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~~Handwritten scribble~~ 1453

*Br. John Taylor
1694 - 1761*

MOTIVES
TO THE
GOOD EDUCATION
OF
CHILDREN.

*William Cook His
Book 1767*

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THE

VALUE of a CHILD;

OR,

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TO THE

GOOD EDUCATION

OF

CHILDREN.

In a LETTER to a DAUGHTER.

Prov. xxii. 6. Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

L O N D O N:

Printed and Sold by JAMES WAUGH, at the *Turk's-Head*, in *Lombard-Street*. 1752.

THE

VALUE OF A CHILD

OR

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GOOD EDUCATION

OF

CHILDREN.

IN A LETTER TO A DAUGHTER.

By MARY WASHINGTON, M.D.
Author of "The Education of a Slave Girl," &c.

LONDON:

Printed and Sold by James Wason, at the
"Black in a Bow" 1782.



T H E
V A L U E of a C H I L D, &c.

Dear Daughter,



T is my most sincere desire, and highest ambition, that the increase of my family may be to the spread of wisdom, virtue and piety in the world. And as God has graciously made you the mother of a lovely boy, I would gladly make you sensible, how much it is incumbent upon you, to whom nature has committed the first and most flexible years of life, to bring him up, and as many more as

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God may give you, to this best and noblest purpose.

OF all creatures in the earth it seemeth proper to man alone to reflect upon himself; to compute the value of his own being, and to consider what is agreeable to the dignity of it. This, not only shews the extent of our capacities; but moreover, is necessary to the right conduct of life. For, if men were duely sensible of their own worth, could they so commonly and so carelessly abandon themselves to sensual pursuits; or act as if they were nothing but a perishing body; when, in fact, they are spirits, created for all the glories of intelligence, and all the happiness of immortality?

BUT this way of thinking ought particularly to be applied to our CHILDREN; whom providence designedly puts into our hands altogether helpless
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and ignorant: to shew us from the very first our great duty as parents; namely, that we ought to employ our understandings, and use the best industry, for the preservation and welfare of our offspring. Other creatures want our faculties: and therefore, their young, bating bulk and strength, are brought forth at maturity. The actions of the lamb, the very hour it sees the light, are equal to any future instance of it's sagacity. So that the whole creature is at once produced. But when the body of man is brought forth, his mind, his better part, is, in a sense, still unborn. It belongs to us to light the understandings of our children; to excite them to proper action; to moderate and direct their passions, and to do all we can to set them into the right way of life. But this we can never do, as we ought, unless our esteem and value of them be fixed upon a just foundation.

In

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In which case the affection of a mother is not always the safest guide.

INDEED, they become ours under such circumstances, as necessarily incline us to love them extremely. But nature never puts us into any wrong tract. We mistake her sweet and gentle language, and, thro' inconsiderateness, push the inclinations she gives quite beyond the bounds of truth and right. We are naturally delighted with our young, that we may carefully guard and nurse their tender age, and chearfully perform the various attendance they require. But it is a common, tho' most deplorable case, for people to pervert this lovely principle to the utter ruin of their children; whilst they consider them only as objects of delight, and under that mistake fancy they have nothing to do but to cocker and indulge what so much pleaseth them, and in which they are not willing to see any irregularity

regularity that needs correction, or the restraint of wholesome discipline. A father, it is true, may fall into this error: but here the mother's weakness is commonly the greater. And the good conduct of the wisest father may easily, and to him insensibly, be defeated by a mother's excessive fondness. Against which even a competent measure of good sense and virtue may not be a sufficient guard, without a particular attention, and serious reflection upon the nature and worth of a child.

REASON is the grand measure of our being and actions. Here lieth our highest excellence, our truest riches, and most solid happiness. In the just exercise of *this* a man is a God to himself and others: neglecting *this*, we are only brutes in a different shape. By *this* we distinguish things, examine their natures, discern our several relations to them, and
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the duties thence resulting. What ever we invent or cultivate, all arts and sciences, all the conveniencies and accommodations of life are managed by reason. *This* establisheth, connecteth and preserveth all the greater and lesser combinations of men for their mutual welfare. Families, cities, kingdoms; religion, laws, decency, honour, commerce, friendship, every thing valuable, honest, commendable, stands firmly upon *this*, and no other foundation. By *this* we contemplate the order, harmony and beauty of the various appearances in nature; open a prospect into worlds vastly remote; delineate and compute their motions as they perform their rapid courses in the bosom of immense space. By *this* we raise our thoughts above the whole creation to the first and best of all beings, the father of the universe, the fountain of all existence and happiness; discover his perfections, imitate his rectitude, and
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find we are infinitely happy in so doing. By *this* we shoot our thoughts far beyond the bounds of our present life, conceive an endless duration in another world, and are animated to seek and hope for a felicity in the lofty regions of eternity.

Now, a little creature endowed with this noble principle, and in whom it may grow to a high degree of perfection, ought to be regarded as a being of importance; as containing in it something divine, and much superior to any of the works of art or nature, which we view with our eyes, either in the heavens, or in the earth. It must be vastly more than only an object of fancy and amusement. It demands even our reverence; and certainly ought to be treated with a particular address.

ESPECIALLY considering that the forming the tender mind depends very much

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upon our conduct. By humoring and indulging, careffing and admiring a child at any rate; by being loth to gaul the neck with the yoke of discipline; by tincturing the palate with a taste of foft and effeminate pleasures, we cruelly abandon the lovely creature to all the weakneffes of it's constitution; lead it out of the way of truth and life, and expose it to be inflaved and devoured by ravenous appetites. Which is something far worfe than cafting pearls upon a dunghil: it is to extinguish a mind; to murder an angel; to destroy an intelligence, of all natures in the universe the moft excellent. But if we carefully guard and tutor the young foul, that he be not commonly dealt with in a ludicrous, trifling way, but accustomed to the early exercife of reason; if nothing absurd in his actions be suffered to pafs, without bringing it to the test of good fenfe; if we teach him to attend to the effential differences of things.

things, which appear very evident even to children; if he is inured betimes to self-denial and patience, and is made to know, that he recommends himself only by what is good, virtuous and ingenious: this is to do him justice; this is to treat him agreeably to his real worth and dignity. Thus we endeavour to add a new glory to the creation, and to light up a new star in the intellectual firmament. Thus the little man becomes possessed of a sound mind; thus he grows up to be wise in choosing, and steady in practising what is best; temperate in governing his passions; brave in despising what is uncertain, insufficient and of short duration; and happy in being disengaged from the bad influence of bodily impressions.

AND why should our affection and care terminate so much in the **BODY**? We ought not indeed to find fault with the sovereign will, which has for a while

confined us to it: there are many duties we owe it, and we are allowed the reasonable use of any of it's pleasures. But, when it is set off to the best advantage, do we not all know what it is? How it grows and is nourished? How it decayeth and dieth? Wherein do its compounding parts excell those of the creatures below us? or what can it enjoy which they are not capable of, perhaps in a higher degree? Does it not lie open in every point to disease and pain? Which not all our skill and care can either prevent or relieve, and which only a sound, well instructed mind can enable us to endure. One cannot willingly make such an ungrateful supposition, yet is there not room enough to suppose, you may at any uncertain time see the sweet babe groaning under the heaviest affliction, shrieking out in extreme anguish, or pining away under a lingering distemper? Possibly you may see him in the agonies of death:
Possibly

Possibly you may see him, if you can bear to see him, dead; the dear body without breath, without motion, piercing the weeping mother's heart with the bitterest sorrows. Neither the reluctance of your thoughts, nor my hearty wishes of the contrary, can prevent this, if he, whose will we cannot resist, appoints it to be so. We have not one of the externals of life in our own power. They are all absolutely at the disposal of one who can sink or raise them when, and as he pleaseth. This should so moderate our regards to the body, and whatever belongs to it, as that they may, neither in this, nor any other case, hinder the free exercise of our minds, in attending to that which is supremely and unalterably good; which alone can make us happy, and will make us happy for ever.

BUT how many mothers have wished death had prevented the undutifulness of
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their children, which hath bereaved them of all comfort, when they have most of all stood in need of it? Look before you, daughter, to threescore, when life begins to be cold and dark. Would you then be slighted, disregarded, dishonoured? Would you have your aged heart torn and pained with the follies and extravagancies of your children? Or would you then be revered, esteemed, consulted, attended, and have a perpetual pleasure in their wise and regular conduct? Now is the time to form the plan of your own as well as their future happiness. And as ever you hope to be considerable hereafter, make yourself so now. The young mother's indulgence brings the old woman into contempt. A parental dominion, well supported by reason and good sense, is the best hold we can have of our children. If we so love them as still to maintain our authority; and so maintain our authority as sufficiently to discover our love; and if both love and

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authority conspire together, the one steadily forbidding, and, in good earnest, correcting what is wrong, and the other cheerfully encouraging and smiling upon every thing right and commendable, they are probably our own for life. Love alone may not be depended upon, being regarded as a thing of course, which a child is not much concerned to return; and which loseth all it's force when he meets with other objects to divert his affections from you. But a mind trained up in wisdom and virtue can never be ungrateful to it's best benefactors, and the early impressions of a well managed authority are never wholly effaced. And, considering the advantages nature gives us, it is easy to establish a lasting dominion over the supple spirits, if we are not by fondness intoxicated into a shameful neglect of ourselves and them. A child is easily taught to stand in awe of a father or mother; to regard their persons

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as sacred, and their commands as indisputable.

You should likewise look forward into life for your child as well as for yourself. As years advance, habits gain strength. It is therefore your wisdom, of the different ways of life to choose the best; habituate him to it betimes, and that will make it easy and pleasant; nor can he, but with difficulty, be seduced into a favourable opinion of what is worse. Man is a various creature. One sees the ignorant, the idle, the covetous, the proud, the luxurious, the voluptuous, &c. on the other hand; there's the knowing, the active, the useful, the temperate, the prudent, the brave, the patient, the humble, the benevolent. I need not ask you to choose your character: I know where you would be. Idleness is a sort of non-existence, the bane of all enjoyment, which renders a life of the greatest advantages

advantages insipid, dull and insignificant. Covetousness is miserably wanting what we already have; or insatiably craving what we do not want. Pride leads to all the evils, which thinking too highly of ourselves, and too contemptibly of all other beings, can produce. Pleasure is our greatest foible, and most dangerous delusion, inflaving and debasing the soul, and ruining all it's glory. In short, all vice, however polished, disguised, or recommended by wit or fashion, is error and falshood, the disease and deformity of our nature: and therefore, though the vicious may, at present, be diverted and amused, yet really they must be destitute of true peace and happiness. Virtue is truth and right, the health, harmony and beauty of the soul, and cannot but yield perpetual satisfaction to the mind reflecting upon it's own conduct. Then, as ever you desire to have your children shine in the honours of a good character,

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character, and happy in that comfort and tranquillity to which too many are strangers, form them betimes to virtue. As the tree receives it's growth, so the mind is always insensibly taking it's bent: and, if it is not carefully set and directed at first, will prove too stubborn for any remedy we may afterward be willing to apply, when the inclinations, humours and passions, which we once thought harmless, appear threatening and dangerous.

You are careful to make the circumstances of your children easy in future life. And consider; whether you choose to be providing fuel for vice, or laying in materials for the exercise of goodness; and take your measures accordingly.

BUT your children as well as others may be pinched in the iron claws of necessity. No condition can be an absolute security

security, against the greatest pains, wants, disappointments, losses, dangers; which are insupportable burthens to those, who have never learnt to value or relish any thing above the objects of sense; and have been accustomed to be pleased and gratified in every thing. Whilst the man practised in self denial and abstinence, seasoned with the maxims of wisdom, and steeled with true fortitude, can, not only support himself under, but even make his own advantage of, that which quite distracts and overwhelms others.

NOR will the benefit of early discipline redound to your child only: Others will share in the good effects of it. Every Man is of some consequence to society, and his influence is always proportionable to his wealth and power. If a man is wicked, the greater his power, and the higher he stands, the more readily, and the further he spreads his own ill qualities,

ties, and the more mischief he is capable of doing. And it is sad to see, how many every where are drawn into debauchery, by the vicious examples of their superiors, abused by their insolence, and oppressed by their rapacious covetousness. But a gentleman of sobriety and humanity, a friend to mankind, whose life recommends virtue, and whose moderation and goodness sweeten the condition of those who depend upon him, or are any ways obnoxious to him, must be an invaluable present to the world, and may be an extensive blessing in it. Therefore as you desire your children may possess handsome fortunes, and labour to procure for them the best you can; and as you know not in what post of eminence the providence of God, who can raise up even *the poor out of the dust, that he may set him with princes*, may place them, you should bestow a care and diligence,

gence, as if they were to be ranked amongst the greatest.

WE know not how large a share of mankind in future ages may spring from us; nor consequently, how far the effects of our present management may spread. But surely, whether our branches are many or few, it should be a pleasing imagination, to suppose religion and goodness, not impiety and wickedness, conveyed down from us to posterity.

BUT the GOSPEL! The glorious gospel of the blessed God setteth the highest rate upon our nature, and supplies the strongest motives for the cultivation of it. There we are not only, to great advantage, distinguished from the creatures below us, but moreover are represented as capable of rising to an equal degree of wisdom and felicity with those that are above us, upon some of the loftiest steps
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of creation. We shamefully neglect our being, and ungratefully despise the best good-will of the munificent author of it, if we make not this a prevailing argument for growing continually in heavenly purity and love. Your child is born in the family and covenant of God; and it's share in the honours, priviledges, and everlasting inheritance belonging to his house, have been signified and assured to it in baptism, as his free gift in *Christ Jesus*. This extraordinary advantage is intended to have it's effect both upon you and your children. The most excellent precepts of wisdom are delivered to us by the son of God. And while you make those the rule of your own life, and of your children's education, must it not ravish your soul, and excite your most zealous industry, to reflect; that you are bringing them up to be glorious among glorious angels; holy spirits among the spirits of just men made perfect; heirs
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of eternal life ; kings and priests to God, in the happy mansions, which the redeemer is gone to make ready for his true and faithful servants! What joy must it be to consider your family as a nursery for heaven and immortality! Oh! what joy one day to meet your dear consort in the paradise of God, and the dear pledges of your mutual love, shining in perfections and honours too high for our present comprehension; disposed to the noblest intellectual exercises, and the most delightful enjoyments, not only of each other, but of the father of the universe, who is life, light and love ineffable!

INDEED, we may fall into the contrary misery; and it is evident, from the very nature of wickedness, and its effects in this world, that our religion would have been false had it not told us so. We may receive the grace of God in vain,
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and sink into endless darkness and separation from him. And can we without horror suppose; that possibly our negligence may contribute to the eternal ruin of our children? Can it sit easy upon our thoughts; that possibly we may be instrumental of bringing new creatures into being, only to insult the divine authority, to violate his laws, to slight his grace, and to sin themselves into a total incapacity of being happy in him? Shall we bring forth and nourish children only to increase the number of apostates, and to find work for vindictive justice?

THE bringing up of children should not be regarded as a thing of course, but as a matter of the most serious attention and care. I have my self experienced the advantages of a good education; and have seen the dismal consequences of neglect and unreasonable indulgence. Fix it in your heart, that the happiness of
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your beloved offspring, both temporal and eternal, depends upon your wife and early tutorage.

LET the following rules be well observed. In care, reproof, correction, encouragement, husband and wife should act in perfect concert. Teach your child submission to your self, or you will be able to teach him nothing besides. Remove all bad examples from his sight. Understand yourselves what you would have your children understand; be yourselves what you would have them be; and do yourselves, what you would have them practice. Parents are the original models upon which we form our tempers and behaviour. Gradually infuse into the empty mind the dearest and most affecting notions of God; his omnipresence, almighty power, his good-

ness and over-ruling providence, his regards to pious men, his hearing and answering of prayer. Whet these things upon the tender spirit, and fix them by scripture-instances; as *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Joseph*, the *Israelites* passage through the *Red-Sea*, being fed with *Manna*, the three children in the fiery furnace, *Daniel* in the lion's den, and such like. Let him frequently hear serious discourse upon religious and heavenly subjects. He will listen and catch the same spirit. Shew him the vanity of the world, the frailty of the body, the dignity and infinite worth of the mind. Often inculcate, that he is made, not to live here below, but in the glorious and eternal world above: and that he is here only to have his virtue tried and exercised, that he may be fit to live in heaven; from whence God has sent a great and glorious person on purpose to inform us how we ought to behave here, in order to our
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being for ever happy hereafter; to whose instructions we should therefore have the highest regard. Habituate him to sanctify the lord's day; to esteem highly the word of God; to reverence his ordinances, and to honour his ministers. Lead him on, as he is capable, to the clearest knowledge of gospel-doctrine. But be sure with all religious instruction that he suck in a spirit of universal candor, goodness, and charity. The justest notions attended with the virulence of bigotry are but as generous wine turned into the fowrest vinegar. Let him be well established in liberty (liberty to use and improve his understanding) and the rights of conscience; but for others as well as himself. Address his understanding; encourage his enquiries, and use him betimes to think and reason. Represent vice in the most odious, virtue in the most amiable colours. Especially give

him a deep sense of truth and integrity, and an abhorrence of all manner of falsehood, fraud, craft, subterfuge and dissimulation, as base and dishonourable, and highly displeasing to God. You cannot cherish veracity too much. Never be severe for any fault he ingenuously acknowledges: But while you are convincing him of the wrong he has done, honour and commend him for the truth he has spoken. Make him sensible bodily appetites and passions are very dangerous, if not duely restrained. Give him a low opinion of splendor and show, and deceive him not into wrong thoughts of himself by gaudy ornaments. Teach him to reverence the human nature even in the poorest, and suffer him not to treat any with contempt. Cherish modesty, and check a forward, bold behaviour; it may grow into an unruly dissolute insolence. Suffer him not to be a man,
but

but as years and understanding allow. Boys are by no means fit to govern themselves, or to direct others. Inure him to diligence and close application, (properly intermixed with play and diversion) when he is strong enough to apply to learning; and let him want no advantage of increasing in knowledge and wisdom you can procure, or he can improve. And rest persuaded that your sincere and pious endeavours will not be in vain. The nature of things, and the promise of God insure success.

I present you with this, not because I think it exceeds what others may have done; but because I hope it will engage the greater regard on account of the hand from which it comes.

MAY the fountain of all being, wisdom, and happiness, shower down the choicest blessings on you and yours.

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May our posterity rise up in successive generations to honour and serve him: And may he direct and guard us all through the temptations and uncertainties of this world to the unspeakable joys of his presence, is the hearty prayer of, dear daughter, your affectionate father, &c.

F I N I S.



William

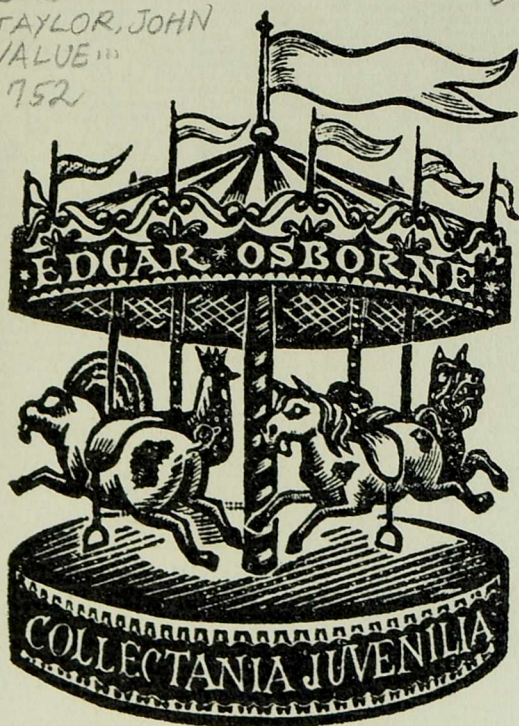
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