the course of years. The child should learn to act according to 'maxims,' the reasonableness of which he is able to see for himself. One can easily see that there is some difficulty in carrying out this principle with young children, and that moral culture demands a great deal of insight on the part of parents and teachers.

Supposing a child tells a lie, for instance, he ought not to be punished, but treated with contempt, and told that he will not be believed in the future, and the like. If you punish a child for being naughty, and reward him for being good, he will do right merely for the sake of the reward; and when he goes out into the world and finds that goodness is not always rewarded, nor wickedness always punished, he will grow into a man who only thinks about how he may get on in the world, and does right or wrong according as he finds either of advantage to himself.

78. 'Maxims' ought to originate in the human being as such. In moral training we should seek early to infuse into children ideas as to what is right and wrong. If we wish to establish morality, we must abolish punishment. Morality is something so sacred and sublime that we must not degrade it by placing it in the same rank as discipline. The first endeavour in moral education is the formation of character. Character consists in readiness to act in accordance with 'maxims.' At first they are school 'maxims,' and later 'maxims' of mankind. At first the child obeys rules. 'Maxims' are also rules, but subjective rules. They proceed from the understanding of man. No infringement of school discipline must be allowed to go unpunished, although the punishment must always fit the offence.

79. If we wish to *form the characters* of children, it is of the greatest importance to point out to them a certain plan, and certain rules, in everything; and these must be strictly adhered to. For instance, they must have set times for sleep, for work, and for pleasure; and these times must be neither shortened nor lengthened. With indifferent matters children might be allowed to choose for themselves, but having once made a rule they must always follow it. We must, however, form in children the character of a child, and not the character of a citizen.

Unmethodical men are not to be relied on; it is difficult to understand them, and to know how far we are to trust them. It is true we often blame people who always act by rule – for instance, the man who does everything by the clock, having a fixed hour for every one of his actions – but we blame them often unreasonably, for this exactness, though it looks like pedantry, goes far towards helping the formation of character.

80. Above all things, obedience is an essential feature in the character of a child, especially of a schoolboy or girl. This obedience is twofold, including absolute obedience to his master's commands, and obedience to what he feels to be a good and reasonable will. Obedience may be the result of compulsion; it is then *absolute*: or it may arise out of confidence; it is then obedience of the second kind. This *voluntary* obedience is very important, but the former is also very necessary, for it prepares the child for the fulfillment of laws that he will have to obey later, as a citizen, even though he may not like them.

81. Children, then, must be subject to a certain law of *necessity*. This law, however, must be a general one – a rule which has to be kept constantly in view, especially in schools. The master must not show any predilection or preference for one child above others; for thus the law would cease to be general. As soon as a child sees that the other children are not all placed under the same rules as himself, he will at once become refractory.

82. One often hears it said that we should put everything before children in such a way that they shall do it from *inclination*. In some cases, it is true, this is all very well, but there is much besides which we must place before them as *duty*. And this will be of great use to them throughout their life. For in the paying of rates and taxes, in the work of the office, and in many other cases, we must be led, not by inclination, but by duty. Even though a child should not be able to see the reason of a duty, it is nevertheless better that certain things should be prescribed to him in this way; for after all, a child will always be able to see that he has certain duties as a child, while it will be more difficult for him to see that he has certain duties as a human being. Were he able to understand this also – which, however, will only be possible in the course of years – his obedience would be still more perfect.

83. Every transgression of a command in a child is a want of obedience, and this brings *punishment* with it. Also, should a command be disobeyed through inattention, punishment is either *physical* or *moral*. It is *moral* when we do something derogatory to the child's longing to be honoured and loved

(a longing which is an aid to moral training); for instance, when we humiliate the child by treating him coldly and distantly. This longing of children should, however, be cultivated as much as possible. Hence this kind of punishment is the best, since it is an aid to moral training – for instance, if a child tells a lie, a look of contempt is punishment enough, and punishment of a most appropriate kind.

Physical punishment consists either in refusing a child's requests or in the infliction of pain. The first is akin to moral punishment, and is of a negative kind. The second form must be used with caution, lest an [slavish disposition] should be the result. It is of no use to give children rewards; this makes them selfish, and gives rise to a [mercenary disposition]

84. Further, obedience is either that of the child or that of the *youth*. Disobedience is always followed by punishment. This is either a really *natural* punishment, which a man brings upon himself by his own behaviour – for instance, when a child gets ill from over-eating – and this kind of punishment is the best, since a man is subject to it throughout his life, and not merely during his childhood; or, on the other hand, the punishment is artificial. By taking into consideration the child's desire to be loved and respected, such punishments may be chosen as will have a lasting effect upon its character. Physical punishments must merely supplement the insufficiency of moral punishment. If moral punishment have no effect at all, and we have at last to resort to physical punishment, we shall find after all that no good character is formed this way. At the beginning, however, physical restraint may serve to take the place of reflection.

85. Punishments inflicted with signs of anger are useless. Children then look upon the punishment simply as the result of anger, and upon themselves merely as the victims of the anger; and as a general rule punishment must be inflicted on children with great caution, that they may understand that its one aim is their improvement. It is foolish to cause children, when they are punished, to return thanks for the punishment by kissing hands, and only turns the child into a slave. If physical punishment is often repeated, it makes a child stubborn; and of parents punish their children for obstinacy, they often become all the more obstinate. Besides, it is not always the worst men who are obstinate, and they will often yield easily to kind remonstrance.

86. The obedience of the growing *youth* must be distinguished from the obedience of the *child*. The former consists in submission to rules of duty. To do something for the sake of duty means obeying reason. It is in vain to speak to children of duty. They look upon it in the end as something which if not fulfilled will be followed by the rod. A child may be guided by mere instinct. As he grows up, however, the idea of duty must come in. Also the idea of shame should not be made use of with children, but only with those who have left childhood for youth. For it cannot exist with them till the idea of honour has first taken root.

87. The second principal feature in the formation of a child's character is *truthfulness*. This is the foundation and very essence of character. A man who tells lies has no character. A man who tells lies has no character. A man who tells lies has no character, and if he has any good in his it is merely the result of a certain kind of temperament. Some children have an inclination towards lying, and this frequently for no other reason than that they have a lively imagination. It is the father's business to see that they are broken of his habit, for mothers generally look upon it as a matter of little or no importance, even finding in it a flattering proof of the cleverness and ability of their children. This is the time to make use of the sense of shame, for the child in this case will understand it well. The blush of shame betrays us when we lie, but it is not always a proof of it, for we often blush at the shamelessness of others who accuse us of guilt. On no condition must we punish children to force the truth from them, unless their telling a lie immediately results in some mischief; then they may be punished for that mischief. The withdrawal of respect is the only fit punishment for lying.

Punishments may be divided into *negative* and *positive* punishments. The first may be applied to laziness or viciousness; for instance, lying, disobedience. Positive punishment may be applied to acts of spitefulness. But above all things we must take care never to bear children a grudge.

88. A third feature in the child's character is *sociableness*. He must form friendships with other children, and not be always by himself. Some teachers, it is true, are opposed to these friendships in schools, but this is a great mistake. Children ought to prepare themselves for the sweetest enjoyment of life.

If a teacher allows himself to prefer one child to another, it must be on account of its character, and not for the sake of any talents the child may possess; otherwise jealousy will arise, which is opposed to friendship

Children ought to be open-hearted and cheerful in their looks as the sun. A joyful heart alone is able to find its happiness in the good. A religion for we should serve God with a joyful heart, and not of constraint.

Children should sometimes be released from the narrow constraint of school, otherwise their natural joyousness will soon be quenched. When the child is set free he soon recovers his natural elasticity. Those games in which children, enjoying perfect freedom, are ever trying to outdo one another, will serve this purpose best, and they will soon make their minds bright and cheerful again.

89. Many people imagine that the years of their youth are the pleasantest and best of their lives; but it is not really so. They are the most troublesome; for we are then under strict discipline, can seldom choose our own friends, and still more seldom can we have our freedom. As Horace says: *Multa tulit, fecitque puer, sudavit et alsit.*

90. Children should only be taught those things which are suited to their age. Many parents are pleased with the precocity of their offspring; but as a rule, nothing will come of such children. A child should be clever, but only as a child. He should not ape the manners of his elders. For a child to provide himself with moral sentences proper to manhood is to go quite beyond his province and to become merely an imitator. He ought to have merely the understanding of a child, and not seek to display it too early. A precocious child will never become a man of insight and clear understanding. It is just as much out of place for a child to follow all the fashions of the time, to curl his hair, wear ruffles, and even carry a snuff-box. He will thus acquire affected manners not becoming to a child. Polite society is a burden to him, and he entirely lacks a man's heart. For that very reason we must set ourselves early to fight against all signs of vanity in a child; or, rather, we must give him no occasion to become vain. This easily happens by people prattling before children, telling them how beautiful they are, and how well this or that dress becomes them, and promising them some finery or other as a reward. Finery is not suitable for children. They must accept their neat and simple clothes as necessities merely.

At the same time the parents must not set great store by their own clothes, not admire themselves; for here, as everywhere, example is all – powerful, and either strengthens or destroys good precepts.

Chapter VI

Practical Education

91. Practical education includes (1) skill, (2) discretion, and (3) morality.

With regard to *skill*, we must see that it is thorough, and not superficial. We must not pretend to know things which we afterwards cannot accomplish. Skill must be characterised by thoroughness, and this thoroughness should gradually become a habit. Thoroughness is an essential element in the formation of a man's character, while skill is necessary for talent.

92. As regards *discretion*, it consists in the art of turning our skill to account; that is, of using our fellow-men for our own ends. For this several things are necessary. Properly speaking, it is the last quality attained by man, but it ranks second in importance.

In order that a child may acquire prudence, he must learn to disguise his feelings and to be reserved, while at the same time he learns to read the character of others. It is chiefly with regard to his own character that he must cultivate reserve. Decorum is the art of outward behaviour, and this is an art that we must possess. It is difficult to read the characters of others, but we must learn to do this without losing our own reserve. For this end a kind of dissembling is necessary; that is to say, we have to hide our faults and keep up that outward appearance. This is not necessarily deceit, and is sometimes allowable, although it does border closely on insincerity.

Dissimulation, however, is but a desperate expedient. To be prudent it is necessary that we should not lose our temper; on the other hand, we should not be too apathetic. A man should be brave without being violent – two qualities which are quite distinct. A brave man is one who is desirous of exercising his will. This desire necessitates control of the passions. Discretion is a matter of temperament.

93. Morality is a matter of character. *Sustine et abstine* (endure and abstain), such is the preparation for a wise moderation. The first step towards the formation of a good character is to put our passions on one side. We must take care that our desires and inclinations do not become passions, by learning to go without those things that are denied to us. *Sustine* implies endure and accustom thyself to endure.

Courage and a certain bent of mind towards it are necessary for renunciation. We ought to accustom ourselves to opposition, the refusal of our requests, and so on.

‘Sympathy’ is a matter of temperament. Children, however, ought to be prevented from contracting the habit of a sentimental maudlin sympathy. ‘Sympathy’ is really sensitiveness, and belongs only to characters of delicate feeling. It is distinct from compassion, and it is an evil, consisting as it does merely in lamenting over a thing. It is a good thing to give children some pocket-money of their own, that they may help the needy; and in this way we should see if they are really compassionate or not. But if they are only charitable with their parents’ money, we have no such test.

The saying *Festina lente* (make haste slowly) expresses constant activity, by which we must hasten to learn a great deal – that is, *festina*. But we must also learn thoroughly, and this needs time; that is, *lente*. The question here arises whether it is better to know a great many things in a superficial way of a few things thoroughly. It is better to know but little, and that little thoroughly, than to know a great deal and that superficially; for one becomes aware of the shallowness of superficial knowledge later on. But the child does not know as yet in what condition he may be with regard to requiring this or that branch of knowledge: it is best, therefore, that he should know something thoroughly of all, otherwise he will but deceive and dazzle others by his superficially acquired knowledge.

94. Our ultimate aim is the formation of *character*. Character consists in the firm purpose to accomplish something, and then also in the actual accomplishing of it. *Vir propositi tenax* (A man who faithfully keeps to his purpose), said Horace, and this is a good character. For instance, if a man makes a promise, he must keep it, however inconvenient it may be to himself; for a man who makes a resolution and fails to keep it will have no more confidence in himself. Suppose, for example, that a man resolves to rise early every morning that he may study, or do something or other, or take a walk – and excuses himself in spring because it is well to allow himself to sleep, and sleep is pleasant – thus he puts off his resolution from day to day, until he ends in having no confidence in himself.

Those things which are contrary to morality must be excluded from such resolutions. The character of a wicked man is evil; but then, in this case, we do not call it ‘character’ any longer, but obstinacy; and yet there is still a certain satisfaction to find such a man holding fast to his resolutions and carrying them out, though it would be much better if he showed the same persistency in good things.

Those who delay to fulfil their resolutions will do but little in life. We cannot expect much good to come of so-called future conversion. The sudden conversion of a man who has led a vicious life cannot possibly be enduring, in that it would be nothing short of a miracle to expect a man who has lived in such a way suddenly to assume the well-conducted life of a man who has always had good and upright thoughts. For the same reason we can expect no good to come from pilgrimages, mortification, and fastings; for it is difficult to see how such customs can, all at once, make a virtuous man out of a vicious one. How can it make a man more upright, or improve him in any way, to fast by day and to feast at night; to impose a penance upon his body, which can in no way help towards improving his mind?

95. *To form the foundation of moral character in children*, we must observe the following:

We must place before them the duties they have to perform, as far as possible, by examples and rules. The duties which a child has to fulfil are only common duties towards himself and towards others. These duties must be the natural outcome of the kind of question involved. We have thus to consider more closely: -

(1) *The child’s duties towards himself*. – These do not consist in putting on fine clothes, in having sumptuous dinners, and so on, although his food should be good and his clothing neat. They do not consist in seeking to satisfy his cravings and inclinations; for, on the contrary, he ought to be very temperate and abstemious. But they consist in his being conscious that man possesses a certain dignity, which ennobles him above all other creatures, and that it is his duty so to act as not to violate in his own person this dignity of mankind. We are acting contrary to the dignity of man, for instance, when we give way to drink, or commit unnatural sins, or practise all kinds of irregularities, and so on, all of which place man far below the animals. Further, to be cringing in one’s behaviour to others; to be always paying compliments, in order by such undignified conduct to ingratiate ourselves, as we assume – all this is against the dignity of man.

We can easily find opportunities for making children conscious of the dignity of man, even in their own persons. For instance, in the case of uncleanliness, which is at least unbecoming to mankind. But it is really through lying that a child degrades himself below the dignity of man, since lying presupposes

the power of thinking and of communicating one's thoughts to others. Lying makes a man the object of common contempt, and is a means of robbing him of the respect for and trust in himself that every man should have.

(2) The child's duties towards others. – A child should learn early to reverence and respect the rights of others, and we must be careful to see that this reverence is realised in his actions. For instance, were a child to meet another poorer child and to push him rudely away, or to hit him, and so on, we must not say to the aggressor, 'Don't do that, you will hurt him; you should have pity, he is a poor child,' and so on. But we must treat him in the same haughty manner, because his conduct is against the rights of man. Children have as yet no idea, properly speaking, of generosity. We may, for instance, notice that when a child is told by his parents to share his slice of bread-and-butter with another, without being promised a second slice, the child either refuses to obey, or obeys unwillingly. It is besides, useless to talk to a child of generosity, as it is not yet in his power to be generous.

96. Many writers – Crugott, for instance – have either quite omitted, or explained falsely, that chapter of morality which teaches *our duties towards ourselves*. Our duties towards ourselves consist, as has been already said, in guarding, each in our own person, the dignity of mankind. A man will only reproach himself if he has the idea of mankind before his eyes. In this idea he finds an original, with which he compares himself. But when years increase, then is the critical period in which the idea of the dignity of man alone will suffice to keep the young man in bounds. But the youth must have some timely hints which will help him to know what he is to approve and what to mistrust.

97. Almost all our schools are lacking in something which would nevertheless greatly tend to the formation of uprightness in children – namely, *a catechism of right conduct*. This should contain, in a popular form, everyday questions of right and wrong. For instance, a man has a certain debt to pay to-day, but he sees another man in sore need, and, moved with pity, gives him the money which belongs to his creditor. Is this right or wrong?

It is wrong, for we must be free from obligation before we can be generous. When we give alms, we do a meritorious act; but in paying our debts, we do what we are bound to do.

Again, can a lie ever be justified by necessity? No, there is no single instance in which a lie can be justified. If this rule were not strictly adhered to, children especially would take the smallest excuse for a necessity, and would very often allow themselves to tell lies. If there were a book of this kind, an hour might very profitably be spent daily in studying it, so that children might learn and take to heart lessons on right conduct – that apple of God's eye upon earth.

98. As to the obligation of benevolence, it is not an absolute obligation. We must arouse the sympathies of others as to a sense of their duty to help them. Children ought not to be full of feeling, but they should be full of the idea of duty. Many people, indeed, become hard-hearted, where once they were pitiful, because they have so often been deceived. It is in vain to point out to children the meritorious side of actions. Religious teachers often make the mistake of representing acts of benevolence as meritorious, without seeing that all we can do for God is just to do what we are bound to do; and in doing good to the poor, we are only doing our duty. For the inequality of man arises only from accidental circumstances favourable to me or to my predecessors? – while our consideration of the whole remains ever the same.

99. We only excite envy in a child by telling him to compare his own worth with the worth of others. He ought rather to compare himself with a concept of his reason. For humility is really nothing else than the comparing of our own worth with the standard of moral perfection. Thus, for instance, the Christian religion makes people humble, not by teaching them to compare themselves with the highest pattern of perfection. It is very absurd to see humility in depreciating ourselves. 'See how such and such a child behaves himself!' An exclamation of this kind produces only a very ignoble mode of thinking; for if a man estimates his own worth by the worth of others, he either tries to elevate himself above others or to detract from another's worth. But this last is envy. We then only seek to impute faults to others, in order that we may compare favourably with them. Thus the spirit of emulation, wrongly applied, only arouses envy. Emulation may occasionally be used to good purpose, as when we tell a child, in order to convince him of the possibility of performing a certain task, that others could easily do it. We must on no account allow one child to humiliate another. We must seek to avoid every form of pride which is founded upon superiority of fortune. At the same time we must seek to cultivate frankness in the child. This is an unassuming confidence in himself, the possession of which places him in a position to exhibit his talents in a becoming manner. This self-confidence is to be distinguished from insolence, which is

really indifference to the judgment of others.

100. All the cravings of men are either formal (relating to freedom and power), or material (set upon a certain object) – that is to say, either cravings of imagination or enjoyment – or, finally, cravings for the continuation of these two things as elements of happiness. Cravings of the first kind are the lust of honour (ambition), the lust of power, and the lust of possession. Those of the second kind are sexual indulgence (voluptuousness), or the enjoyment of social intercourse (love of amusement).

Cravings of the third kind, finally, are love of life, love of health, and the love of ease (freedom from care as regards the future).

Vices are either those of malice, baseness, or narrow-mindedness.

To the first belong envy, ingratitude, and joy at the misfortune of others. To the second kind belong injustice, unfaithfulness (deceitfulness), dissoluteness – and this in the squandering of wealth as well as of health (intemperance) and of honour.

Vices of the third kind are those of unkindness, niggardliness, and idleness (effeminacy).

101. *Virtues* are either virtues of merit or merely of obligation or of innocence.

To the first belong magnanimity (shown in self-conquest in times of anger or when tempted to ease and the lust of possession), benevolence, and self-command.

To the second belong honesty, propriety, and peaceableness; and to the third, finally, belong honourableness, modesty, and content.

102. Bit is man by nature morally good or bad? He is neither, for he is not by nature a moral being. He is neither, for he is not by nature a moral being. He only becomes a moral being when his reason has developed ideas of duty and law. One may say, however, that he has inclinations and instincts which would urge him one way, while his reason would drive him in another. He can only become morally good by means of virtue – that is to say, by self-restraint – though he may be innocent as long as his vicious inclination lie dormant.

Vices, for the most part, arise in this way, that civilization does violence to Nature; and yet our destiny as human beings is to emerge from our natural state as animals. Perfect art becomes second nature.

103. Everything in education depends upon establishing correct principles, and leading children to understand and accept them. They must learn to substitute abhorrence for what is revolting and absurd, for hatred; the fear of their own conscience, for the fear of man and divine punishment; self-respect and inward dignity, for the opinions of men; the inner value of actions, for words and mere impulses; understanding, for feeling; and joyousness and piety with good humour, for a morose, timid, and gloomy devotion.

But above all things we must keep children from esteeming [the strokes of fortune] too highly.

104. In looking at the education of children with regard to religion, the first question which arises is whether it is practicable to impart religious ideas to children early in life. On this point much has been written in educational works. Religious ideas always imply a theology; and how can young people be taught theology when they do not yet know themselves, much less the world? Is the youth who as yet knows nothing of duty in the condition to comprehend an immediate duty towards God? This much is certain – that, could it be brought about that children should never witness a single act of veneration to God, never hear the name of God spoken, it might then be the right order of things to teach them first about ends and aims, and of what concerns mankind; to sharpen their judgment; to instruct them in the *order and beauty of works of Nature*; then add a wider knowledge of the structure of the universe; and then only might be revealed to them for the first time the idea of a Supreme Being – a Law-giver. But since this mode of proceeding is impossible, according to the present condition of society, and we cannot prevent children from hearing the name of God and seeing tokens of man's devotion to Him; if we were to teach them something about God only when they are grown up, the result would be either indifference of false ideas – for instance, terror of God's power. So, then, it is to be feared that such ideas might find a dwelling-place in the child's imagination, to avoid it we should seek early to impart religious ideas to the child. But this instruction must not be merely the work of memory and imitation; the way chosen must always be in accordance with Nature. Children will understand – without abstract ideas of duty, of obligations, of good and bad conduct – that there is a law of duty which is not the same as ease, utility, or other considerations of the kind, but something universal, which is not governed by the caprice of men. The teacher himself, however, must form this idea.

At first we must ascribe everything to Nature, and afterwards Nature himself to God; showing at first,

for instance, how everything is disposed for the equilibrium, but at the same time with consideration in the long run for man, that he may attain happiness.

The idea of God might first be taught by analogy with that of a father under whose care we are placed, and in this way we may with advantage point out to the child the unity of men as represented by one family.

105. What, then, is *religion*? Religion is the law in us, in so far as it derives emphasis from a Law-giver and a Judge above us. It is morality applied to the knowledge of God. If religion is not united to morality, it becomes merely an endeavour to win favour. Hymn-singing, prayers, and church-going should only give men fresh strength, fresh courage to advance; or they should be the utterance of a heart inspired with the idea of duty. They are but preparations for good works, and not the works themselves; and the only real way in which we may please God is by our becoming better men.

In teaching a child we must first begin with the law which is in him. A vicious man is contemptible to himself, and this contempt is inborn, and does not arise in the first instance because God has forbidden vice; for it does not necessarily follow that the law-giver is the author of the law. A prince, for instance, may forbid stealing in his country without being called the original prohibitor of theft. From this, man learns to understand that it is a good life alone which makes him worthy of happiness. The divine law must at the same time be recognized as Nature's law, for it is not arbitrary. Hence religion belongs to all morality.

We must now, however, begin with theology. The religion which is founded merely on theology can never contain anything of morality. Hence we derive no other feelings from it but fear on the one hand, and hope of reward on the other, and this produces merely a superstitious cult. Morality, then, must come first and theology follow; and that is religion.

106. The law that is within us we call conscience. Conscience, properly speaking, is the application of our actions to this law. The reproaches of conscience would be without effect, if we did not regard it as the representative of God, who, while He has raised up a tribunal over us, has also established a judgment-seat within us. If religion is not added to moral conscientiousness, it is of no effect. Religion without moral conscientiousness is a service of superstition. People will serve God by praising Him and reverencing His power and wisdom, without thinking how to fulfill the divine law; nay, even without knowing and searching out His power, wisdom, and so on. These hymn-sings are an opiate for the conscience of such people, and a pillow upon which it may quietly slumber.

107. Children cannot comprehend all *religious ideas*, notwithstanding there are some which we ought to teach them; these, however, must be more negative than positive. It is of no use whatever to let children recite formulae; it only produces a misconception of piety. The true way of honouring God consists in acting in accordance with His will, and this is what we must teach children to do. We must see to it that the name of God is not so often taken in vain, and this by ourselves as well as by children. If we use it in congratulating our friends – even with pious intent – this also is a misuse of the holy name. The idea of God ought to fill people with reverence every time they hear His name spoken. And it should be pronounced but seldom and feel reverence towards God, as the Lord of life and of the whole world; further, as one who cares for men, and lastly as their Judge. We are told of Newton that he never pronounced the name of God without pausing for a while and meditating upon it.

108. Through an explanation which unites the ideas of *God* and *duty* the child learns the better to respect the divine care for creatures, destruction and cruelty, which we so often see in the torture of small animals. At the same time we should teach the child to discover good in evil. For instance, beasts of prey and insects are patterns of cleanliness and diligence; so, too, evil men are a warning to follow the law; and birds, by waylaying worms, protect the garden; and so on.

109. We must, then, give children some idea of the Supreme Being, in order that when they see others praying, and so on, they may know to whom they are praying, and why. But these ideas must be few in number, and, as has been said, merely negative. We must begin to impart them from early youth, being careful at the same time that they do not esteem men according to their religious observances, for, in spite of the diversity of religions, religion is everywhere the same.

110. Here, in conclusion we shall add a few remarks which should be especially observed by the youth as he approaches the years of early manhood. At this time the youth begins to make certain distinctions which he did not make formerly. In the first place, the distinction of sex. Nature has spread a certain veil of secrecy over this subject, as if it were something unseemly for man, and merely an animal need in him.

She has, however, sought to unite it, as far as possible, with every kind of morality. Even savage nations behave with a kind of shame and reserve in this matter. Children now and then ask curious questions; for instance, 'Where do children come from?' &c. They are, however, easily satisfied either at receiving an unreasonable answer which means nothing, or by being told that these are childish questions.

These inclinations develop mechanically in the youth, and, as is the way with all instincts, even without the knowledge of a particular object. Thus it is impossible to keep the youth in ignorance and the innocence which belongs to ignorance. By silence the evil is but increased. We see this in the education of our forefathers. In the education of the present day it is rightly assumed that we must speak openly, clearly, and definitely with the youth. We must allow that it is a delicate point, for we cannot look upon it as a subject for open conversation; but if we enter with sympathy into his new impulses all will go well.

The thirteenth or fourteenth year is usually the time in which the feeling of sex develops itself in the youth. (When it happens earlier it is because children have been led astray and corrupted through bad examples.) Their judgment also is then already formed, and at about this time Nature has prepared them for our discussing this matter with them.

111. Nothing weakens the mind as well as the body so much as the kind of lust which is directed towards themselves, and it is entirely at variance with the nature of man. But this also must not be concealed from the youth. We must place it before him in all its horribleness, telling him that in this way he will become useless for the propagation of the race, that his bodily strength will be ruined by this vice more than by anything else, that he will bring on himself premature old age, and that his intellect will be very much weakened, and so on.

We may escape from these impulses by constant occupation, and by devoting no more time to bed and sleep than is necessary. Through this constant occupation we may banish all such thoughts from our mind, for even if the object only remains in our imagination it eats away our vital strength. If we direct our inclination towards the other sex, there are at any rate certain obstacles in the way; if, however, they are directed towards ourselves, we may satisfy them at any time. The physical effects are hurtful, but the consequences with regard to morality are even worse. The bounds of Nature are here overstepped and the inclination rages ceaselessly, since no real satisfaction can take place. The teachers of grown-up youths have propounded the question whether it is allowable for a youth to enter into relations with the other sex? If we must choose one of the two things, this is certainly better than the other. In the former he acts against Nature; in the latter he does not. Nature has called upon him to be a man so soon as he becomes of age, and to propagate his kind; the exigencies, however, which exist for man in a civilised community render it sometimes impossible for him to marry and educate his children at that period. Herein he would be transgressing the social order. It is the best way – indeed, it is a condition to marry. He acts then not only as a good man, but as a good citizen.

The youth should learn early to entertain a proper respect for the other sex; to win their esteem by an activity free from vice; the thus to strive after the high prize of a happy marriage.

112. A second distinction which the youth begins to make about the time of his entrance into society consists in the knowledge of the distinction of rank and the inequality of men. As a child he must not be allowed to notice this. He must not even be allowed to give orders to the servants. If the child sees his parents giving orders to the servants, they may at any rate say to him: 'We give them their bread, and therefore they obey us – you do not, and therefore they need no obey you.' In fact, children would of themselves know nothing of this distinction, if only their parents did not give them this false notion. The young men should be shown that the inequality of man is an institution that has arisen on account of one man striving to get an advantage over another. The consciousness of the equality of men, together with their civil inequality, may be taught him little by little.

113. We must accustom the youth to esteem himself absolutely and not relatively to others. The high esteem of others for what does not constitute the true value of men at all is vanity. Further, we must teach him to be conscientious in everything, and not merely to appear so, but to strive to be so. We must also make him heedful that in no matter about which he has well weighed a resolution. Rather than this it is better to conceive of no resolution at all, and let the matter remain in doubt. He must be taught contentedness as regards outward circumstances, and patience in work – *Sustine et abstine* - moderation in pleasure. If we are not always thinking of pleasure, but will be patient in our work, we shall become useful members of the community and be kept from *ennui*.

Again, we must encourage the youth –

(1) To be cheerful and good-humoured. Cheerfulness arises from the fact of having nothing to reproach oneself with.

(2) To be even tempered. By means of self-discipline one can train oneself to become a cheerful companion in society.

(3) To regard many things invariably as matters of duty. We must hold an action to be worthy, not because it falls in without inclinations, but because in performing it we fulfill our duty.

(4) In love towards others, as well as to feeling of cosmopolitanism. There exists something in our minds which causes us to take an interest (a) in ourselves, (b) in those with whom we have been brought up, and (c) there should also be an interest in the progress of the world. Children should be made acquainted with this interest, so that it may give warmth to their hearts. They should learn to rejoice at the world's progress, although it may not be to their own advantage or to that of their country.

(5) To set little store by the enjoyment of the good things of life. The childish fear of death will then disappear – we must point out to the youth that the anticipations of pleasure are not realised in its fulfillment.

Lastly, by pointing out the necessity of daily 'settling accounts' with himself, so that at the end of life he may be able to make an estimate with regard to its value.

Kant on Education. Trans. Annette Churton. Boston: D.C. Heath and Co., 1900.

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