A Vindication of the Rights of Woman

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT

1759–1797

A Vindication of the Rights of Woman

The 1792 text

Rendered into modern English with AI (Claude) and edited

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A Vindication of the Rights of Woman · Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797)

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INTRODUCTION

In 1791 the French statesman Talleyrand proposed to the National Assembly that girls be given only a domestic education. Mary Wollstonecraft, a London writer who had already answered Edmund Burke with *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*, replied in six weeks with *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), dedicated to him.

Her argument is simple and radical: women are rational beings, and virtue is the same for both sexes. If women seem frivolous, vain and weak, it is because they are educated to please men rather than to think. She takes apart the advice books of her day, above all Rousseau's portrait of the ideal wife in *Emile*, and calls for women to be educated alongside men, to earn their own living, and to have a direct share in government. "I do not wish them to have power over men," she writes, "but over themselves."

The book is often called the founding text of modern feminism. The right-hand column is Wollstonecraft in lightly modernized English; the left is her original text, with her own footnotes after the paragraphs that cite them.

Dedication, Advertisement and Introduction

Wollstonecraft asks Talleyrand to reconsider his plan for women's education, and sets out her aim: to show that women are rational creatures degraded by a false education.

TO M. TALLEYRAND-PÉRIGORD, LATE BISHOP OF AUTUN

	1792	MODERN
Ded.1	Sir,	Sir,[1]
Ded.2	Having read with great pleasure a pamphlet, which you have lately published, on National Education, I dedicate this volume to you—the first dedication that I have ever written, to induce you to read it with attention; and, because I think that you will understand me, which I do not suppose many pert witlings will, who may ridicule the arguments they are unable to answer. But, Sir, I carry my respect for your understanding still farther; so far, that I am confident you will not throw my work aside, and hastily conclude that I am in the wrong, because you did not view the subject in the same light yourself.	I have read with great pleasure a pamphlet on national education that you recently published, and I dedicate this volume to you—the first dedication I have ever written—to induce you to read it attentively. I also dedicate it to you because I think you will understand me, which I do not expect of the many smart-mouthed little wits who may ridicule arguments they cannot answer. But, Sir, I carry my respect for your understanding still further. I carry it so far that I am confident you will not toss my work aside and hastily conclude that I am wrong merely because you did not see the subject in the same light yourself.
	And, pardon my frankness, but I must observe, that you treated it in too cursory a manner, contented to consider it as it had been considered formerly, when the rights of man, not to advert to woman, were trampled on as chimerical—I call upon you, therefore, now to weigh what I have advanced respecting the rights of woman, and national education—and I call with the firm tone of humanity. For my arguments, Sir, are dictated by a disinterested spirit—I plead for my sex—not for myself. Independence I have long considered as the grand blessing of life, the basis of every virtue—and independence I will ever secure by contracting my wants, though I were to live on a barren heath.	Forgive my frankness, but I must point out that you treated the subject too superficially. You were content to consider it as it used to be considered, when the rights of man, to say nothing of woman, were trampled on as fantasies. I therefore call on you now to weigh what I have put forward about the rights of woman and national education—and I call in the firm voice of humanity. For my arguments, Sir, come from a disinterested spirit: I plead for my sex, not for myself. I have long considered independence the great blessing of life, the basis of every virtue. And independence I will always secure by limiting my wants, even if I had to live on a barren heath.
Ded.3	It is then an affection for the whole human race that makes my pen dart rapidly along to support what I believe to be the cause of virtue: and the same motive leads me earnestly to wish to see woman placed in a station in which she would advance, instead of retarding, the progress of	It is, then, affection for the whole human race that makes my pen dart rapidly along in support of what I believe to be the cause of virtue. The same motive makes me earnestly wish to see woman placed in a position where she would advance, instead of holding back, the progress of those glori-

1 Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord (1754–1838), the former Bishop of Autun, presented a report on public education to France's National Assembly in September 1791.

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	those glorious principles that give a substance to morality. My opinion, indeed, respecting the rights and duties of woman, seems to flow so naturally from these simple principles, that I think it scarcely possible, but that some of the enlarged minds who formed your admirable constitution, will coincide with me.	ous principles that give substance to morality. Indeed, my opinion about the rights and duties of woman seems to follow so naturally from these simple principles that I think it hardly possible that none of the broad minds who framed your admirable constitution will agree with me.
Ded.4	In France there is undoubtedly a more general diffusion of knowledge than in any part of the European world, and I attribute it, in a great measure, to the social intercourse which has long subsisted between the sexes. It is true, I utter my sentiments with freedom, that in France the very essence of sensuality has been extracted to regale the voluptuary, and a kind of sentimental lust has prevailed, which, together with the system of duplicity that the whole tenor of their political and civil government taught, have given a sinister sort of sagacity to the French character, properly termed finesse, and a polish of manners that injures the substance, by hunting sincerity out of society.—And, modesty, the fairest garb of virtue!	In France there is undoubtedly a wider spread of knowledge than in any other part of Europe, and I attribute it largely to the social mixing that has long existed between the sexes. It is true—I speak my mind freely—that in France the very essence of sensuality has been distilled to treat the pleasure-seeker, and a kind of sentimental lust has prevailed. Their political and civil government, in its whole tenor, has also taught a system of duplicity. Together, these have given the French character a sinister sort of shrewdness, properly called finesse, and a polish of manners that damages substance by hunting sincerity out of society.—And modesty, the fairest garment of virtue![2]
	has been more grossly insulted in France than even in England, till their women have treated as *prudish* that attention to decency, which brutes instinctively observe.	Modesty has been more grossly insulted in France than even in England, until French women have come to treat as *prudish* the attention to decency that animals observe by instinct.
Ded.5	Manners and morals are so nearly allied that they have often been confounded; but, though the former should only be the natural reflection of the latter, yet, when various causes have produced factitious and corrupt manners, which are very early caught, morality becomes an empty name. The personal reserve, and sacred respect for cleanliness and delicacy in domestic life, which French women almost despise, are the graceful pillars of modesty; but, far from despising them, if the pure flame of patriotism have reached their bosoms, they should labour to improve the morals of their fellow-citizens, by teaching men, not only to respect modesty in women, but to acquire it themselves, as the only way to merit their esteem.	Manners and morals are so closely related that they have often been confused. Manners ought to be only the natural reflection of morals. Yet when various causes have produced artificial and corrupt manners, which are picked up very early, morality becomes an empty name. Personal reserve, and a sacred respect for cleanliness and delicacy in domestic life, are the graceful pillars of modesty, and French women almost despise them. Far from despising them, French women should, if the pure flame of patriotism has reached their hearts, work to improve the morals of their fellow citizens. They should teach men not only to respect modesty in women but to acquire it themselves, as the only way to earn women's esteem.
Ded.6	Contending for the rights of woman, my main argument is built on this simple principle, that if she be not prepared by education to become the companion of man, she will stop the progress of knowledge, for truth must be common to all, or it	In arguing for the rights of woman, I build my main argument on this simple principle: if she is not prepared by education to become the companion of man, she will stop the progress of knowledge. For truth must be common to all, or it will

2 "Manners" here and throughout means the customs and behavior of a society, not just etiquette.

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will be inefficacious with respect to its influence on general practice. And how can woman be expected to co-operate unless she know why she ought to be virtuous? unless freedom strengthen her reason till she comprehend her duty, and see in what manner it is connected with her real good?

If children are to be educated to understand the true principle of patriotism, their mother must be a patriot; and the love of mankind, from which an orderly train of virtues spring, can only be produced by considering the moral and civil interest of mankind; but the education and situation of woman, at present, shuts her out from such investigations.

Ded.7 In this work I have produced many arguments, which to me were conclusive, to prove that the prevailing notion respecting a sexual character was subversive of morality, and I have contended, that to render the human body and mind more perfect, chastity must more universally prevail, and that chastity will never be respected in the male world till the person of a woman is not, as it were, idolized, when little virtue or sense embellish it with the grand traces of mental beauty, or the interesting simplicity of affection.

Ded.8 Consider, Sir, dispassionately, these observations —for a glimpse of this truth seemed to open before you when you observed, 'that to see one half of the human race excluded by the other from all participation of government, was a political phænomenon that, according to abstract principles, it was impossible to explain.' If so, on what does your constitution rest? If the abstract rights of man will bear discussion and explanation, those of woman, by a parity of reasoning, will not shrink from the same test: though a different opinion prevails in this country, built on the very arguments which you use to justify the oppression of woman—prescription.

Ded.9 Consider, I address you as a legislator, whether, when men contend for their freedom, and to be allowed to judge for themselves respecting their own happiness, it be not inconsistent and unjust to subjugate women, even though you firmly

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have no influence on general practice. And how can woman be expected to cooperate unless she knows why she ought to be virtuous? How can she, unless freedom strengthens her reason until she understands her duty and sees how it is connected with her real good?

If children are to be educated to understand the true principle of patriotism, their mother must be a patriot. The love of humanity, from which an orderly train of virtues springs, can only be produced by considering the moral and civil interest of humanity. But woman's present education and situation shut her out from such inquiries.

In this work I have put forward many arguments, which I found conclusive, to prove that the prevailing notion of a separate sexual character undermines morality. I have argued that chastity must become far more widespread if the human body and mind are to become more perfect. I have also argued that chastity will never be respected in the male world as long as a woman's person is, as it were, idolized even when little virtue or sense adorns it with the grand traces of mental beauty or the touching simplicity of affection.

Consider these observations dispassionately, Sir. A glimpse of this truth seemed to open before you when you remarked "that to see one half of the human race excluded by the other from all participation in government was a political phenomenon that, according to abstract principles, it was impossible to explain." If so, on what does your constitution rest? If the abstract rights of man can bear discussion and explanation, those of woman, by the same reasoning, will not shrink from the same test. A different opinion does prevail in this country, but it is built on the very argument you use to justify the oppression of woman—prescription.[3]

I address you as a legislator: consider whether it is not inconsistent and unjust to subjugate women when men are fighting for their own freedom and for the right to judge their own happiness for themselves. It is unjust even if you firmly believe

3 "Prescription" is a claim that rests on long-established custom or possession.

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	believe that you are acting in the manner best calculated to promote their happiness? Who made man the exclusive judge, if woman partake with him the gift of reason?	that you are acting in the way best designed to promote women's happiness. Who made man the sole judge, if woman shares with him the gift of reason?
Ded.10	In this style, argue tyrants of every denomination, from the weak king to the weak father of a family; they are all eager to crush reason, yet always assert that they usurp its throne only to be useful. Do you not act a similar part, when you *force* all women, by denying them civil and political rights, to remain immured in their families groping in the dark? for surely, Sir, you will not assert, that a duty can be binding which is not founded on reason?	This is how tyrants of every kind argue, from the weak king to the weak father of a family. They are all eager to crush reason, yet they always insist that they usurp its throne only to be useful. Do you not play a similar part when you deny women civil and political rights, and so *force* them all to stay shut up in their families, groping in the dark? For surely, Sir, you will not claim that a duty can be binding if it is not founded on reason?
	If indeed this be their destination, arguments may be drawn from reason: and thus augustly supported, the more understanding women acquire, the more they will be attached to their duty—comprehending it—for unless they comprehend it, unless their morals be fixed on the same immutable principle as those of man, no authority can make them discharge it in a virtuous manner. They may be convenient slaves, but slavery will have its constant effect, degrading the master and the abject dependent.	If this really is their destiny, arguments for it can be drawn from reason. With such noble support, the more understanding women acquire, the more attached they will be to their duty—because they comprehend it. For unless they comprehend it, and unless their morals rest on the same unchangeable principle as men's, no authority can make them carry it out virtuously. They may be convenient slaves, but slavery will have its constant effect, degrading both the master and the abject dependent.
Ded.11	But, if women are to be excluded, without having a voice, from a participation of the natural rights of mankind, prove first, to ward off the charge of injustice and inconsistency, that they want reason,—else this flaw in your NEW CONSTITUTION, the first constitution founded on reason, will ever show that man must, in some shape, act like a tyrant, and tyranny, in whatever part of society it rears its brazen front, will ever undermine morality.	But if women are to be excluded, without a voice, from sharing the natural rights of humanity, first prove that they lack reason. Only that will ward off the charge of injustice and inconsistency. Otherwise this flaw in your NEW CONSTITUTION, the first constitution founded on reason, will always show that man must in some way act like a tyrant. And tyranny will always undermine morality, wherever in society it rears its brazen head.
Ded.12	I have repeatedly asserted, and produced what appeared to me irrefragable arguments drawn from matters of fact, to prove my assertion, that women cannot, by force, be confined to domestic concerns; for they will, however ignorant, intermeddle with more weighty affairs, neglecting private duties only to disturb, by cunning tricks, the orderly plans of reason which rise above their comprehension.	I have repeatedly asserted that women cannot be confined to domestic concerns by force, and I have given what seemed to me irrefutable arguments, drawn from matters of fact, to prove it. For however ignorant they are, they will meddle in weightier affairs. They will neglect their private duties only to disrupt, with cunning tricks, the orderly plans of reason that are beyond their comprehension.
Ded.13	Besides, whilst they are only made to acquire personal accomplishments, men will seek for pleasure in variety, and faithless husbands will	Besides, as long as women are taught only personal accomplishments, men will look for pleasure in variety, and unfaithful husbands will make un-

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	make faithless wives; such ignorant beings, indeed, will be very excusable when, not taught to respect public good, nor allowed any civil rights, they attempt to do themselves justice by retaliation.	faithful wives. Such ignorant beings are never taught to respect the public good, nor allowed any civil rights. They will indeed be very excusable when they try to get justice for themselves by retaliating.
Ded.14	The box of mischief thus opened in society, what is to preserve private virtue, the only security of public freedom and universal happiness?	Once this box of mischief has been opened in society, what is to preserve private virtue, the only guarantee of public freedom and universal happiness?
Ded.15	Let there be then no coercion *established* in society, and the common law of gravity prevailing, the sexes will fall into their proper places. And, now that more equitable laws are forming your citizens, marriage may become more sacred; your young men may choose wives from motives of affection, and your maidens allow love to root out vanity.	So let no coercion be *established* in society. Let the ordinary law of gravity prevail, and the sexes will fall into their proper places. And now that fairer laws are shaping your citizens, marriage may become more sacred. Your young men may choose wives out of affection, and your young women may let love root out vanity.
Ded.16	The father of a family will not then weaken his constitution and debase his sentiments, by visiting the harlot, nor forget, in obeying the call of appetite, the purpose for which it was implanted. And, the mother will not neglect her children to practise the arts of coquetry, when sense and modesty secure her the friendship of her husband.	The father of a family will not then ruin his health and debase his feelings by visiting prostitutes. Nor will he forget, in obeying the call of appetite, the purpose for which it was implanted. And the mother will not neglect her children to practice the arts of flirtation, when good sense and modesty secure her husband's friendship.
Ded.17	But, till men become attentive to the duty of a father, it is vain to expect women to spend that time in their nursery which they, 'wise in their generation,' choose to spend at their glass; for this exertion of cunning is only an instinct of nature to enable them to obtain indirectly a little of that power of which they are unjustly denied a share; for, if women are not permitted to enjoy legitimate rights, they will render both men and themselves vicious, to obtain illicit privileges.	But until men pay attention to the duty of a father, it is useless to expect women to spend in the nursery the time that they, "wise in their generation," choose to spend at the mirror. This display of cunning is only an instinct of nature. It enables women to obtain indirectly a little of the power of which they are unjustly denied a share. For if women are not permitted to enjoy legitimate rights, they will make both men and themselves vicious in order to obtain illicit privileges.[4]
Ded.18	I wish, Sir, to set some investigations of this kind afloat in France; and should they lead to a confirmation of my principles, when your constitution is revised the Rights of Woman may be respected, if it be fully proved that reason calls for this respect, and loudly demands JUSTICE for one half of the human race.	I wish, Sir, to set some inquiries of this kind going in France. Should they confirm my principles, the Rights of Woman may be respected when your constitution is revised—if it is fully proved that reason calls for this respect and loudly demands JUSTICE for one half of the human race.
Ded.19	I am, Sir, Your's respectfully, M. W.	I am, Sir, Yours respectfully, M. W.

4 "Wise in their generation" echoes Luke 16:8.

ADVERTISEMENT

Wollstonecraft explains that this volume is only the first part of a longer planned work.

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Adv.1	When I began to write this work, I divided it into three parts, supposing that one volume would contain a full discussion of the arguments which seemed to me to rise naturally from a few simple principles; but fresh illustrations occurring as I advanced, I now present only the first part to the public.	When I began writing this work, I divided it into three parts. I supposed that one volume would contain a full discussion of the arguments that seemed to me to arise naturally from a few simple principles. But as I went on, new illustrations occurred to me, and I now present only the first part to the public.
Adv.2	Many subjects, however, which I have cursorily alluded to, call for particular investigation, especially the laws relative to women, and the consideration of their peculiar duties. These will furnish ample matter for a second volume, which in due time will be published, to elucidate some of the sentiments, and complete many of the sketches begun in the first.	Many subjects that I have only touched on briefly, however, call for detailed investigation, especially the laws relating to women and the consideration of their particular duties. These will provide ample material for a second volume, to be published in due course. That volume will clarify some of the views, and complete many of the sketches, begun in the first.[5]

INTRODUCTION

She blames a false education for women's weakness and sets out her aim of treating them as rational creatures.

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Intro.1	After considering the historic page, and viewing the living world with anxious solicitude, the most melancholy emotions of sorrowful indignation have depressed my spirits, and I have sighed when obliged to confess, that either nature has made a great difference between man and man, or that the civilization which has hitherto taken place in the world has been very partial.	I have studied the pages of history and watched the living world with anxious concern, and the most melancholy feelings of sorrowful indignation have weighed down my spirits. I have sighed when forced to admit one of two things. Either nature has made a great difference between one person and another, or the civilization that has so far taken place in the world has been very incomplete.
	I have turned over various books written on the subject of education, and patiently observed the conduct of parents and the management of schools; but what has been the result?—a profound conviction that the neglected education of my fellow-creatures is the grand source of the misery I deplore; and that women, in particular, are rendered weak and wretched by a variety of concurring causes, originating from one hasty conclusion.	I have looked through various books on education, and I have patiently observed the conduct of parents and the management of schools. And what has been the result?—a deep conviction that the neglected education of my fellow creatures is the great source of the misery I deplore. I am convinced, too, that women in particular are made weak and wretched by a variety of combined causes, all stemming from one hasty conclusion.
	The conduct and manners of women, in fact, evidently prove that their minds are not in a healthy state; for, like the flowers which are	The conduct and manners of women plainly prove, in fact, that their minds are not in a healthy state. Like flowers planted in too rich a soil, they

5 The second volume was never written.

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planted in too rich a soil, strength and usefulness are sacrificed to beauty; and the flaunting leaves, after having pleased a fastidious eye, fade, disregarded on the stalk, long before the season when they ought to have arrived at maturity.—One cause of this barren blooming I attribute to a false system of education, gathered from the books written on this subject by men who, considering females rather as women than human creatures, have been more anxious to make them alluring mistresses than rational wives; and the understanding of the sex has been so bubbled by this specious homage, that the civilized women of the present century, with a few exceptions, are only anxious to inspire love, when they ought to cherish a nobler ambition, and by their abilities and virtues exact respect.

Intro.2 In a treatise, therefore, on female rights and manners, the works which have been particularly written for their improvement must not be overlooked; especially when it is asserted, in direct terms, that the minds of women are enfeebled by false refinement; that the books of instruction, written by men of genius, have had the same tendency as more frivolous productions; and that, in the true style of *[Islam]*, they are only considered as females, and not as a part of the human species, when improvable reason is allowed to be the dignified distinction which raises men above the brute creation, and puts a natural sceptre in a feeble hand.

Intro.3 Yet, because I am a woman, I would not lead my readers to suppose that I mean violently to agitate the contested question respecting the equality or inferiority of the sex; but as the subject lies in my way, and I cannot pass it over without subjecting the main tendency of my reasoning to misconstruction, I shall stop a moment to deliver, in a few words, my opinion.—In the government of the physical world it is observable that the female, in general, is inferior to the male. The male pursues, the female yields—this is the law of nature; and it does not appear to be suspended or abrogated in favour of woman. This physical superiority cannot be denied—and it is a noble prerogative!

But not content with this natural pre-eminence, men endeavour to sink us still lower, merely to

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sacrifice strength and usefulness to beauty. The showy leaves please a fastidious eye for a while, then fade, neglected on the stalk, long before the season when they should have reached maturity.—I attribute one cause of this barren blooming to a false system of education. It is drawn from books on the subject written by men who see females as women rather than as human beings, and who have been more anxious to make them alluring mistresses than rational wives. Women's understanding has been so thoroughly duped by this plausible homage that the civilized women of the present century, with a few exceptions, care only about inspiring love. They ought instead to cherish a nobler ambition and command respect by their abilities and virtues.

In a treatise on the rights and manners of women, therefore, the works written specifically for their improvement must not be overlooked. This is especially so when it is asserted in plain terms that women's minds are weakened by false refinement. It is also asserted that the books of instruction written by men of genius have had the same tendency as more frivolous productions, and that, in the true style of Islam, they regard women only as females and not as part of the human species. Yet improvable reason is acknowledged to be the noble distinction that raises men above the animals and puts a natural scepter in a feeble hand.[6]

Yet I would not have my readers suppose that, because I am a woman, I mean to stir up violently the disputed question of whether women are equal or inferior. But the subject lies in my path, and I cannot pass it by without exposing the main drift of my reasoning to misinterpretation. So I shall pause for a moment to give my opinion in a few words.—In the government of the physical world, it can be observed that the female is, in general, inferior to the male. The male pursues, the female yields—this is the law of nature, and it does not seem to be suspended or repealed in woman's favor. This physical superiority cannot be denied—and it is a noble prerogative!

But men are not content with this natural pre-eminence. They try to sink us still lower, merely to

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render us alluring objects for a moment; and women, intoxicated by the adoration which men, under the influence of their senses, pay them, do not seek to obtain a durable interest in their hearts, or to become the friends of the fellow creatures who find amusement in their society.

Intro.4 I am aware of an obvious inference:—from every quarter have I heard exclamations against masculine women; but where are they to be found? If by this appellation men mean to inveigh against their ardour in hunting, shooting, and gaming, I shall most cordially join in the cry; but if it be against the imitation of manly virtues, or, more properly speaking, the attainment of those talents and virtues, the exercise of which ennobles the human character, and which raise females in the scale of animal being, when they are comprehensively termed mankind;—all those who view them with a philosophical eye must, I should think, wish with me, that they may every day grow more and more masculine.

Intro.5 This discussion naturally divides the subject. I shall first consider women in the grand light of human creatures, who, in common with men, are placed on this earth to unfold their faculties; and afterwards I shall more particularly point out their peculiar designation.

Intro.6 I wish also to steer clear of an error which many respectable writers have fallen into; for the instruction which has hitherto been addressed to women, has rather been applicable to *ladies*, if the little indirect advice, that is scattered through Sanford and Merton, be excepted; but, addressing my sex in a firmer tone, I pay particular attention to those in the middle class, because they appear to be in the most natural state. Perhaps the seeds of false refinement, immorality, and vanity, have ever been shed by the great. Weak, artificial beings, raised above the common wants and affections of their race, in a premature unnatural manner, undermine the very foundation of virtue, and spread corruption through the whole mass of society!

As a class of mankind they have the strongest claim to pity; the education of the rich tends to

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make us alluring objects for a moment. And women, intoxicated by the adoration that men pay them under the influence of their senses, do not try to win a lasting place in men's hearts. Nor do they try to become the friends of the fellow creatures who find amusement in their company.

I am aware of an obvious inference. From every quarter I have heard outcries against masculine women—but where are they to be found? If by this label men mean to attack women's enthusiasm for hunting, shooting, and gambling, I shall most heartily join in the outcry. But the outcry may be aimed instead at the imitation of manly virtues. More properly speaking, it may be aimed at the attainment of those talents and virtues whose exercise ennobles human character, and which raise females in the scale of animal being when they are included under the general term mankind. In that case, all who view women with a philosophical eye must, I think, wish with me that they may grow more and more masculine every day.

This discussion naturally divides the subject. I shall first consider women in the grand light of human beings who, like men, are placed on this earth to develop their faculties. Afterward I shall point out more specifically their particular role.

I also wish to steer clear of an error into which many respectable writers have fallen. The instruction addressed to women so far has applied rather to *ladies*, apart from the little indirect advice scattered through Sandford and Merton. Addressing my sex in a firmer tone, I pay particular attention to those in the middle class, because they seem to be in the most natural state. Perhaps the seeds of false refinement, immorality, and vanity have always been sown by the great. They are weak, artificial beings, raised above the common needs and affections of their kind in a premature, unnatural way, and they undermine the very foundation of virtue and spread corruption through the whole mass of society![7]

As a class of humanity, the great have the strongest claim to pity. The education of the rich

6 She repeats a common eighteenth-century European misconception that Islam held women to have no souls.
7 *The History of Sandford and Merton* (1783–89), a popular moral tale for children by Thomas Day.

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	render them vain and helpless, and the unfolding mind is not strengthened by the practice of those duties which dignify the human character.—They only live to amuse themselves, and by the same law which in nature invariably produces certain effects, they soon only afford barren amusement.	tends to make them vain and helpless, and their developing minds are not strengthened by practicing the duties that dignify human character.—They live only to amuse themselves. And by the same law that invariably produces certain effects in nature, they soon afford only barren amusement themselves.
Intro.7	But as I purpose taking a separate view of the different ranks of society, and of the moral character of women, in each, this hint is, for the present, sufficient; and I have only alluded to the subject, because it appears to me to be the very essence of an introduction to give a cursory account of the contents of the work it introduces.	But I intend to take a separate look at the different ranks of society, and at the moral character of women in each, so this hint is enough for now. I have only alluded to the subject because it seems to me the very essence of an introduction to give a brief account of the contents of the work it introduces.

STRENGTH OF MIND AND BODY

She urges women to seek strength of mind and body and to reject flattering talk of delicacy.

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Intro.8	My own sex, I hope, will excuse me, if I treat them like rational creatures, instead of flattering their *fascinating* graces, and viewing them as if they were in a state of perpetual childhood, unable to stand alone. I earnestly wish to point out in what true dignity and human happiness consists—I wish to persuade women to endeavour to acquire strength, both of mind and body, and to convince them that the soft phrases, susceptibility of heart, delicacy of sentiment, and refinement of taste, are almost synonimous with epithets of weakness, and that those beings who are only the objects of pity and that kind of love, which has been termed its sister, will soon become objects of contempt.	My own sex, I hope, will excuse me if I treat them like rational creatures. I will not flatter their *fascinating* graces, or view them as if they were in a state of perpetual childhood, unable to stand alone. I earnestly wish to point out what true dignity and human happiness consist in. I wish to persuade women to endeavor to acquire strength, both of mind and body. I wish to convince them that the soft phrases—susceptibility of heart, delicacy of sentiment, and refinement of taste—are almost synonyms for weakness. And I wish to convince them that beings who are only the objects of pity, and of that kind of love which has been called its sister, will soon become objects of contempt.
Intro.9	Dismissing then those pretty feminine phrases, which the men condescendingly use to soften our slavish dependence, and despising that weak elegancy of mind, exquisite sensibility, and sweet docility of manners, supposed to be the sexual characteristics of the weaker vessel, I wish to shew that elegance is inferior to virtue, that the first object of laudable ambition is to obtain a character as a human being, regardless of the distinction of sex; and that secondary views should be brought to this simple touchstone.	Let us dismiss, then, those pretty feminine phrases that men condescendingly use to soften our slavish dependence. Let us despise the weak elegance of mind, exquisite sensibility, and sweet docility of manners supposed to be the sexual characteristics of the weaker vessel. I wish to show that elegance is inferior to virtue, and that the first object of praiseworthy ambition is to achieve a character as a human being, regardless of the distinction of sex. All secondary aims should be tested against this simple touchstone.[8]

8 "Sensibility" was the eighteenth-century term for refined emotional susceptibility, the capacity for delicate feeling. "The weaker vessel" is from 1 Peter 3:7.

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Intro.10 This is a rough sketch of my plan; and should I express my conviction with the energetic emotions that I feel whenever I think of the subject, the dictates of experience and reflection will be felt by some of my readers. Animated by this important object, I shall disdain to cull my phrases or polish my style;—I aim at being useful, and sincerity will render me unaffected; for, wishing rather to persuade by the force of my arguments, than dazzle by the elegance of my language, I shall not waste my time in rounding periods, nor in fabricating the turgid bombast of artificial feelings, which, coming from the head, never reach the heart.—I shall be employed about things, not words!—and, anxious to render my sex more respectable members of society, I shall try to avoid that flowery diction which has slided from essays into novels, and from novels into familiar letters and conversation.	This is a rough sketch of my plan. I may express my conviction with the strong emotions I feel whenever I think of the subject. If I do, some of my readers will feel the force of what experience and reflection have taught me. Driven by this important aim, I shall scorn to pick my phrases or polish my style. I aim to be useful, and sincerity will keep me unaffected. I would rather persuade by the force of my arguments than dazzle by the elegance of my language. So I shall not waste my time rounding off sentences, or manufacturing the swollen bombast of artificial feelings, which come from the head and never reach the heart.—I shall deal with things, not words! I am anxious to make my sex more respectable members of society, and so I shall try to avoid the flowery language that has slid from essays into novels, and from novels into personal letters and conversation.
Intro.11 These pretty nothings—these caricatures of the real beauty of sensibility, dropping glibly from the tongue, vitiate the taste, and create a kind of sickly delicacy that turns away from simple unadorned truth; and a deluge of false sentiments and overstretched feelings, stifling the natural emotions of the heart, render the domestic pleasures insipid, that ought to sweeten the exercise of those severe duties, which educate a rational and immortal being for a nobler field of action.	These pretty nothings slip glibly off the tongue, and they are caricatures of the real beauty of sensibility. They corrupt taste and create a sickly delicacy that turns away from simple, unadorned truth. A flood of false sentiments and overstrained feelings stifles the natural emotions of the heart. It makes insipid the domestic pleasures that ought to sweeten the performance of those severe duties which educate a rational and immortal being for a nobler field of action.
Intro.12 The education of women has, of late, been more attended to than formerly; yet they are still reckoned a frivolous sex, and ridiculed or pitied by the writers who endeavor by satire or instruction to improve them. It is acknowledged that they spend many of the first years of their lives in acquiring a smattering of accomplishments: meanwhile strength of body and mind are sacrificed to libertine notions of beauty, to the desire of establishing themselves,—the only way women can rise in the world,—by marriage. And this desire making mere animals of them, when they marry they act as such children may be expected to act:—they dress; they paint, and nickname God's creatures.—Surely these weak beings are only fit for a seraglio!—Can they govern	Women's education has lately received more attention than it used to. Yet women are still considered a frivolous sex, and they are ridiculed or pitied by the writers who try to improve them by satire or instruction. It is admitted that they spend many of their early years acquiring a smattering of accomplishments. Meanwhile, strength of body and mind is sacrificed to libertine notions of beauty and to the desire to settle themselves by marriage —the only way women can rise in the world. This desire makes mere animals of them, and when they marry they act as such children may be expected to act: they dress, they paint, and they nickname God's creatures.—Surely these weak beings are fit only for a harem!—Can they run a

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a family, or take care of the poor babes whom they bring into the world?

Intro.13 If then it can be fairly deduced from the present conduct of the sex, from the prevalent fondness for pleasure which takes place of ambition and those nobler passions that open and enlarge the soul; that the instruction which women have received has only tended, with the constitution of civil society, to render them insignificant objects of desire—mere propagators of fools!—if it can be proved that in aiming to accomplish them, without cultivating their understandings, they are taken out of their sphere of duties, and made ridiculous and useless when the short-lived bloom of beauty is over[1], I presume that *rational* men will excuse me for endeavouring to persuade them to become more masculine and respectable.

10

Intro.14 Indeed the word masculine is only a bugbear: there is little reason to fear that women will acquire too much courage or fortitude; for their apparent inferiority with respect to bodily strength, must render them, in some degree, dependent on men in the various relations of life; but why should it be increased by prejudices that give a sex to virtue, and confound simple truths with sensual reveries?

Intro.15 Women are, in fact, so much degraded by mistaken notions of female excellence, that I do not mean to add a paradox when I assert, that this artificial weakness produces a propensity to tyrannize, and gives birth to cunning, the natural opponent of strength, which leads them to play off those contemptible infantine airs that undermine esteem even whilst they excite desire. Do not foster these prejudices, and they will naturally fall into their subordinate, yet respectable station, in life.

Intro.16 It seems scarcely necessary to say, that I now speak of the sex in general. Many individuals have more sense than their male relatives; and, as nothing preponderates where there is a constant

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household, or take care of the poor babies they bring into the world?[9]

Suppose, then, that one thing can be fairly concluded from the present conduct of women, and from the prevailing love of pleasure that takes the place of ambition and of the nobler passions that open and enlarge the soul. Suppose it follows that the instruction women have received, together with the constitution of civil society, has only tended to make them insignificant objects of desire—mere breeders of fools! Suppose it can be proved that by trying to give them accomplishments without cultivating their understanding, we take them out of their sphere of duties and make them ridiculous and useless once the short-lived bloom of beauty is over[1]. Then I presume that *rational* men will excuse me for trying to persuade women to become more masculine and respectable.

Indeed, the word masculine is only a bogeyman. There is little reason to fear that women will acquire too much courage or fortitude. Their apparent inferiority in bodily strength must make them dependent on men to some degree in the various relations of life. But why should that dependence be increased by prejudices that give a sex to virtue, and that confuse simple truths with sensual fantasies?

Women are in fact so degraded by mistaken notions of female excellence that I do not mean to add a paradox when I say that this artificial weakness produces a tendency to tyrannize. It also gives birth to cunning, the natural opponent of strength. And cunning leads them to put on those contemptible childish airs that undermine esteem even while they arouse desire. Do not foster these prejudices, and women will naturally fall into their subordinate, yet respectable, station in life.

It hardly seems necessary to say that I am speaking here of women in general. Many individual women have more sense than their male relatives. Where there is a constant struggle for balance,

9 "Nickname God's creatures" echoes Hamlet's rebuke to Ophelia (*Hamlet* 3.1).

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[1] A lively writer, I cannot recollect his name, asks what business women turned of forty have to do in the world?

[1] A lively writer—I cannot remember his name—asks what business women over forty have in the world.

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struggle for an equilibrium, without it has naturally more gravity, some women govern their husbands without degrading themselves, because intellect will always govern.

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nothing outweighs the other side unless it naturally has more weight. So some women govern their husbands without degrading themselves, because intellect will always govern.

Chapter I: The Rights and Involved Duties of Mankind Considered

Reason, virtue and knowledge are what raise human beings; hereditary rank, monarchy, the army and the clergy corrupt them.

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1.1	In the present state of society it appears necessary to go back to first principles in search of the most simple truths, and to dispute with some prevailing prejudice every inch of ground. To clear my way, I must be allowed to ask some plain questions, and the answers will probably appear as unequivocal as the axioms on which reasoning is built; though, when entangled with various motives of action, they are formally contradicted, either by the words or conduct of men.	In the present state of society it seems necessary to go back to first principles in search of the simplest truths, and to contest every inch of ground with some prevailing prejudice. To clear my way, I must be allowed to ask a few plain questions. The answers will probably seem as unambiguous as the axioms on which reasoning is built. Yet when they become entangled with various motives for action, they are flatly contradicted, either by men's words or by their conduct.
1.2	In what does man's pre-eminence over the brute creation consist? The answer is as clear as that a half is less than the whole; in Reason.	What does man's superiority over the animals consist in? The answer is as clear as that a half is less than the whole: in Reason.
1.3	What acquirement exalts one being above another? Virtue; we spontaneously reply.	What acquirement raises one being above another? Virtue, we reply without hesitation.
1.4	For what purpose were the passions implanted? That man by struggling with them might attain a degree of knowledge denied to the brutes; whispers Experience.	For what purpose were the passions implanted? So that man, by struggling with them, might attain a degree of knowledge denied to the animals, whispers Experience.
1.5	Consequently the perfection of our nature and capability of happiness, must be estimated by the degree of reason, virtue, and knowledge, that distinguish the individual, and direct the laws which bind society: and that from the exercise of reason, knowledge and virtue naturally flow, is equally undeniable, if mankind be viewed collectively.	Consequently, the perfection of our nature and our capacity for happiness must be measured by the degree of reason, virtue, and knowledge that distinguish the individual and direct the laws that bind society. And if humanity is viewed collectively, it is equally undeniable that knowledge and virtue flow naturally from the exercise of reason.
1.6	The rights and duties of man thus simplified, it seems almost impertinent to attempt to illustrate truths that appear so incontrovertible; yet such deeply rooted prejudices have clouded reason, and such spurious qualities have assumed the name of virtues, that it is necessary to pursue the course of reason as it has been perplexed and involved in error, by various adventitious	With the rights and duties of man thus simplified, it seems almost impertinent to try to illustrate truths that appear so indisputable. Yet such deeply rooted prejudices have clouded reason, and such counterfeit qualities have taken the name of virtues, that it is necessary to follow the course of reason. We must follow it as various incidental circumstances have confused it and entangled it in

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	circumstances, comparing the simple axiom with casual deviations.	error, comparing the simple axiom with chance deviations from it.
1.7	Men, in general, seem to employ their reason to justify prejudices, which they have imbibed, they cannot trace how, rather than to root them out. The mind must be strong that resolutely forms its own principles; for a kind of intellectual cowardice prevails which makes many men shrink from the task, or only do it by halves. Yet the imperfect conclusions thus drawn, are frequently very plausible, because they are built on partial experience, on just, though narrow, views.	Men in general seem to use their reason to justify prejudices they have absorbed, they cannot tell how, rather than to root them out. It takes a strong mind to form its own principles resolutely. A kind of intellectual cowardice prevails, which makes many men shrink from the task or do it only halfway. Yet the imperfect conclusions drawn in this way are often very plausible, because they are built on partial experience, on views that are accurate, though narrow.
1.8	Going back to first principles, vice skulks, with all its native deformity, from close investigation; but a set of shallow reasoners are always exclaiming that these arguments prove too much, and that a measure rotten at the core may be expedient. Thus expediency is continually contrasted with simple principles, till truth is lost in a mist of words, virtue, in forms, and knowledge rendered a sounding nothing, by the specious prejudices that assume its name.	When we go back to first principles, vice slinks away from close investigation in all its native ugliness. But a set of shallow reasoners are always exclaiming that such arguments prove too much, and that a measure rotten at the core may still be expedient. So expediency is continually set against simple principles, until truth is lost in a fog of words and virtue in formalities. And knowledge is reduced to a resounding nothing by the plausible prejudices that take its name.
1.9	That the society is formed in the wisest manner, whose constitution is founded on the nature of man, strikes, in the abstract, every thinking being so forcibly, that it looks like presumption to endeavour to bring forward proofs; though proof must be brought, or the strong hold of prescription will never be forced by reason; yet to urge prescription as an argument to justify the depriving men (or women) of their natural rights, is one of the absurd sophisms which daily insult common sense.	In the abstract, every thinking being is forcibly struck by the idea that the wisest society is the one whose constitution is founded on the nature of man. It is so obvious that it looks like presumption to try to offer proofs. Yet proof must be offered, or reason will never storm the stronghold of prescription. And to cite prescription as an argument for depriving men (or women) of their natural rights is one of the absurd sophistries that insult common sense every day.
1.10	The civilization of the bulk of the people of Europe is very partial; nay, it may be made a question, whether they have acquired any virtues in exchange for innocence, equivalent to the misery produced by the vices that have been plastered over unsightly ignorance, and the freedom which has been bartered for splendid slavery. The desire of dazzling by riches, the most certain pre-eminence that man can obtain, the pleasure of commanding flattering sycophants, and many other complicated low calculations of doting self-love, have all contributed to overwhelm the mass of mankind, and make liberty a convenient handle for mock patriotism.	The civilization of most of the people of Europe is very incomplete. Indeed, one may question whether they have acquired any virtues, in exchange for their innocence, that make up for the misery produced by two losses. One is the vices that have been plastered over their unsightly ignorance, and the other is the freedom they have bartered for splendid slavery. Several motives have all helped to crush the mass of humanity and make liberty a convenient handle for sham patriotism. There is the desire to dazzle by wealth, the surest pre-eminence a man can obtain. There is the pleasure of commanding flattering syco-

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		phants. And there are many other complicated, low calculations of doting self-love.
	For whilst rank and titles are held of the utmost importance, before which Genius "must hide its diminished head," it is, with a few exceptions, very unfortunate for a nation when a man of abilities, without rank or property, pushes himself forward to notice.—Alas! what unheard of misery have thousands suffered to purchase a cardinal's hat for an intriguing obscure adventurer, who longed to be ranked with princes, or lord it over them by seizing the triple crown!	Rank and titles are held to be of the utmost importance, and before them Genius "must hide its diminished head." So long as this is true, it is, with a few exceptions, very unfortunate for a nation when a man of ability, without rank or property, pushes himself forward into notice.—Alas! What unheard-of misery thousands have suffered to buy a cardinal's hat for some obscure, scheming adventurer who longed to be ranked with princes, or to lord it over them by seizing the triple crown![1]
1.11	Such, indeed, has been the wretchedness that has flowed from hereditary honours, riches, and monarchy, that men of lively sensibility have almost uttered blasphemy in order to justify the dispensations of providence. Man has been held out as independent of his power who made him, or as a lawless planet darting from its orbit to steal the celestial fire of reason; and the vengeance of heaven, lurking in the subtile flame, sufficiently punished his temerity, by introducing evil into the world.	Such, indeed, has been the wretchedness flowing from hereditary honors, riches, and monarchy that men of lively sensibility have almost uttered blasphemy in order to justify the ways of providence. Man has been depicted as independent of the power that made him, or as a lawless planet shooting from its orbit to steal the celestial fire of reason. And the vengeance of heaven, lurking in the subtle flame, has amply punished his rashness by bringing evil into the world.

ROUSSEAU AND THE STATE OF NATURE

She rejects Rousseau's claim that humans were better off in a state of nature than in civilization.

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1.12	Impressed by this view of the misery and disorder which pervaded society, and fatigued with jostling against artificial fools, Rousseau became enamoured of solitude, and, being at the same time an optimist, he labours with uncommon eloquence to prove that man was naturally a solitary animal. Misled by his respect for the goodness of God, who certainly—for what man of sense and feeling can doubt it!—gave life only to communicate happiness, he considers evil as positive, and the work of man; not aware that he was exalting one attribute at the expense of another, equally necessary to divine perfection.	Struck by this view of the misery and disorder that pervaded society, and tired of jostling against artificial fools, Rousseau fell in love with solitude. Being at the same time an optimist, he labors with uncommon eloquence to prove that man was naturally a solitary animal. He was misled by his respect for the goodness of God, who certainly—for what man of sense and feeling can doubt it!—gave life only to communicate happiness. So he regards evil as something positive, and as the work of man. He does not realize that he was exalting one attribute of God at the expense of another, equally necessary to divine perfection.[2]
1.13	Reared on a false hypothesis his arguments in favour of a state of nature are plausible, but unsound. I say unsound; for to assert that a state of nature is preferable to civilization, in all its	Built on a false hypothesis, his arguments in favor of a state of nature are plausible but unsound. I say unsound, because to assert that a state of nature is preferable to civilization in all its pos-

1 The quotation adapts Milton, *Paradise Lost* 4.35. The "triple crown" is the papal tiara.
2 Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), Genevan-born philosopher and novelist.

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possible perfection, is, in other words, to arraign supreme wisdom; and the paradoxical exclamation, that God has made all things right, and that evil has been introduced by the creature, whom he formed, knowing what he formed, is as unphilosophical as impious.

1.14 When that wise Being who created us and placed us here, saw the fair idea, he willed, by allowing it to be so, that the passions should unfold our reason, because he could see that present evil would produce future good. Could the helpless creature whom he called from nothing break loose from his providence, and boldly learn to know good by practising evil, without his permission? No.—How could that energetic advocate for immortality argue so inconsistently?

Had mankind remained for ever in the brutal state of nature, which even his magic pen cannot paint as a state in which a single virtue took root, it would have been clear, though not to the sensitive unreflecting wanderer, that man was born to run the circle of life and death, and adorn God's garden for some purpose which could not easily be reconciled with his attributes.

1.15 But, if, to crown the whole, there were to be rational creatures produced, allowed to rise in excellence by the exercise of powers implanted for that purpose; if benignity itself thought fit to call into existence a creature above the brutes[1], who could think and improve himself, why should that inestimable gift, for a gift it was, if man was so created as to have a capacity to rise above the state in which sensation produced brutal ease, be called, in direct terms, a curse?

A curse it might be reckoned, if all our existence was bounded by our continuance in this world; for why should the gracious fountain of life give us passions, and the power of reflecting, only to imbitter our days and inspire us with mistaken notions of dignity? Why should he lead us from love of ourselves to the sublime emotions which the discovery of his wisdom and goodness excites, if these feelings were not set in motion to improve our nature, of which they make a part[2], and render us capable of enjoying a more godlike

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sible perfection is, in other words, to put supreme wisdom on trial. His paradoxical exclamation claims that God made all things right, and that evil was introduced by the creature he formed, knowing what he formed. It is as unphilosophical as it is impious.[3]

When that wise Being who created us and placed us here saw the fair idea, he willed, by allowing it to be so, that the passions should unfold our reason, because he could see that present evil would produce future good. Could the helpless creature he called out of nothing break loose from his providence, and boldly learn to know good by practicing evil, without his permission? No.—How could that energetic champion of immortality argue so inconsistently?

Suppose humanity had remained forever in the brutish state of nature, which even his magic pen cannot paint as a state in which a single virtue took root. It would then have been clear that man was born to run the circle of life and death, and to adorn God's garden for some purpose hard to reconcile with God's attributes. It would have been clear to everyone except the sensitive, unreflecting wanderer.

But suppose that, to crown the whole, rational creatures were to be produced, allowed to rise in excellence by exercising powers implanted for that purpose. Suppose that benevolence itself saw fit to call into existence a creature above the animals[1], who could think and improve himself. Why, then, should that priceless gift be called, in so many words, a curse? For a gift it was, if man was so created as to have the capacity to rise above the state in which sensation produced brutish ease.

It might be considered a curse if our whole existence were bounded by our time in this world. For why should the gracious fountain of life give us passions and the power of reflection only to embitter our days and fill us with mistaken notions of dignity? Why should he lead us from love of ourselves to the sublime emotions that the discovery of his wisdom and goodness arouses, if these feelings were not set in motion for a purpose? They are meant to improve our nature, of which they are a part[2], and to make us capable of enjoy-

3 *Emile* opens: "Everything is good as it leaves the hands of the Author of things; everything degenerates in the hands of man."

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portion of happiness? Firmly persuaded that no evil exists in the world that God did not design to take place, I build my belief on the perfection of God.

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1.16 Rousseau exerts himself to prove that all *was* right originally: a crowd of authors that all *is* now right: and I, that all will *be* right.

1.17 But, true to his first position, next to a state of nature, Rousseau celebrates barbarism, and, apostrophizing the shade of Fabricius, he forgets that, in conquering the world, the Romans never dreamed of establishing their own liberty on a firm basis, or of extending the reign of virtue. Eager to support his system, he stigmatizes, as vicious, every effort of genius; and, uttering the apotheosis of *[pre-civilized]* virtues, he exalts those to demi-gods, who were scarcely human—the brutal Spartans, who, in defiance of justice and gratitude, sacrificed, in cold blood, the slaves who had shewn themselves men to rescue their oppressors.

1.18 Disgusted with artificial manners and virtues, the citizen of Geneva, instead of properly sifting the subject, threw away the wheat with the chaff, without waiting to inquire whether the evils which his ardent soul turned from indignantly, were the consequence of civilization or the vestiges of barbarism. He saw vice trampling on virtue, and the semblance of goodness taking place of the reality; he saw talents bent by power to sinister purposes, and never thought of tracing

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ing a more godlike share of happiness. I am firmly convinced that no evil exists in the world that God did not intend to take place, and I build my belief on the perfection of God.

Rousseau strives to prove that all *was* right originally; a crowd of authors, that all *is* right now; and I, that all will *be* right.[6]

But, true to his first position, Rousseau celebrates barbarism as the next best thing to a state of nature. Addressing the ghost of Fabricius, he forgets that the Romans, in conquering the world, never dreamed of establishing their own liberty on a firm basis or of extending the reign of virtue. Eager to support his system, he brands every effort of genius as vicious. And, deifying pre-civilized virtues, he raises to demigods men who were scarcely human—the brutal Spartans. In defiance of justice and gratitude, they massacred in cold blood the slaves who had proved themselves men by rescuing their oppressors.[7]

Disgusted with artificial manners and virtues, the citizen of Geneva did not properly sift the subject. Instead he threw out the wheat with the chaff, without stopping to ask whether the evils his ardent soul turned from in indignation were the consequence of civilization or the remnants of barbarism. He saw vice trampling on virtue, and the appearance of goodness taking the place of the reality. He saw talents bent by power to sinister purposes. Yet he never thought of tracing this gi-

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[1] Contrary to the opinion of anatomists, who argue by analogy from the formation of the teeth, stomach, and intestines, Rousseau will not allow a man to be a carnivorous animal. And, carried away from nature by a love of system, he disputes whether man be a gregarious animal, though the long and helpless state of infancy seems to point him out as particularly impelled to pair.

[1] Anatomists argue by analogy from the structure of the teeth, stomach, and intestines that man is a carnivorous animal, but Rousseau will not allow it. And, carried away from nature by his love of system, he disputes whether man is a gregarious animal at all. Yet the long and helpless state of infancy seems to mark man out as especially driven to pair.

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[2] What would you say to a mechanic whom you had desired to make a watch to point out the hour of the day, if, to shew his ingenuity, he added wheels to make it a repeater, &c. that perplexed the simple mechanism; should he urge, to excuse himself—had you not touched a certain spring, you would have known nothing of the matter, and that he should have amused himself by making *an experiment* without doing you any harm: would you not retort fairly upon him, by insisting that if he had not added those needless wheels and springs, the accident could not have happened?

[2] Suppose you had asked a craftsman to make a watch that would tell you the time of day. To show off his ingenuity, he added wheels to make it a repeater, and so on, which complicated the simple mechanism. What would you say to him if he offered an excuse? He might say that if you had not touched a certain spring you would never have known anything about it, and that he had only amused himself by making *an experiment* that did you no harm. Would you not fairly retort that if he had not added those needless wheels and springs, the accident could not have happened?

6 The optimists' motto was Alexander Pope's "Whatever is, is right" (*An Essay on Man*, 1733–34).

7 Rousseau invokes the Roman hero Fabricius in his *Discourse on the Sciences and Arts* (1750). The Spartans secretly killed about two thousand helots who had fought bravely for them (Thucydides 4.80).

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the gigantic mischief up to arbitrary power, up to the hereditary distinctions that clash with the mental superiority that naturally raises a man above his fellows.	gantic mischief back to arbitrary power, back to the hereditary distinctions that clash with the mental superiority that naturally raises one man above his fellows.
He did not perceive that regal power, in a few generations, introduces *[mental incapacity]* into the noble stem, and holds out baits to render thousands idle and vicious.	He did not see that royal power, within a few generations, brings mental incapacity into the noble line, and holds out bait that makes thousands idle and vicious.

THE CORRUPTION OF RANK

She argues that monarchy, standing armies and the church hierarchy corrupt those who live within them.

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1.19 Nothing can set the regal character in a more contemptible point of view, than the various crimes that have elevated men to the supreme dignity.—Vile intrigues, unnatural crimes, and every vice that degrades our nature, have been the steps to this distinguished eminence; yet millions of men have supinely allowed the nerveless limbs of the posterity of such rapacious prowlers to rest quietly on their ensanguined thrones[3].	Nothing can show the royal character in a more contemptible light than the various crimes that have raised men to the supreme dignity.—Vile intrigues, unnatural crimes, and every vice that degrades our nature have been the steps to this distinguished height. Yet millions of men have passively allowed the feeble limbs of the descendants of such rapacious prowlers to rest quietly on their bloodstained thrones[3].
9	
1.20 What but a pestilential vapour can hover over society when its chief director is only instructed in the invention of crimes, or the stupid routine of childish ceremonies? Will men never be wise?—will they never cease to expect corn from tares, and figs from thistles?	What but a poisonous vapor can hang over society when its chief director has been taught nothing but how to invent crimes, or the stupid routine of childish ceremonies? Will men never be wise?—will they never stop expecting wheat from tares, and figs from thistles?
1.21 It is impossible for any man, when the most favourable circumstances concur, to acquire sufficient knowledge and strength of mind to discharge the duties of a king, entrusted with uncontrouled power; how then must they be violated when his very elevation is an insuperable bar to the attainment of either	Even under the most favorable circumstances, no man can acquire enough knowledge and strength of mind to fulfill the duties of a king entrusted with unchecked power. How badly, then, must those duties be violated when his very elevation is an insurmountable barrier to acquiring either wisdom or virtue! His feelings as a man are all

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[3] Could there be a greater insult offered to the rights of man than the beds of justice in France, when an infant was made the organ of the detestable Dubois?

[3] Could any greater insult be offered to the rights of man than the beds of justice in France, when an infant was made the mouthpiece of the detestable Dubois?[8]

8 A *lit de justice* was a ceremonial session at which the king forced the Paris Parlement to register his edicts. Such sessions were held under the boy-king Louis XV, while Cardinal Guillaume Dubois (1656–1723) held power.

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wisdom or virtue; when all the feelings of a man are stifled by flattery, and reflection shut out by pleasure! Surely it is madness to make the fate of thousands depend on the caprice of a weak fellow creature, whose very station sinks him *necessarily* below the meanest of his subjects!

But one power should not be thrown down to exalt another—for all power intoxicates weak man; and its abuse proves, that the more equality there is established among men, the more virtue and happiness will reign in society. But this, and any similar maxim deduced from simple reason, raises an outcry—the church or the state is in danger, if faith in the wisdom of antiquity is not implicit; and they who, roused by the sight of human calamity, dare to attack human authority, are reviled as despisers of God, and enemies of man.

These are bitter calumnies, yet they reached one of the best of men[4], whose ashes still preach peace, and whose memory demands a respectful pause, when subjects are discussed that lay so near his heart.

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1.22 After attacking the sacred majesty of Kings, I shall scarcely excite surprise by adding my firm persuasion that every profession, in which great subordination of rank constitutes its power, is highly injurious to morality.

1.23 A standing army, for instance, is incompatible with freedom; because subordination and rigour are the very sinews of military discipline; and despotism is necessary to give vigour to enterprizes that one will directs. A spirit inspired by romantic notions of honour, a kind of morality founded on the fashion of the age, can only be felt by a few officers, whilst the main body must be moved by command, like the waves of the sea; for the strong wind of authority pushes the crowd of subalterns forward, they scarcely know or care why, with headlong fury.

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stifled by flattery, and pleasure shuts out reflection. Surely it is madness to make the fate of thousands depend on the whims of a weak fellow creature whose very position sinks him *necessarily* below the lowest of his subjects!

But one power should not be thrown down only to exalt another, for all power intoxicates weak man. Its abuse proves that the more equality is established among men, the more virtue and happiness will reign in society. Yet this maxim, and any like it drawn from simple reason, raises an outcry. The church or the state is in danger, we are told, if faith in the wisdom of antiquity is not unquestioning. And those who are roused by the sight of human suffering to attack human authority are reviled as despisers of God and enemies of man.

These are bitter slanders, yet they reached one of the best of men[4]. His ashes still preach peace, and his memory calls for a respectful pause whenever we discuss subjects that lay so close to his heart.

After attacking the sacred majesty of kings, I shall hardly cause surprise by adding my firm conviction that every profession whose power rests on a strict hierarchy of rank is highly damaging to morality.

A standing army, for instance, is incompatible with freedom. Subordination and rigor are the very sinews of military discipline, and despotism is needed to give vigor to enterprises that a single will directs. Only a few officers can feel a spirit inspired by romantic notions of honor, a kind of morality founded on the fashion of the age. The main body must be moved by command, like the waves of the sea. The strong wind of authority drives the crowd of subordinates forward with

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[4] Dr. Price. | [4] Dr. Price.[10]

10 Richard Price (1723–1791), Dissenting minister and Wollstonecraft's friend. His 1789 sermon welcoming the French Revolution provoked Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

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headlong fury, though they scarcely know or care why.

1.24 Besides, nothing can be so prejudicial to the morals of the inhabitants of country towns as the occasional residence of a set of idle superficial young men, whose only occupation is gallantry, and whose polished manners render vice more dangerous, by concealing its deformity under gay ornamental drapery. An air of fashion, which is but a badge of slavery, and proves that the soul has not a strong individual character, awes simple country people into an imitation of the vices, when they cannot catch the slippery graces, of politeness. Every corps is a chain of despots, who, submitting and tyrannizing without exercising their reason, become dead weights of vice and folly on the community.

Besides, nothing can do more harm to the morals of people in country towns than the occasional stationing among them of a set of idle, superficial young men whose only occupation is gallantry. Their polished manners make vice more dangerous by hiding its ugliness under gay, ornamental drapery. An air of fashion is only a badge of slavery, and it proves that the soul has no strong individual character. Yet it awes simple country people into imitating the vices of politeness, even when they cannot catch its slippery graces. Every regiment is a chain of despots. Submitting and tyrannizing without exercising their reason, they become dead weights of vice and folly on the community.

A man of rank or fortune, sure of rising by interest, has nothing to do but to pursue some extravagant freak; whilst the needy *gentleman*, who is to rise, as the phrase turns, by his merit, becomes a servile parasite or vile pander.

A man of rank or fortune, sure of rising through connections, has nothing to do but pursue some extravagant whim. Meanwhile the needy *gentleman*, who is to rise, as the phrase goes, by his merit, becomes a servile parasite or a vile pimp.

1.25 Sailors, the naval gentlemen, come under the same description, only their vices assume a different and a grosser cast. They are more positively indolent, when not discharging the ceremonials of their station; whilst the insignificant fluttering of soldiers may be termed active idleness. More confined to the society of men, the former acquire a fondness for humour and mischievous tricks; whilst the latter, mixing frequently with well-bred women, catch a sentimental cant.—But mind is equally out of the question, whether they indulge the horse-laugh, or polite simper.

Sailors, the naval gentlemen, fit the same description, except that their vices take a different and coarser form. They are more thoroughly idle when they are not performing the ceremonial duties of their rank, while the pointless fluttering of soldiers might be called active idleness. Confined more to the company of men, sailors acquire a taste for crude humor and practical jokes; soldiers, who mix often with well-bred women, pick up a sentimental jargon.—But mind is equally out of the question, whether they indulge in the horse-laugh or the polite simper.

1.26 May I be allowed to extend the comparison to a profession where more mind is certainly to be found; for the clergy have superior opportunities of improvement, tho' subordination almost equally cramps their faculties? The blind submission imposed at college to forms of belief serves as a novitiate to the curate, who must obsequiously respect the opinion of his rector or patron, if he means to rise in his profession. Perhaps there cannot be a more forcible contrast than between the servile dependent gait of a poor curate and the courtly mien of a bishop. And the respect and contempt they inspire render the

May I extend the comparison to a profession where more mind is certainly to be found? The clergy have better opportunities for improvement, though subordination cramps their faculties almost as much. The blind submission to set forms of belief demanded at university serves as an apprenticeship for the curate, who must obsequiously defer to the opinions of his rector or patron if he means to rise in his profession. There may be no more striking contrast than the one between the servile, dependent walk of a poor curate and the courtly bearing of a bishop. And the respect and the contempt they inspire make both

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discharge of their separate functions equally useless.	equally useless in performing their separate functions.
1.27 It is of great importance to observe that the character of every man is, in some degree, formed by his profession. A man of sense may only have a cast of countenance that wears off as you trace his individuality, whilst the weak, common man has scarcely ever any character, but what belongs to the body; at least, all his opinions have been so steeped in the vat consecrated by authority, that the faint spirit which the grape of his own vine yields cannot be distinguished.	It is very important to observe that every man's character is, to some degree, formed by his profession. A man of sense may show only a certain professional cast of features, which fades as you come to know him as an individual. The weak, ordinary man, by contrast, hardly ever has any character except that of the body he belongs to. At least, all his opinions have been so steeped in the vat consecrated by authority that the faint spirit yielded by the grape of his own vine can no longer be told apart.
1.28 Society, therefore, as it becomes more enlightened, should be very careful not to establish bodies of men who must necessarily be made foolish or vicious by the very constitution of their profession.	Society, therefore, as it becomes more enlightened, should take great care not to establish bodies of men who must necessarily be made foolish or vicious by the very constitution of their profession.
1.29 In the infancy of society, when men were just emerging out of barbarism, chiefs and priests, touching the most powerful springs of *[early human]* conduct, hope and fear, must have had unbounded sway. An aristocracy, of course, is naturally the first form of government. But, clashing interests soon losing their equipoise, a monarchy and hierarchy break out of the confusion of ambitious struggles, and the foundation of both is secured by feudal tenures. This appears to be the origin of monarchical and priestly power, and the dawn of civilization.	In the infancy of society, when men were just emerging from barbarism, chiefs and priests, who worked the most powerful springs of early human conduct, hope and fear, must have had unlimited sway. An aristocracy, then, is naturally the first form of government. But clashing interests soon lose their balance, and a monarchy and a priestly hierarchy break out of the confusion of ambitious struggles, with the foundation of both secured by feudal land tenure. This seems to be the origin of monarchical and priestly power, and the dawn of civilization.
But such combustible materials cannot long be pent up; and, getting vent in foreign wars and intestine insurrections the people acquire some power in the tumult, which obliges their rulers to gloss over their oppression with a shew of right. Thus, as wars, agriculture, commerce, and literature, expand the mind, despots are compelled, to make covert corruption hold fast the power which was formerly snatched by open force[5]. And this baneful lurking gangrene is most quickly spread by luxury and superstition, the sure dregs of ambition. The indolent puppet of a court first becomes a luxurious monster, or fastidious sensualist, and then makes the contagion which his unnatural state spread, the instrument of tyranny.	But such combustible material cannot stay bottled up for long. It finds an outlet in foreign wars and internal uprisings, and the people gain some power in the tumult, which forces their rulers to gloss over their oppression with a show of right. So, as war, agriculture, commerce and literature expand the mind, despots are compelled to use covert corruption to hold on to the power they once seized by open force[5]. And this deadly, lurking gangrene is spread fastest by luxury and superstition, the sure dregs of ambition. The idle puppet of a court first becomes a pampered monster or a fastidious sensualist. He then turns the contagion that his unnatural condition has spread into an instrument of tyranny.

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It is the pestiferous purple which renders the progress of civilization a curse, and warps the understanding, till men of sensibility doubt whether the expansion of intellect produces a greater portion of happiness or misery. But the nature of the poison points out the antidote; and had Rousseau mounted one step higher in his investigation, or could his eye have pierced through the foggy atmosphere, which he almost disdained to breathe, his active mind would have darted forward to contemplate the perfection of man in the establishment of true civilization, instead of taking his ferocious flight back to the night of sensual ignorance.

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1.30 It is this poisonous purple that makes the progress of civilization a curse and warps the understanding, until people of sensibility doubt whether the expansion of the intellect produces more happiness or more misery. But the nature of the poison points to the antidote. Suppose Rousseau had climbed one step higher in his investigation, or his eye had pierced the foggy atmosphere he almost disdained to breathe. His active mind would then have leapt forward to contemplate the perfection of humanity in the establishment of true civilization, instead of taking its ferocious flight back into the night of sensual ignorance.[13]

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> [5] Men of abilities scatter seeds that grow up and have a great influence on the forming opinion; and when once the public opinion preponderates, through the exertion of reason, the overthrow of arbitrary power is not very distant.

> [5] Men of ability scatter seeds that grow up and have a great influence on the forming of opinion; and once public opinion gains the upper hand through the exercise of reason, the overthrow of arbitrary power is not far off.

13 Purple, the color of royal robes, stands for hereditary rank and court power. Rousseau's *Discourse on Inequality* (1755) argued that civilization had corrupted humanity.

Chapter II: The Prevailing Opinion of a Sexual Character Discussed

Against Milton, Rousseau and Gregory, Wollstonecraft argues that women's virtue must be the same as men's, grounded in reason.

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2.1	To account for, and excuse the tyranny of man, many ingenious arguments have been brought forward to prove, that the two sexes, in the acquirement of virtue, ought to aim at attaining a very different character: or, to speak explicitly, women are not allowed to have sufficient strength of mind to acquire what really deserves the name of virtue. Yet it should seem, allowing them to have souls, that there is but one way appointed by Providence to lead *mankind* to either virtue or happiness.	To account for and excuse the tyranny of man, many ingenious arguments have been put forward to prove that the two sexes, in acquiring virtue, ought to aim at very different characters. To put it plainly, women are not granted enough strength of mind to acquire what really deserves the name of virtue. Yet if we allow that they have souls, it would seem that Providence has appointed only one way to lead *humankind* to either virtue or happiness.
2.2	If then women are not a swarm of ephemeron triflers, why should they be kept in ignorance under the specious name of innocence? Men complain, and with reason, of the follies and caprices of our sex, when they do not keenly satirize our headstrong passions and groveling vices. Behold, I should answer, the natural effect of ignorance! The mind will ever be unstable that has only prejudices to rest on, and the current will run with destructive fury when there are no barriers to break its force. Women are told from their infancy, and taught by the example of their mothers, that a little knowledge of human weakness, justly termed cunning, softness of temper, *outward* obedience, and a scrupulous attention to a puerile kind of propriety, will obtain for them the protection of man; and should they be beautiful, every thing else is needless, for, at least, twenty years of their lives.	If, then, women are not a swarm of ephemeral triflers, why should they be kept in ignorance under the plausible name of innocence? Men complain, and with reason, of the follies and whims of our sex, when they are not bitingly satirizing our headstrong passions and groveling vices. Look, I would answer, at the natural effect of ignorance! A mind that has nothing but prejudices to rest on will always be unstable, and the current will run with destructive fury when there are no barriers to break its force. From infancy, women are told, and taught by their mothers' example, what will win them the protection of man: a little knowledge of human weakness (rightly called cunning), a soft temper, *outward* obedience, and scrupulous attention to a childish kind of propriety. And if they are beautiful, nothing else is needed, for twenty years of their lives at least.
2.3	Thus Milton describes our first frail mother; though when he tells us that women are formed for softness and sweet attractive grace, I cannot comprehend his meaning, unless, in the true *[Muslim]* strain, he meant to deprive us of souls, and insinuate that we were beings only designed by sweet attractive grace, and docile blind	This is how Milton describes our first frail mother. Yet when he tells us that women are formed for softness and sweet attractive grace, I cannot understand what he means, unless, in the true Muslim strain, he meant to deprive us of souls. He would then be insinuating that we were beings designed only to gratify man's senses, by sweet attractive grace and docile blind obedience, when

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	obedience, to gratify the senses of man when he can no longer soar on the wing of contemplation.	he can no longer soar on the wing of contemplation.[1]
2.4	How grossly do they insult us who thus advise us only to render ourselves gentle, domestic brutes! For instance, the winning softness so warmly, and frequently, recommended, that governs by obeying. What childish expressions, and how insignificant is the being—can it be an immortal one? who will condescend to govern by such sinister methods! 'Certainly,' says Lord Bacon, 'man is of kin to the beasts by his body; and if he be not of kin to God by his spirit, he is a base and ignoble creature!' Men, indeed, appear to me to act in a very unphilosophical manner when they try to secure the good conduct of women by attempting to keep them always in a state of childhood.	How grossly they insult us who advise us to make ourselves nothing but gentle, domestic brutes! Take, for instance, the winning softness, so warmly and so often recommended, that governs by obeying. What childish expressions! And how insignificant is the being (can it be an immortal one?) who will stoop to govern by such underhanded methods! "Certainly," says Lord Bacon, "man is akin to the beasts by his body; and if he is not akin to God by his spirit, he is a base and ignoble creature!" Men really do seem to me to act very unphilosophically when they try to secure women's good conduct by keeping them forever in a state of childhood.[2]
	Rousseau was more consistent when he wished to stop the progress of reason in both sexes, for if men eat of the tree of knowledge, women will come in for a taste; but, from the imperfect cultivation which their understandings now receive, they only attain a knowledge of evil.	Rousseau was more consistent when he wished to halt the progress of reason in both sexes, for if men eat of the tree of knowledge, women will get a taste too. But given the imperfect cultivation their understandings now receive, the only knowledge they gain is a knowledge of evil.
2.5	Children, I grant, should be innocent; but when the epithet is applied to men, or women, it is but a civil term for weakness. For if it be allowed that women were destined by Providence to acquire human virtues, and by the exercise of their understanding, that stability of character which is the firmest ground to rest our future hopes upon, they must be permitted to turn to the fountain of light, and not forced to shape their course by the twinkling of a mere satellite. Milton, I grant, was of a very different opinion; for he only bends to the indefeasible right of beauty, though it would be difficult to render two passages which I now mean to contrast, consistent.	Children, I grant, should be innocent; but when the word is applied to men or women, it is only a polite term for weakness. Suppose we allow that Providence destined women to acquire human virtues, and, by exercising their understanding, to acquire the stability of character that is the firmest ground for our hopes of the future. Then they must be permitted to turn to the source of light, not forced to steer by the twinkling of a mere satellite. Milton, I grant, was of a very different opinion, for he bows only to the indefeasible right of beauty. Yet it would be hard to reconcile the two passages I now mean to contrast.
	But into similar inconsistencies are great men often led by their senses.	But great men are often led into such inconsistencies by their senses.
2.6	'To whom thus Eve with *perfect beauty* adorn'd. My Author and Disposer, what thou bidst *Unargued* I obey; so God ordains; God is *thy law*, *thou mine*: to know no more Is Woman's *happiest* knowledge and her *praise*.'	"To whom thus Eve with *perfect beauty* adorned: My Author and Disposer, what thou bidst *Unargued* I obey; so God ordains; God is *thy law*, *thou mine*: to know no more Is Woman's *happiest* knowledge and her *praise*."[3]

1 Milton, *Paradise Lost* 4.297–98: "For contemplation he and valour formed, / For softness she and sweet attractive grace."
2 Francis Bacon (1561–1626), from his essay "Of Atheism."

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2.7	These are exactly the arguments that I have used to children; but I have added, your reason is now gaining strength, and, till it arrives at some degree of maturity, you must look up to me for advice—then you ought to *think*, and only rely on God.	These are exactly the arguments I have used with children. But I have added: your reason is now growing stronger, and until it reaches some degree of maturity you must look to me for advice; after that you ought to *think*, and rely only on God.
2.8	Yet in the following lines Milton seems to coincide with me; when he makes Adam thus expostulate with his Maker.	Yet in the following lines Milton seems to agree with me, when he has Adam remonstrate with his Maker:
2.9	'Hast thou not made me here thy substitute, And these inferior far beneath me set? Among *unequals* what society Can sort, what harmony or true delight? Which must be mutual, in proportion due Giv'n and receiv'd; but in *disparity* The one intense, the other still remiss	“Hast thou not made me here thy substitute, And these inferior far beneath me set? Among *unequals* what society Can sort, what harmony or true delight? Which must be mutual, in proportion due Given and received; but in *disparity* The one intense, the other still remiss[4]
2.10	Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove Tedious alike: of *fellowship* I speak Such as I seek, fit to participate All rational delight—	Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove Tedious alike: of *fellowship* I speak Such as I seek, fit to participate All rational delight—”
2.11	In treating, therefore, of the manners of women, let us, disregarding sensual arguments, trace what we should endeavour to make them in order to co-operate, if the expression be not too bold, with the supreme Being.	In discussing the manners of women, then, let us set aside sensual arguments and trace what we should try to make them, so that they may cooperate, if the expression is not too bold, with the Supreme Being.
2.12	By individual education, I mean, for the sense of the word is not precisely defined, such an attention to a child as will slowly sharpen the senses, form the temper, regulate the passions, as they begin to ferment, and set the understanding to work before the body arrives at maturity; so that the man may only have to proceed, not to begin, the important task of learning to think and reason.	By individual education (for the sense of the term is not precisely defined) I mean the kind of attention to a child that will slowly sharpen the senses, form the temper, regulate the passions as they begin to ferment, and set the understanding to work before the body reaches maturity. The adult will then only have to continue, not to begin, the important task of learning to think and reason.
2.13	To prevent any misconstruction, I must add, that I do not believe that a private education can work the wonders which some sanguine writers have attributed to it. Men and women must be educated, in a great degree, by the opinions and manners of the society they live in. In every age there has been a stream of popular opinion that has carried all before it, and given a family character, as it were, to the century. It may then	To prevent any misunderstanding, I must add that I do not believe private education can work the wonders some optimistic writers have attributed to it. Men and women must be educated, to a great degree, by the opinions and manners of the society they live in. In every age a stream of popular opinion has carried everything before it and given, as it were, a family character to the century. We may fairly conclude, then, that until society is

3 Milton, *Paradise Lost* 4.634–38.
4 Milton, *Paradise Lost* 8.381–91.

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fairly be inferred, that, till society be differently constituted, much cannot be expected from education.

It is, however, sufficient for my present purpose to assert, that whatever effect circumstances have on the abilities, every being may become virtuous by the exercise of its own reason; for if but one being was created with vicious inclinations, that is positively bad, what can save us from atheism? or if we worship a God, is not that God a devil?

2.14 Consequently, the most perfect education, in my opinion, is such an exercise of the understanding as is best calculated to strengthen the body and form the heart. Or, in other words, to enable the individual to attain such habits of virtue as will render it independent. In fact, it is a farce to call any being virtuous whose virtues do not result from the exercise of its own reason. This was Rousseau's opinion respecting men: I extend it to women, and confidently assert that they have been drawn out of their sphere by false refinement, and not by an endeavour to acquire masculine qualities.

Still the regal homage which they receive is so intoxicating, that till the manners of the times are changed, and formed on more reasonable principles, it may be impossible to convince them that the illegitimate power which they obtain, by degrading themselves, is a curse, and that they must return to nature and equality, if they wish to secure the placid satisfaction that unsophisticated affections impart. But for this epoch we must wait—wait, perhaps, till kings and nobles, enlightened by reason, and, preferring the real dignity of man to childish state, throw off their gaudy hereditary trappings: and if then women do not resign the arbitrary power of beauty—they will prove that they have *less* mind than man.

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differently constituted, not much can be expected from education.

For my present purpose, however, it is enough to assert that whatever effect circumstances have on people's abilities, every being can become virtuous by exercising its own reason. For if even one being were created with vicious inclinations, that is, positively bad, what could save us from atheism? Or if we worship a God, is that God not a devil?

Consequently, the most perfect education, in my view, is the exercise of the understanding best suited to strengthen the body and form the heart. In other words, it should enable the individual to acquire such habits of virtue as will make it independent. In fact, it is a farce to call any being virtuous whose virtues do not result from the exercise of its own reason. This was Rousseau's view regarding men. I extend it to women, and I confidently assert that they have been drawn out of their sphere by false refinement, not by any effort to acquire masculine qualities.

Still, the royal homage they receive is so intoxicating that it may be impossible to convince them until the manners of the times change and are formed on more reasonable principles. They must see that the illegitimate power they gain by degrading themselves is a curse, and that they must return to nature and equality if they wish to secure the quiet contentment that unaffected affections bring. But for that era we must wait. We may have to wait until kings and nobles, enlightened by reason and preferring the real dignity of man to childish pomp, throw off their gaudy hereditary trappings. And if women do not then give up the arbitrary power of beauty, they will prove that they have *less* mind than man.

AGAINST THE CONDUCT BOOKS

She charges writers from Rousseau to Gregory with making women artificial, weak and useless.

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2.15 I may be accused of arrogance; still I must declare, what I firmly believe, that all the writers who have written on the subject of female education and manners, from Rousseau to Dr.

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I may be accused of arrogance, but I must still declare what I firmly believe. All the writers on female education and manners, from Rousseau to Dr. Gregory, have helped to make women more ar-

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Gregory, have contributed to render women more artificial, weak characters, than they would otherwise have been; and, consequently, more useless members of society. I might have expressed this conviction in a lower key; but I am afraid it would have been the whine of affectation, and not the faithful expression of my feelings; of the clear result, which experience and reflection have led me to draw.

When I come to that division of the subject, I shall advert to the passages that I more particularly disapprove of, in the works of the authors I have just alluded to; but it is first necessary to observe, that my objection extends to the whole purport of those books, which tend, in my opinion, to degrade one half of the human species, and render women pleasing at the expense of every solid virtue.

2.16 Though, to reason on Rousseau's ground, if man did attain a degree of perfection of mind when his body arrived at maturity, it might be proper, in order to make a man and his wife *one*, that she should rely entirely on his understanding; and the graceful ivy, clasping the oak that supported it, would form a whole in which strength and beauty would be equally conspicuous. But, alas! husbands, as well as their helpmates, are often only overgrown children; nay, thanks to early debauchery, scarcely men in their outward form—and if the blind lead the blind, one need not come from heaven to tell us the consequence.

2.17 Many are the causes that, in the present corrupt state of society, contribute to enslave women by cramping their understandings and sharpening their senses. One, perhaps, that silently does more mischief than all the rest, is their disregard of order.

2.18 To do every thing in an orderly manner, is a most important precept, which women, who, generally speaking, receive only a disorderly kind of education, seldom attend to with that degree of exactness, that men, who from their infancy are broken into method, observe. This negligent kind of guess-work, for what other epithet can be used to point out the random exertions of a sort of instinctive common sense, never brought to the

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tificial and weaker characters than they would otherwise have been, and consequently more useless members of society. I might have expressed this conviction in a quieter tone. But I fear it would then have been the whine of affectation, not the faithful expression of my feelings and of the clear conclusion that experience and reflection have led me to draw.[5]

When I come to that part of the subject, I shall take up the passages I particularly object to in the works of the authors just mentioned. But I must first point out that my objection extends to the whole drift of those books. In my opinion they tend to degrade one half of the human species and to make women pleasing at the expense of every solid virtue.

Admittedly, to reason on Rousseau's own ground: if man did reach a degree of perfection of mind when his body reached maturity, it might be proper, in order to make a man and his wife *one*, for her to rely entirely on his understanding. The graceful ivy, clasping the oak that supported it, would then form a whole in which strength and beauty were equally on display. But alas! husbands, like their helpmates, are often just overgrown children. Indeed, thanks to early debauchery, they are scarcely men even in outward form. And if the blind lead the blind, no one needs to come down from heaven to tell us the result.

In the present corrupt state of society, many causes help to enslave women by cramping their understandings and sharpening their senses. One that perhaps silently does more harm than all the rest is their disregard of order.

To do everything in an orderly way is a very important rule. Yet women, who generally receive only a disorderly kind of education, seldom follow it with the exactness observed by men, who are broken in to method from infancy. This careless kind of guesswork keeps them from generalizing from facts, and what other word describes the random exertions of a sort of instinctive common

5 John Gregory (1724–1773), Scottish physician, author of *A Father's Legacy to His Daughters* (1774), a popular conduct book for young women.

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test of reason? prevents their generalizing matters of fact—so they do to-day, what they did yesterday, merely because they did it yesterday.

2.19 This contempt of the understanding in early life has more baneful consequences than is commonly supposed; for the little knowledge which women of strong minds attain, is, from various circumstances, of a more desultory kind than the knowledge of men, and it is acquired more by sheer observations on real life, than from comparing what has been individually observed with the results of experience generalized by speculation. Led by their dependent situation and domestic employments more into society, what they learn is rather by snatches; and as learning is with them, in general, only a secondary thing, they do not pursue any one branch with that persevering ardour necessary to give vigour to the faculties, and clearness to the judgment.

In the present state of society, a little learning is required to support the character of a gentleman; and boys are obliged to submit to a few years of discipline. But in the education of women, the cultivation of the understanding is always subordinate to the acquirement of some corporeal accomplishment; even while enervated by confinement and false notions of modesty, the body is prevented from attaining that grace and beauty which relaxed half-formed limbs never exhibit. Besides, in youth their faculties are not brought forward by emulation; and having no serious scientific study, if they have natural sagacity it is turned too soon on life and manners.

They dwell on effects, and modifications, without tracing them back to causes; and complicated rules to adjust behaviour, are a weak substitute for simple principles.

2.20 As a proof that education gives this appearance of weakness to females, we may instance the example of military men, who are, like them, sent into the world before their minds have been stored with knowledge or fortified by principles. The consequences are similar; soldiers acquire a little superficial knowledge, snatched from the muddy current of conversation, and, from continually mixing with society, they gain, what is termed a knowledge of the world; and this acquaintance with manners and customs has

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sense never tested by reason? So they do today what they did yesterday, merely because they did it yesterday.

This contempt for the understanding in early life has more harmful consequences than is commonly supposed. For various reasons, the little knowledge that women of strong minds acquire is more scattered than men's knowledge. It comes more from bare observation of real life than from comparing what one has personally observed with the results of experience generalized by theory. Their dependent situation and domestic occupations draw them more into company, so they learn in snatches. And since learning is generally only a secondary matter for them, they do not pursue any one branch with the persevering ardor needed to give vigor to the faculties and clarity to the judgment.

In the present state of society, a little learning is required to keep up the character of a gentleman, and boys are made to submit to a few years of discipline. But in the education of women, cultivating the understanding always comes second to acquiring some physical accomplishment. Even so, the body, weakened by confinement and false notions of modesty, is kept from attaining the grace and beauty that slack, half-formed limbs never display. Besides, in youth their faculties are not drawn out by competition. Having no serious scientific study, whatever natural shrewdness they have is turned too soon upon life and manners.

They dwell on effects and variations without tracing them back to causes; and complicated rules for regulating behavior are a poor substitute for simple principles.

As proof that it is education that gives women this appearance of weakness, we may point to military men. Like women, they are sent into the world before their minds have been stocked with knowledge or fortified by principles. The consequences are similar. Soldiers pick up a little superficial knowledge, snatched from the muddy current of conversation, and from constantly mixing in society they gain what is called a knowledge of the world. This acquaintance with manners and customs has often been mistaken for a knowledge of

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frequently been confounded with a knowledge of the human heart. But can the crude fruit of casual observation, never brought to the test of judgment, formed by comparing speculation and experience, deserve such a distinction?	the human heart. But does the crude fruit of casual observation deserve that distinction, when it has never been tested by a judgment formed from comparing theory with experience?
Soldiers, as well as women, practise the minor virtues with punctilious politeness. Where is then the sexual difference, when the education has been the same? All the difference that I can discern, arises from the superior advantage of liberty, which enables the former to see more of life.	Soldiers, like women, practice the minor virtues with punctilious politeness. Where, then, is the difference between the sexes, when the education has been the same? All the difference I can see comes from the superior advantage of liberty, which lets soldiers see more of life.
2.21 It is wandering from my present subject, perhaps, to make a political remark; but, as it was produced naturally by the train of my reflections, I shall not pass it silently over.	It is perhaps a digression from my present subject to make a political remark; but since it arose naturally from the train of my thoughts, I will not pass over it in silence.
2.22 Standing armies can never consist of resolute, robust men; they may be well disciplined machines, but they will seldom contain men under the influence of strong passions, or with very vigorous faculties. And as for any depth of understanding, I will venture to affirm, that it is as rarely to be found in the army as amongst women, and the cause, I maintain, is the same. It may be further observed, that officers are also particularly attentive to their persons, fond of dancing, crowded rooms, adventures, and ridicule[1]. Like the *fair* sex, the business of their lives is gallantry.—They were taught to please, and they only live to please.	Standing armies can never be made up of resolute, robust men. They may be well-disciplined machines, but they will seldom contain men moved by strong passions or possessed of very vigorous faculties. As for any depth of understanding, I will venture to say that it is as rarely found in the army as among women, and the cause, I maintain, is the same. It may further be observed that officers are also especially attentive to their appearance and fond of dancing, crowded rooms, adventures and ridicule[1]. Like the *fair* sex, they make gallantry the business of their lives.—They were taught to please, and they live only to please.
Yet they do not lose their rank in the distinction of sexes, for they are still reckoned superior to women, though in what their superiority consists, beyond what I have just mentioned, it is difficult to discover.	Yet they do not lose their rank in the distinction of the sexes, for they are still considered superior to women. In what their superiority consists, beyond what I have just mentioned, is hard to discover.
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2.23 The great misfortune is this, that they both acquire manners before morals, and a knowledge	The great misfortune is that both acquire manners before morals, and a knowledge of life before they have, through reflection, any acquaintance with the grand ideal outline of human nature. The consequence is natural. Content with ordinary human

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of life before they have, from reflection, any acquaintance with the grand ideal outline of human nature. The consequence is natural; satisfied with common nature, they become a prey to prejudices, and taking all their opinions on credit, they blindly submit to authority. So that, if they have any sense, it is a kind of instinctive glance, that catches proportions, and decides with respect to manners; but fails when arguments are to be pursued below the surface, or opinions analyzed.

2.24 May not the same remark be applied to women? Nay, the argument may be carried still further, for they are both thrown out of a useful station by the unnatural distinctions established in civilized life. Riches and hereditary honours have made cyphers of women to give consequence to the numerical figure; and idleness has produced a mixture of gallantry and despotism into society, which leads the very men who are the slaves of their mistresses to tyrannize over their sisters, wives, and daughters. This is only keeping them in rank and file, it is true.

Strengthen the female mind by enlarging it, and there will be an end to blind obedience; but, as blind obedience is ever sought for by power, tyrants and sensualists are in the right when they endeavour to keep women in the dark, because the former only want slaves, and the latter a plaything. The sensualist, indeed, has been the most dangerous of tyrants, and women have been duped by their lovers, as princes by their ministers, whilst dreaming that they reigned over them.

2.25 I now principally allude to Rousseau, for his character of Sophia is, undoubtedly, a captivating one, though it appears to me grossly unnatural; however, it is not the superstructure, but the foundation of her character, the principles on which her education was built, that I mean to attack; nay, warmly as I admire the genius of that able writer, whose opinions I shall often have occasion to cite, indignation always takes place of

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nature, they fall prey to prejudices, and, taking all their opinions on credit, they blindly submit to authority. So if they have any sense, it is a kind of instinctive glance that catches proportions and makes judgments about manners. It fails when arguments must be pursued below the surface or opinions analyzed.

May not the same remark be applied to women? Indeed, the argument can be taken further, for both are thrown out of a useful position by the unnatural distinctions established in civilized life. Riches and hereditary honors have turned women into zeros, whose only use is to add value to the digit placed before them. And idleness has introduced into society a mixture of gallantry and despotism. It leads the very men who are slaves to their mistresses to tyrannize over their sisters, wives and daughters. This is only keeping them in rank and file, it is true.

Strengthen the female mind by enlarging it, and there will be an end to blind obedience. But since power always seeks blind obedience, tyrants and sensualists are quite right to try to keep women in the dark: the former want only slaves, and the latter a plaything. The sensualist, indeed, has been the most dangerous of tyrants. Women have been duped by their lovers, as princes by their ministers, while dreaming that they reigned over them.

I am chiefly referring here to Rousseau. His character of Sophie is undoubtedly captivating, though to me it seems grossly unnatural. It is not the superstructure, however, that I mean to attack, but the foundation of her character, the principles on which her education was built. I warmly admire the genius of that able writer, whose opinions I shall often have occasion to cite. Yet when I read his voluptuous reveries, indignation always takes

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[1] Why should women be censured with petulent acrimony, because they seem to have a passion for a scarlet coat? Has not education placed them more on a level with soldiers than any other class of men?

[1] Why should women be scolded with peevish bitterness because they seem to have a passion for a scarlet coat? Has not education put them more on a level with soldiers than with any other class of men?[6]

6 The scarlet coat was the uniform of the British army.

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admiration, and the rigid frown of insulted virtue effaces the smile of complacency, which his eloquent periods are wont to raise, when I read his voluptuous reveries.

Is this the man, who, in his ardour for virtue, would banish all the soft arts of peace, and almost carry us back to Spartan discipline? Is this the man who delights to paint the useful struggles of passion, the triumphs of good disposition, and the heroic flights which carry the glowing soul out of itself?—How are these mighty sentiments lowered when he describes the pretty foot and enticing airs of his little favourite!

But, for the present I wave the subject, and, instead of severely reprehending the transient effusions of overweening sensibility, I shall only observe, that whoever has cast a benevolent eye on society, must often have been gratified by the sight of humble mutual love, not dignified by sentiment, nor strengthened by a union in intellectual pursuits. The domestic trifles of the day have afforded matter for cheerful converse, and innocent caresses have softened toils which did not require great exercise of mind or stretch of thought: yet, has not the sight of this moderate felicity excited more tenderness than respect?

An emotion similar to what we feel when children are playing, or animals sporting[2], whilst the contemplation of the noble struggles of suffering merit has raised admiration, and carried our thoughts to that world where sensation will give place to reason.

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2.26 Women are, therefore, to be considered either as moral beings, or so weak that they must be entirely subjected to the superior faculties of men.

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the place of admiration, and the stern frown of insulted virtue wipes away the smile of pleasure that his eloquent sentences usually raise.[8]

Is this the man who, in his ardor for virtue, would banish all the gentle arts of peace and almost carry us back to Spartan discipline? Is this the man who delights in painting the useful struggles of passion, the triumphs of good disposition, and the heroic flights that carry the glowing soul out of itself?—How these mighty sentiments are lowered when he describes the pretty foot and enticing airs of his little favorite!

But for the present I set the subject aside. Instead of severely condemning the passing outpourings of excessive sensibility, I will only make one observation. Anyone who has looked on society with a kindly eye must often have been pleased by the sight of humble mutual love, neither dignified by sentiment nor strengthened by a union in intellectual pursuits. The domestic trifles of the day have supplied matter for cheerful conversation, and innocent caresses have softened labors that required no great exercise of mind or stretch of thought. Yet has not the sight of this modest happiness aroused more tenderness than respect?

The emotion is like the one we feel when children are playing or animals frolicking[2]. The contemplation of the noble struggles of suffering merit, by contrast, has raised our admiration and carried our thoughts to that world where sensation will give way to reason.

Women, therefore, must be regarded either as moral beings, or as so weak that they must be entirely subjected to the superior faculties of men.

8 Sophie is the girl raised to be the ideal wife of Emile in Book 5 of Rousseau's treatise on education, *Emile* (1762).

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[2] Similar feelings has Milton's pleasing picture of paradisiacal happiness ever raised in my mind; yet, instead of envying the lovely pair, I have, with conscious dignity, or Satanic pride, turned to hell for sublimer objects. In the same style, when viewing some noble monument of human art, I have traced the emanation of the Deity in the order I admired, till, descending from that giddy height, I have caught myself contemplating the grandest of all human sights;—for fancy quickly placed, in some solitary recess, an outcast of fortune, rising superior to passion and discontent.

[2] Milton's charming picture of the happiness of paradise has always raised similar feelings in me. Yet instead of envying the lovely pair, I have turned to hell for more sublime objects, whether from conscious dignity or Satanic pride. In the same way, when viewing some noble monument of human art, I have traced the emanation of the Deity in the order I admired. Then, coming down from that dizzy height, I have caught myself contemplating the grandest of all human sights;—for my imagination quickly placed, in some lonely retreat, an outcast of fortune rising above passion and discontent.

ONE VIRTUE FOR BOTH SEXES

She rejects Rousseau's training of women in obedience and argues that virtue must be the same for both sexes.

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2.27	Let us examine this question. Rousseau declares that a woman should never, for a moment, feel herself independent, that she should be governed by fear to exercise her *natural* cunning, and made a coquetish slave in order to render her a more alluring object of desire, a *sweeter* companion to man, whenever he chooses to relax himself. He carries the arguments, which he pretends to draw from the indications of nature, still further, and insinuates that truth and fortitude, the corner stones of all human virtue, should be cultivated with certain restrictions, because, with respect to the female character, obedience is the grand lesson which ought to be impressed with unrelenting rigour.	Let us examine this question. Rousseau declares that a woman should never for a moment feel herself independent. She should be governed by fear, so as to exercise her *natural* cunning, and made a coquettish slave, so as to become a more alluring object of desire and a *sweeter* companion to man whenever he chooses to relax. He carries the arguments he claims to draw from the indications of nature still further. He insinuates that truth and fortitude, the cornerstones of all human virtue, should be cultivated only with certain restrictions, because in the female character obedience is the great lesson, to be impressed with unrelenting rigor.
2.28	What nonsense! when will a great man arise with sufficient strength of mind to puff away the fumes which pride and sensuality have thus spread over the subject! If women are by nature inferior to men, their virtues must be the same in quality, if not in degree, or virtue is a relative idea; consequently, their conduct should be founded on the same principles, and have the same aim.	What nonsense! When will a great man arise with enough strength of mind to blow away the fumes that pride and sensuality have spread over this subject! If women are by nature inferior to men, their virtues must still be the same in quality, if not in degree, or else virtue is a relative idea. Consequently, their conduct should be founded on the same principles and have the same aim.
2.29	Connected with man as daughters, wives, and mothers, their moral character may be estimated by their manner of fulfilling those simple duties; but the end, the grand end of their exertions should be to unfold their own faculties and acquire the dignity of conscious virtue. They may try to render their road pleasant; but ought never to forget, in common with man, that life yields not the felicity which can satisfy an immortal soul. I do not mean to insinuate, that either sex should be so lost in abstract reflections or distant views, as to forget the affections and duties that lie before them, and are, in truth, the means appointed to produce the fruit of life; on the contrary, I would warmly recommend them, even while I assert, that they afford most satisfaction when they are considered in their true subordinate light.	Women are connected with man as daughters, wives and mothers, and their moral character may be judged by how they fulfill those simple duties. But the end, the grand end, of their efforts should be to unfold their own faculties and acquire the dignity of conscious virtue. They may try to make their road pleasant, but, like man, they should never forget that life does not yield the happiness that can satisfy an immortal soul. I do not mean to suggest that either sex should be so lost in abstract reflection or distant prospects as to forget the affections and duties that lie before them. These are in truth the means appointed to produce the fruit of life. On the contrary, I warmly recommend them, even while I maintain that they give the most satisfaction when they are seen in their true, subordinate light.
2.30	Probably the prevailing opinion, that woman was created for man, may have taken its rise from	The prevailing opinion that woman was created for man probably arose from Moses's poetic story.

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	Moses's poetical story; yet, as very few, it is presumed, who have bestowed any serious thought on the subject, ever supposed that Eve was, literally speaking, one of Adam's ribs, the deduction must be allowed to fall to the ground; or, only be so far admitted as it proves that man, from the remotest antiquity, found it convenient to exert his strength to subjugate his companion, and his invention to shew that she ought to have her neck bent under the yoke; because she, as well as the brute creation, was created to do his pleasure.	Yet very few people who have given the subject any serious thought, it may be presumed, ever supposed that Eve was literally one of Adam's ribs. The inference must therefore be allowed to collapse. At most it proves one thing: that man, from the remotest antiquity, found it convenient to use his strength to subjugate his companion, and his ingenuity to show that she ought to have her neck bent under the yoke, because she, like the animals, was created to do his pleasure.[10]
2.31	Let it not be concluded that I wish to invert the order of things; I have already granted, that, from the constitution of their bodies, men seem to be designed by Providence to attain a greater degree of virtue. I speak collectively of the whole sex; but I see not the shadow of a reason to conclude that their virtues should differ in respect to their nature. In fact, how can they, if virtue has only one eternal standard? I must therefore, if I reason consequentially, as strenuously maintain that they have the same simple direction, as that there is a God.	Let no one conclude that I wish to turn the order of things upside down. I have already granted that, from the constitution of their bodies, men seem designed by Providence to attain a greater degree of virtue. I speak collectively of the whole sex. But I see not the shadow of a reason to conclude that their virtues should differ in nature. Indeed, how can they, if virtue has only one eternal standard? If I reason consistently, then, I must maintain that they have the same simple direction as strenuously as I maintain that there is a God.
2.32	It follows then that cunning should not be opposed to wisdom, little cares to great exertions, nor insipid softness, varnished over with the name of gentleness, to that fortitude which grand views alone can inspire.	It follows, then, that cunning should not be set against wisdom, or little cares against great efforts. Nor should insipid softness, varnished over with the name of gentleness, be set against the fortitude that only grand views can inspire.
2.33	I shall be told that woman would then lose many of her peculiar graces, and the opinion of a well known poet might be quoted to refute my unqualified assertion. For Pope has said, in the name of the whole male sex,	I will be told that woman would then lose many of her peculiar graces, and the opinion of a well-known poet may be quoted to refute my unqualified assertion. For Pope has said, in the name of the whole male sex:
2.34	'Yet ne'er so sure our passion to create, / As when she touch'd the brink, of all we hate.'	"Yet ne'er so sure our passion to create, / As when she touched the brink of all we hate."[11]
2.35	In what light this sally places men and women, I shall leave to the judicious to determine; meanwhile I shall content myself with observing, that I cannot discover why, unless they are mortal, females should always be degraded by being made subservient to love or lust.	In what light this quip places men and women, I leave the judicious to decide. Meanwhile I will content myself with one observation. Unless women are merely mortal, I cannot see why they should always be degraded by being made subservient to love or lust.
2.36	To speak disrespectfully of love is, I know, high treason against sentiment and fine feelings; but I	To speak disrespectfully of love is, I know, high treason against sentiment and fine feelings; but I

10 Genesis 2:21–23, traditionally attributed to Moses.
11 Pope, *Epistle to a Lady* (1735), lines 51–52.

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wish to speak the simple language of truth, and rather to address the head than the heart. To endeavour to reason love out of the world, would be to out Quixote Cervantes, and equally offend against common sense; but an endeavour to restrain this tumultuous passion, and to prove that it should not be allowed to dethrone superior powers, or to usurp the sceptre which the understanding should ever coolly wield, appears less wild.

2.37 Youth is the season for love in both sexes; but in those days of thoughtless enjoyment provision should be made for the more important years of life, when reflection takes place of sensation. But Rousseau, and most of the male writers who have followed his steps, have warmly inculcated that the whole tendency of female education ought to be directed to one point:—to render them pleasing.

2.38 Let me reason with the supporters of this opinion who have any knowledge of human nature, do they imagine that marriage can eradicate the habitude of life? The woman who has only been taught to please will soon find that her charms are oblique sunbeams, and that they cannot have much effect on her husband's heart when they are seen every day, when the summer is passed and gone. Will she then have sufficient native energy to look into herself for comfort, and cultivate her dormant faculties? or, is it not more rational to expect that she will try to please other men; and, in the emotions raised by the expectation of new conquests, endeavour to forget the mortification her love or pride has received?

When the husband ceases to be a lover—and the time will inevitably come, her desire of pleasing will then grow languid, or become a spring of bitterness; and love, perhaps, the most evanescent of all passions, gives place to jealousy or vanity.

2.39 I now speak of women who are restrained by principle or prejudice; such women, though they would shrink from an intrigue with real abhorrence, yet, nevertheless, wish to be convinced by the homage of gallantry that they are cruelly neglected by their husbands; or, days and weeks are spent in dreaming of the happiness enjoyed by congenial souls, till the health is undermined and the spirits broken by discontent.

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wish to speak the simple language of truth and to address the head rather than the heart. To try to reason love out of the world would be to out-Quixote Cervantes, and just as offensive to common sense. It seems less wild to try to restrain this tumultuous passion, and to prove that it should not be allowed to dethrone higher powers or to usurp the scepter that the understanding should always coolly wield.

Youth is the season for love in both sexes. But in those days of thoughtless enjoyment, provision should be made for the more important years of life, when reflection takes the place of sensation. Rousseau, however, and most of the male writers who have followed in his footsteps, have warmly taught that the whole tendency of female education ought to be directed to one point:—to make women pleasing.

Let me reason with those supporters of this opinion who have any knowledge of human nature. Do they imagine that marriage can uproot the habits of a lifetime? The woman who has only been taught to please will soon find that her charms are slanting sunbeams. They cannot have much effect on her husband’s heart when he sees them every day, once the summer is past and gone. Will she then have enough native energy to look into herself for comfort and cultivate her dormant faculties? Or is it not more reasonable to expect that she will try to please other men, and, in the excitement of new conquests in prospect, try to forget the humiliation her love or pride has suffered?

When the husband stops being a lover, and that time will inevitably come, her desire to please will either wither or become a source of bitterness. And love, perhaps the most fleeting of all passions, gives way to jealousy or vanity.

I am now speaking of women who are restrained by principle or prejudice. Such women would shrink from an affair with real horror. Nevertheless, they want the homage of gallantry to convince them that their husbands are cruelly neglecting them. Or else they spend days and weeks dreaming of the happiness enjoyed by kindred

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	souls, until their health is undermined and their spirits broken by discontent.
How then can the great art of pleasing be such a necessary study; it is only useful to a mistress; the chaste wife, and serious mother, should only consider her power to please as the polish of her virtues, and the affection of her husband as one of the comforts that render her task less difficult and her life happier.—But, whether she be loved or neglected, her first wish should be to make herself respectable, and not to rely for all her happiness on a being subject to like infirmities with herself.	How, then, can the great art of pleasing be such a necessary study? It is useful only to a mistress. The chaste wife and serious mother should regard her power to please only as the polish on her virtues. Her husband's affection is one of the comforts that make her task less difficult and her life happier.—But whether she is loved or neglected, her first wish should be to make herself worthy of respect, and not to rest all her happiness on a being subject to the same weaknesses as herself.

DR. GREGORY'S ADVICE

She criticizes Gregory's counsel to daughters on dress, dancing, dissimulation and hiding affection.

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2.40 The amiable Dr. Gregory fell into a similar error. I respect his heart; but entirely disapprove of his celebrated Legacy to his Daughters.	The amiable Dr. Gregory fell into a similar error. I respect his heart, but I entirely disapprove of his celebrated Legacy to his Daughters.
2.41 He advises them to cultivate a fondness for dress, because a fondness for dress, he asserts, is natural to them. I am unable to comprehend what either he or Rousseau mean, when they frequently use this indefinite term. If they told us that in a pre-existent state the soul was fond of dress, and brought this inclination with it into a new body, I should listen to them with a half smile, as I often do when I hear a rant about innate elegance.—But if he only meant to say that the exercise of the faculties will produce this fondness—I deny it.—It is not natural; but arises, like false ambition in men, from a love of power.	He advises them to cultivate a fondness for dress, because, he asserts, a fondness for dress is natural to them. I cannot understand what either he or Rousseau means when they so often use this vague term. Suppose they told us that in a previous existence the soul was fond of dress and brought this inclination with it into a new body. I would listen with a half-smile, as I often do when I hear someone rant about innate elegance.—But if he merely meant that the exercise of the faculties will produce this fondness, I deny it.—It is not natural. It arises, like false ambition in men, from a love of power.
2.42 Dr. Gregory goes much further; he actually recommends dissimulation, and advises an innocent girl to give the lie to her feelings, and not dance with spirit, when gaiety of heart would make her feet eloquent without making her gestures immodest. In the name of truth and common sense, why should not one woman acknowledge that she can take more exercise than another? or, in other words, that she has a sound constitution; and why, to damp innocent vivacity, is she darkly to be told that men will draw conclusions which she little thinks of? Let the libertine draw what inference he pleases; but, I hope, that no sensible mother will restrain the	Dr. Gregory goes much further. He actually recommends dissimulation. He advises an innocent girl to give the lie to her feelings and not dance with spirit, even when gaiety of heart would make her feet eloquent without making her gestures immodest. In the name of truth and common sense, why should one woman not admit that she can take more exercise than another, in other words, that she has a sound constitution? And why, to dampen innocent liveliness, should she be darkly told that men will draw conclusions she little suspects? Let the libertine draw whatever inference he likes. But I hope no sensible mother will re-

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natural frankness of youth by instilling such indecent cautions.

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh; and a wiser than Solomon hath said, that the heart should be made clean, and not trivial ceremonies observed, which it is not very difficult to fulfil with scrupulous exactness when vice reigns in the heart.

2.43 Women ought to endeavour to purify their heart; but can they do so when their uncultivated understandings make them entirely dependent on their senses for employment and amusement, when no noble pursuit sets them above the little vanities of the day, or enables them to curb the wild emotions that agitate a reed over which every passing breeze has power? To gain the affections of a virtuous man is affectation necessary?

Nature has given woman a weaker frame than man; but, to ensure her husband's affections, must a wife, who by the exercise of her mind and body whilst she was discharging the duties of a daughter, wife, and mother, has allowed her constitution to retain its natural strength, and her nerves a healthy tone, is she, I say, to condescend to use art and feign a sickly delicacy in order to secure her husband's affection? Weakness may excite tenderness, and gratify the arrogant pride of man; but the lordly caresses of a protector will not gratify a noble mind that pants for, and deserves to be respected. Fondness is a poor substitute for friendship!

2.44 In a seraglio, I grant, that all these arts are necessary; the epicure must have his palate tickled, or he will sink into apathy; but have women so little ambition as to be satisfied with such a condition? Can they supinely dream life away in the lap of pleasure, or the languor of weariness, rather than assert their claim to pursue reasonable pleasures and render themselves conspicuous by practising the virtues which dignify mankind? Surely she has not an immortal soul who can loiter life away merely employed to adorn her person, that she may amuse the languid hours, and soften the cares of a fellow-creature who is willing to be enlivened by

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strain the natural frankness of youth by instilling such indecent warnings.

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. And one wiser than Solomon has said that the heart should be made clean, rather than trivial ceremonies observed, which are not very hard to perform with scrupulous exactness while vice reigns in the heart.[12]

Women ought to try to purify their hearts. But how can they, when their uncultivated understandings make them wholly dependent on their senses for occupation and amusement? No noble pursuit lifts them above the petty vanities of the day or enables them to curb the wild emotions that shake a reed at the mercy of every passing breeze. To win the affections of a virtuous man, is affectation necessary?

Nature has given woman a weaker frame than man. But take a wife who has exercised her mind and body while carrying out the duties of a daughter, wife and mother, and so has let her constitution keep its natural strength and her nerves a healthy tone. To ensure her husband's affections, must she, I say, stoop to use art and fake a sickly delicacy in order to secure his affection? Weakness may arouse tenderness and gratify man's arrogant pride. But the lordly caresses of a protector will not satisfy a noble mind that longs to be respected, and deserves to be. Fondness is a poor substitute for friendship!

In a harem, I grant, all these arts are necessary; the epicure must have his palate tickled or he will sink into apathy. But do women have so little ambition as to be satisfied with such a condition? Can they lazily dream their lives away in the lap of pleasure or the languor of weariness, rather than assert their claim to pursue reasonable pleasures and distinguish themselves by practicing the virtues that dignify humanity? Surely she has no immortal soul who can loiter her life away occupied only in adorning her person. She does it so that she may amuse the languid hours and soften the cares of a fellow creature who is willing to be cheered by her smiles and tricks once the serious business of life is over.

12 Matthew 12:34 and 23:25–26; "a greater than Solomon" (Matthew 12:42) is Jesus.

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	her smiles and tricks, when the serious business of life is over.	
2.45	Besides, the woman who strengthens her body and exercises her mind will, by managing her family and practicing various virtues, become the friend, and not the humble dependent of her husband, and if she deserves his regard by possessing such substantial qualities, she will not find it necessary to conceal her affection, nor to pretend to an unnatural coldness of constitution to excite her husband's passions. In fact, if we revert to history, we shall find that the women who have distinguished themselves have neither been the most beautiful nor the most gentle of their sex.	Besides, the woman who strengthens her body and exercises her mind will, by managing her household and practicing various virtues, become her husband's friend and not his humble dependent. And if she earns his regard by having such substantial qualities, she will not find it necessary to hide her affection, or to pretend to an unnatural coldness of constitution in order to excite her husband's passion. In fact, if we turn to history, we will find that the women who have distinguished themselves have been neither the most beautiful nor the most gentle of their sex.
2.46	Nature, or, to speak with strict propriety, God, has made all things right; but man has sought him out many inventions to mar the work. I now allude to that part of Dr. Gregory's treatise, where he advises a wife never to let her husband know the extent of her sensibility or affection. Voluptuous precaution, and as ineffectual as absurd.—Love, from its very nature, must be transitory. To seek for a secret that would render it constant, would be as wild a search as for the philosopher's stone, or the grand panacea: and the discovery would be equally useless, or rather pernicious, to mankind. The most holy band of society is friendship.	Nature (or, to speak with strict accuracy, God) has made all things right; but man has sought out many inventions to spoil the work. I am now referring to the part of Dr. Gregory's treatise where he advises a wife never to let her husband know the full extent of her sensibility or affection. A voluptuous precaution, and as ineffective as it is absurd.—Love, by its very nature, must be transitory. To look for a secret that would make it constant would be as wild a quest as the search for the philosopher's stone or the universal cure-all. And the discovery would be just as useless, or rather harmful, to humanity. The holiest bond of society is friendship.[13]
	It has been well said, by a shrewd satirist, "that rare as true love is, true friendship is still rarer."	A shrewd satirist has rightly said "that rare as true love is, true friendship is still rarer."[14]
2.47	This is an obvious truth, and the cause not lying deep, will not elude a slight glance of inquiry.	This is an obvious truth, and since its cause does not lie deep, it will not escape even a quick glance of inquiry.

LOVE GIVES WAY TO FRIENDSHIP

She argues that passionate love must fade in marriage and that friendship should take its place.

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2.48	Love, the common passion, in which chance and sensation take place of choice and reason, is, in some degree, felt by the mass of mankind; for it is not necessary to speak, at present, of the emotions that rise above or sink below love. This passion, naturally increased by suspense and	Love, the common passion, in which chance and sensation take the place of choice and reason, is felt to some degree by the mass of humanity. There is no need, for the present, to speak of the emotions that rise above or sink below love. This passion, naturally heightened by suspense and

13 Echoing Ecclesiastes 7:29: "God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."
14 La Rochefoucauld, *Maxims*, no. 473.

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	difficulties, draws the mind out of its accustomed state, and exalts the affections; but the security of marriage, allowing the fever of love to subside, a healthy temperature is thought insipid, only by those who have not sufficient intellect to substitute the calm tenderness of friendship, the confidence of respect, instead of blind admiration, and the sensual emotions of fondness.	difficulties, draws the mind out of its usual state and exalts the affections. But the security of marriage lets the fever of love subside. The healthy temperature that follows seems dull only to those who lack the intellect to replace blind admiration and the sensual emotions of fondness with the calm tenderness of friendship and the confidence of respect.
2.49	This is, must be, the course of nature:—friendship or indifference inevitably succeeds love.—And this constitution seems perfectly to harmonize with the system of government which prevails in the moral world. Passions are spurs to action, and open the mind; but they sink into mere appetites, become a personal and momentary gratification, when the object is gained, and the satisfied mind rests in enjoyment.	This is, and must be, the course of nature:—friendship or indifference inevitably follows love.—And this arrangement seems to harmonize perfectly with the system of government that prevails in the moral world. Passions are spurs to action, and they open the mind. But once the object is gained and the satisfied mind rests in enjoyment, they sink into mere appetites, a personal and momentary gratification.
	The man who had some virtue whilst he was struggling for a crown, often becomes a voluptuous tyrant when it graces his brow; and, when the lover is not lost in the husband, the dotard, a prey to childish caprices, and fond jealousies, neglects the serious duties of life, and the caresses which should excite confidence in his children are lavished on the overgrown child, his wife.	The man who had some virtue while he was struggling for a crown often becomes a voluptuous tyrant once it graces his brow. And when the lover is not lost in the husband, the doting fool falls prey to childish whims and foolish jealousies and neglects the serious duties of life. The caresses that should build confidence in his children are lavished on the overgrown child, his wife.
2.50	In order to fulfil the duties of life, and to be able to pursue with vigour the various employments which form the moral character, a master and mistress of a family ought not to continue to love each other with passion. I mean to say, that they ought not to indulge those emotions which disturb the order of society, and engross the thoughts that should be otherwise employed. The mind that has never been engrossed by one object wants vigour—if it can long be so, it is weak.	To fulfill the duties of life, and to pursue with energy the various occupations that form moral character, the master and mistress of a household ought not to go on loving each other with passion. I mean that they ought not to indulge those emotions that disturb the order of society and absorb thoughts that should be put to other uses. The mind that has never been absorbed by one object lacks vigor—but if it can stay absorbed for long, it is weak.
2.51	A mistaken education, a narrow, uncultivated mind, and many sexual prejudices, tend to make women more constant than men; but, for the present, I shall not touch on this branch of the subject. I will go still further, and advance, without dreaming of a paradox, that an unhappy marriage is often very advantageous to a family, and that the neglected wife is, in general, the best mother.	A mistaken education, a narrow, uncultivated mind, and many prejudices about sex tend to make women more constant than men; but for now I will not take up this branch of the subject. I will go further still and put forward, with no thought of paradox, that an unhappy marriage is often very good for a family, and that the neglected wife is, in general, the best mother.
	And this would almost always be the consequence if the female mind was more enlarged: for, it	And this would almost always be the result if women's minds were broader. For it seems to be the

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seems to be the common dispensation of Providence, that what we gain in present enjoyment should be deducted from the treasure of life, experience; and that when we are gathering the flowers of the day and revelling in pleasure, the solid fruit of toil and wisdom should not be caught at the same time. The way lies before us, we must turn to the right or left; and he who will pass life away in bounding from one pleasure to another, must not complain if he neither acquires wisdom nor respectability of character.

2.52 Supposing, for a moment, that the soul is not immortal, and that man was only created for the present scene,—I think we should have reason to complain that love, infantile fondness, ever grew insipid and pallid upon the sense. Let us eat, drink, and love, for to-morrow we die, would be, in fact, the language of reason, the morality of life; and who but a fool would part with a reality for a fleeting shadow?

But, if awed by observing the improvable powers of the mind, we disdain to confine our wishes or thoughts to such a comparatively mean field of action; that only appears grand and important, as it is connected with a boundless prospect and sublime hopes, what necessity is there for falsehood in conduct, and why must the sacred majesty of truth be violated to detain a deceitful good that saps the very foundation of virtue? Why must the female mind be tainted by coquetish arts to gratify the sensualist, and prevent love from subsiding into friendship, or compassionate tenderness, when there are not qualities on which friendship can be built?

Let the honest heart shew itself, and *reason* teach passion to submit to necessity; or, let the dignified pursuit of virtue and knowledge raise the mind above those emotions which rather imbitter than sweeten the cup of life, when they are not restrained within due bounds.

2.53 I do not mean to allude to the romantic passion, which is the concomitant of genius.—Who can clip its wing? But that grand passion not proportioned to the puny enjoyments of life, is only true to the sentiment, and feeds on itself. The passions which have been celebrated for their durability have

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usual arrangement of Providence that what we gain in present enjoyment is deducted from the treasure of life, experience. While we are gathering the flowers of the day and reveling in pleasure, we cannot at the same time lay hold of the solid fruit of toil and wisdom. The road lies before us, and we must turn right or left. Whoever means to spend life bounding from one pleasure to another must not complain if he gains neither wisdom nor a respectable character.

Suppose for a moment that the soul is not immortal, and that man was created only for the present scene. Then I think we would have reason to complain that love, that infantile fondness, ever grew stale and faded on the senses. “Let us eat, drink, and love, for tomorrow we die” would in fact be the language of reason, the morality of life. And who but a fool would give up a reality for a fleeting shadow?

But suppose that, awed by seeing how far the powers of the mind can be improved, we scorn to confine our wishes or thoughts to such a comparatively lowly field of action, one that looks grand and important only insofar as it is connected with a boundless prospect and sublime hopes. What need is there, then, for falsehood in conduct? Why must the sacred majesty of truth be violated to hold on to a deceptive good that undermines the very foundation of virtue? Why must women’s minds be tainted by the arts of the coquette to gratify the sensualist, and to keep love from subsiding into friendship or compassionate tenderness, when there are no qualities on which friendship can be built?

Let the honest heart show itself, and let *reason* teach passion to submit to necessity. Or let the dignified pursuit of virtue and knowledge raise the mind above those emotions that, when not kept within proper limits, embitter the cup of life rather than sweeten it.

I do not mean the romantic passion that goes with genius.—Who can clip its wings? But that grand passion, out of all proportion to the puny enjoyments of life, is true only to the feeling itself, and feeds on itself. The passions celebrated for lasting have always been unhappy ones. They gained

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	always been unfortunate. They have acquired strength by absence and constitutional melancholy.—The fancy has hovered round a form of beauty dimly seen—but familiarity might have turned admiration into disgust; or, at least, into indifference, and allowed the imagination leisure to start fresh game. With perfect propriety, according to this view of things, does Rousseau make the mistress of his soul, Eloisa, love St.	strength from absence and from an inborn melancholy.—The imagination hovered around a form of beauty dimly seen; but familiarity might have turned admiration into disgust, or at least into indifference, and given the imagination leisure to chase fresh game. Seen this way, Rousseau is perfectly right to make the mistress of his soul, Eloisa, love St.[15]
	Preux, when life was fading before her; but this is no proof of the immortality of the passion.	Preux when her life was fading; but this is no proof that the passion is immortal.
2.54	Of the same complexion is Dr. Gregory's advice respecting delicacy of sentiment, which he advises a woman not to acquire, if she has determined to marry. This determination, however, perfectly consistent with his former advice, he calls *indelicate*, and earnestly persuades his daughters to conceal it, though it may govern their conduct: as if it were indelicate to have the common appetites of human nature.	Dr. Gregory's advice about delicacy of sentiment is of the same kind: he advises a woman not to acquire it if she has decided to marry. Yet this decision, perfectly consistent with his earlier advice, he calls *indelicate*, and he earnestly urges his daughters to conceal it, even though it may govern their conduct. As if it were indelicate to have the common appetites of human nature.
2.55	Noble morality! and consistent with the cautious prudence of a little soul that cannot extend its views beyond the present minute division of existence. If all the faculties of woman's mind are only to be cultivated as they respect her dependence on man; if, when she obtains a husband she has arrived at her goal, and meanly proud is satisfied with such a paltry crown, let her grovel contentedly, scarcely raised by her employments above the animal kingdom; but, if she is struggling for the prize of her high calling, let her cultivate her understanding without stopping to consider what character the husband may have whom she is destined to marry.	Noble morality! And just what you would expect from the cautious prudence of a little soul that cannot see beyond the present tiny division of existence. Suppose all the faculties of a woman's mind are to be cultivated only as they bear on her dependence on man, and that once she gets a husband she has reached her goal and, meanly proud, is satisfied with such a paltry crown. Then let her grovel contentedly, her occupations barely raising her above the animal kingdom. But if she is striving for the prize of her high calling, let her cultivate her understanding without stopping to consider what character the husband she is destined to marry may have.
	Let her only determine, without being too anxious about present happiness, to acquire the qualities that ennoble a rational being, and a rough inelegant husband may shock her taste without destroying her peace of mind. She will not model her soul to suit the frailties of her companion, but to bear with them: his character may be a trial, but not an impediment to virtue.	Let her only resolve, without being too anxious about present happiness, to acquire the qualities that ennoble a rational being. Then a rough, unrefined husband may offend her taste without destroying her peace of mind. She will not shape her soul to suit her companion's weaknesses, but to bear with them: his character may be a trial to her virtue, but not an obstacle to it.
2.56	If Dr. Gregory confined his remark to romantic expectations of constant love and congenial feelings, he should have recollected that experience will banish what advice can never	If Dr. Gregory meant his remark to apply only to romantic expectations of constant love and kindred feelings, he should have remembered this: when the imagination is kept alive at the ex-

15 Rousseau's novel *Julie, or the New Heloise* (1761), in which Julie's love for her former tutor Saint-Preux lasts until her deathbed.

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make us cease to wish for, when the imagination is kept alive at the expense of reason.

2.57 I own it frequently happens that women who have fostered a romantic unnatural delicacy of feeling, waste their[3] lives in *imagining* how happy they should have been with a husband who could love them with a fervid increasing affection every day, and all day. But they might as well pine married as single—and would not be a jot more unhappy with a bad husband than longing for a good one. That a proper education; or, to speak with more precision, a well stored mind, would enable a woman to support a single life with dignity, I grant; but that she should avoid cultivating her taste, lest her husband should occasionally shock it, is quitting a substance for a shadow.

To say the truth, I do not know of what use is an improved taste, if the individual is not rendered more independent of the casualties of life; if new sources of enjoyment, only dependent on the solitary operations of the mind, are not opened. People of taste, married or single, without distinction, will ever be disgusted by various things that touch not less observing minds. On this conclusion the argument must not be allowed to hinge; but in the whole sum of enjoyment is taste to be denominated a blessing?

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2.58 The question is, whether it procures most pain or pleasure? The answer will decide the propriety of Dr. Gregory's advice, and shew how absurd and tyrannic it is thus to lay down a system of slavery; or to attempt to educate moral beings, by any other rules than those deduced from pure reason, which apply to the whole species.

2.59 Gentleness of manners, forbearance and long-suffering, are such amiable Godlike qualities, that in sublime poetic strains the Deity has been invested with them; and, perhaps no representation of his goodness so strongly fastens on the human affections as those that represent him abundant in mercy and willing to pardon. Gentleness, considered in this point of view, bears on its front all the characteristics of grandeur,

[3] For example, the herd of novelists.

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pense of reason, experience will banish what advice can never make us stop wishing for.

I admit it often happens that women who have nurtured a romantic, unnatural delicacy of feeling waste their[3] lives *imagining* how happy they would have been with a husband who could love them with an ardent affection that grew every day, and all day. But they might as well pine married as single, and they would not be one bit more unhappy with a bad husband than longing for a good one. I grant that a proper education, or, to be more precise, a well-stocked mind, would enable a woman to bear a single life with dignity. But for her to avoid cultivating her taste in case her husband should now and then offend it is to give up the substance for the shadow.

To tell the truth, I do not see what use an improved taste is if it does not make the individual more independent of life's accidents, and does not open new sources of enjoyment that depend only on the solitary workings of the mind. People of taste, married or single alike, will always be disgusted by various things that do not touch less observant minds. The argument must not be allowed to turn on this point. But, taking the whole sum of enjoyment, is taste to be called a blessing?

The question is whether it brings more pain or more pleasure. The answer will settle whether Dr. Gregory's advice is sound. It will also show how absurd and tyrannical it is to lay down a system of slavery in this way, or to try to educate moral beings by any rules other than those drawn from pure reason, which apply to the whole species.

Gentleness of manners, forbearance, and long-suffering are such lovable, godlike qualities that sublime poetry has clothed the Deity in them. Perhaps no picture of his goodness takes so strong a hold on human affections as those that show him abounding in mercy and willing to pardon. Seen in this light, gentleness bears on its face all the marks of grandeur, combined with the winning graces of condescension. But how different it

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[3] For example, the herd of novelists.

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combined with the winning graces of condescension; but what a different aspect it assumes when it is the submissive demeanour of dependence, the support of weakness that loves, because it wants protection; and is forbearing, because it must silently endure injuries; smiling under the lash at which it dare not snarl.

Abject as this picture appears, it is the portrait of an accomplished woman, according to the received opinion of female excellence, separated by specious reasoners from human excellence. Or, they [4] kindly restore the rib, and make one moral being of a man and woman; not forgetting to give her all the 'submissive charms.'

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2.60 How women are to exist in that state where there is to be neither marrying nor giving in marriage, we are not told.—For though moralists have agreed that the tenor of life seems to prove that *man* is prepared by various circumstances for a future state, they constantly concur in advising *woman* only to provide for the present. Gentleness, docility, and a spaniel-like affection are, on this ground, consistently recommended as the cardinal virtues of the sex; and, disregarding the arbitrary economy of nature, one writer has declared that it is masculine for a woman to be melancholy. She was created to be the toy of man, his rattle, and it must jingle in his ears whenever, dismissing reason, he chooses to be amused.

2.61 To recommend gentleness, indeed, on a broad basis is strictly philosophical. A frail being should labour to be gentle. But when forbearance confounds right and wrong, it ceases to be a virtue; and, however convenient it may be found in a companion—that companion will ever be considered as an inferior, and only inspire a vapid tenderness, which easily degenerates into contempt.

Still, if advice could really make a being gentle, whose natural disposition admitted not of such a

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looks when it is the submissive bearing of dependence, the prop of a weakness that loves because it needs protection, and forbears because it must silently endure injuries—smiling under the lash at which it dare not snarl.

Abject as this picture looks, it is the portrait of an accomplished woman according to the accepted idea of female excellence, which plausible reasoners have separated from human excellence. Or else they[4] kindly restore the rib and make one moral being out of a man and a woman, not forgetting to give her all the "submissive charms."[17]

How women are to exist in that state where there is to be neither marrying nor giving in marriage, we are not told. Moralists have agreed that the course of life seems to prove that *man* is prepared by various circumstances for a future state; yet they consistently agree in advising *woman* to provide only for the present. On this basis, gentleness, docility, and a spaniel-like affection are consistently recommended as the cardinal virtues of women. And, ignoring the arbitrary arrangement of nature, one writer has declared that it is masculine for a woman to be melancholy. She was created to be man's toy, his rattle, and it must jingle in his ears whenever, dismissing reason, he chooses to be amused.

To recommend gentleness on a broad basis is, indeed, strictly philosophical. A frail being should work at being gentle. But when forbearance confuses right and wrong, it stops being a virtue. However convenient it may be in a companion, that companion will always be regarded as an inferior, and will inspire only an insipid tenderness that easily degenerates into contempt.

Still, if advice could really make a being gentle whose natural disposition did not allow such a

17 "Submissive charms" is from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book 4, describing Eve.

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[4] Vide Rousseau, and Swedenborg.

[4] See Rousseau, and Swedenborg.[18]

18 Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), Swedish mystic, taught that a married couple in heaven form a single angel.

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fine polish, something towards the advancement of order would be attained; but if, as might quickly be demonstrated, only affectation be produced by this indiscriminate counsel, which throws a stumbling-block in the way of gradual improvement, and true melioration of temper, the sex is not much benefited by sacrificing solid virtues to the attainment of superficial graces, though for a few years they may procure the individuals regal sway.

2.62 As a philosopher, I read with indignation the plausible epithets which men use to soften their insults; and, as a moralist, ask what is meant by such heterogeneous associations, as fair defects, amiable weaknesses, &c.? If there is but one criterion of morals, but one archetype for man, women appear to be suspended by destiny, according to the vulgar tale of *[Muhammad]*'s coffin; they have neither the unerring instinct of brutes; nor are allowed to fix the eye of reason on a perfect model. They were made to be loved, and must not aim at respect, lest they should be hunted out of society as masculine.

2.63 But to view the subject in another point of view. Do passive indolent women make the best wives? Confining our discussion to the present moment of existence, let us see how such weak creatures perform their part? Do the women, who, by the attainment of a few superficial accomplishments, have strengthened the prevailing prejudice, merely contribute to the happiness of their husbands? Do they display their charms merely to amuse them? And have women, who have early imbibed notions of passive obedience, sufficient character to manage a family or educate children?

So far from it, that, after surveying the history of woman, I cannot help agreeing with the severest satirist, considering the sex as the weakest as well as the most oppressed half of the species. What does history disclose but marks of inferiority, and how few women have emancipated themselves from the galling yoke of sovereign man?—So few, that the exceptions remind me of an ingenious conjecture respecting Newton: that he was probably a being of a superior order, accidentally caged in a human body. In the same style I have been led to imagine that the few extraordinary

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fine polish, something would be gained toward the advancement of order. But this indiscriminate counsel, as could quickly be shown, produces only affectation, and it throws a stumbling block in the way of gradual improvement and true betterment of temper. If so, women gain little by sacrificing solid virtues to acquire superficial graces, even if for a few years those graces win individual women royal sway.

As a philosopher, I read with indignation the plausible epithets men use to soften their insults. As a moralist, I ask what is meant by such mismatched pairings as “fair defects,” “amiable weaknesses,” and so on. If there is only one standard of morals, only one archetype for humanity, then women seem to be left hanging by destiny, like Muhammad’s coffin in the popular tale. They have neither the unerring instinct of animals, nor are they allowed to fix the eye of reason on a perfect model. They were made to be loved, and must not aim at respect, or they will be hunted out of society as masculine.[20]

But let us look at the subject from another angle. Do passive, indolent women make the best wives? Confining our discussion to the present life, let us see how such weak creatures play their part. Some women, by acquiring a few superficial accomplishments, have strengthened the prevailing prejudice. Do they merely contribute to their husbands’ happiness? Do they display their charms merely to amuse them? And do women who absorbed notions of passive obedience early in life have enough character to manage a household or educate children?

Far from it. After surveying the history of woman, I cannot help agreeing with the harshest satirist and regarding women as the weakest as well as the most oppressed half of the species. What does history reveal but marks of inferiority? And how few women have freed themselves from the galling yoke of sovereign man?—So few that the exceptions remind me of a clever guess about Newton: that he was probably a being of a higher order, accidentally caged in a human body. In the same vein, I have been led to imagine that the few ex-

20 A popular European legend held that Muhammad’s coffin hung suspended in midair, between heaven and earth.

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women who have rushed in eccentrical directions out of the orbit prescribed to their sex, were *male* spirited, confined by mistake in a female frame.

But if it be not philosophical to think of sex when the soul is mentioned, the inferiority must depend on the organs; or the heavenly fire, which is to ferment the clay, is not given in equal portions.

2.64 But avoiding, as I have hitherto done, any direct comparison of the two sexes collectively, or frankly acknowledging the inferiority of woman, according to the present appearance of things, I shall only insist that men have increased that inferiority till women are almost sunk below the standard of rational creatures. Let their faculties have room to unfold, and their virtues to gain strength, and then determine where the whole sex must stand in the intellectual scale. Yet let it be remembered, that for a small number of distinguished women I do not ask a place.

2.65 It is difficult for us purblind mortals to say to what height human discoveries and improvements may arrive when the gloom of despotism subsides, which makes us stumble at every step; but, when morality shall be settled on a more solid basis, then, without being gifted with a prophetic spirit, I will venture to predict that woman will be either the friend or slave of man. We shall not, as at present, doubt whether she is a moral agent, or the link which unites man with brutes.

But, should it then appear, that like the brutes they were principally created for the use of man, he will let them patiently bite the bridle, and not mock them with empty praise; or, should their rationality be proved, he will not impede their improvement merely to gratify his sensual appetites. He will not, with all the graces of rhetoric, advise them to submit implicitly their understanding to the guidance of man. He will not, when he treats of the education of women, assert that they ought never to have the free use of reason, nor would he recommend cunning and dissimulation to beings who are acquiring, in like manner as himself, the virtues of humanity.

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traordinary women who have rushed off in eccentric directions out of the orbit laid down for their sex were *male* spirits, confined by mistake in a female frame.

But if it is not philosophical to think of sex when the soul is mentioned, then the inferiority must depend on the bodily organs. Otherwise the heavenly fire that is to ferment the clay is not handed out in equal portions.

So far I have avoided any direct comparison of the two sexes as wholes; or I have frankly acknowledged woman's inferiority as things now appear. I will go on doing so, and will only insist that men have increased that inferiority until women have sunk almost below the standard of rational creatures. Let their faculties have room to unfold and their virtues room to gain strength, and then decide where the whole sex must stand on the intellectual scale. But let it be remembered that I am not asking for a place for a small number of distinguished women.

It is hard for us half-blind mortals to say how far human discoveries and improvements may go once the gloom of despotism lifts, the gloom that makes us stumble at every step. But when morality is settled on a firmer basis, then, without any gift of prophecy, I will venture to predict that woman will be either the friend or the slave of man. We will not, as now, doubt whether she is a moral agent or the link that joins man to the animals.

Suppose it should then turn out that, like the animals, women were created mainly for man's use. Then he will let them patiently bite the bridle, and not mock them with empty praise. Or, if their rationality should be proved, he will not hinder their improvement merely to gratify his sensual appetites. He will not, with all the graces of rhetoric, advise them to submit their understanding without question to the guidance of man. He will not, when he writes on the education of women, assert that they ought never to have the free use of reason. Nor will he recommend cunning and deceit to beings who are acquiring, just as he is, the virtues of humanity.

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	Surely there can be but one rule of right, if morality has an eternal foundation, and whoever sacrifices virtue, strictly so called, to present convenience, or whose *duty* it is to act in such a manner, lives only for the passing day, and cannot be an accountable creature.	Surely, if morality has an eternal foundation, there can be only one rule of right. Whoever sacrifices virtue, strictly so called, to present convenience, or whose *duty* it is to act that way, lives only for the passing day and cannot be an accountable creature.
2.67	The poet then should have dropped his sneer when he says,	The poet, then, should have dropped his sneer when he says,[21]
2.68	"If weak women go astray, / The stars are more in fault than they."	"If weak women go astray, / The stars are more to blame than they."
2.69	For that they are bound by the adamantine chain of destiny is most certain, if it be proved that they are never to exercise their own reason, never to be independent, never to rise above opinion, or to feel the dignity of a rational will that only bows to God, and often forgets that the universe contains any being but itself and the model of perfection to which its ardent gaze is turned, to adore attributes that, softened into virtues, may be imitated in kind, though the degree overwhelms the enraptured mind.	For it is quite certain that they are bound by the unbreakable chain of destiny, if it is proved that they are never to exercise their own reason, never to be independent, never to rise above opinion, and never to feel the dignity of a rational will that bows only to God. Such a will often forgets that the universe contains any being but itself and the model of perfection toward which its ardent gaze is turned. It adores attributes that, softened into virtues, may be imitated in kind, though their degree overwhelms the enraptured mind.
2.70	If, I say, for I would not impress by declamation when Reason offers her sober light, if they are really capable of acting like rational creatures, let them not be treated like slaves; or, like the brutes who are dependent on the reason of man, when they associate with him; but cultivate their minds, give them the salutary, sublime curb of principle, and let them attain conscious dignity by feeling themselves only dependent on God. Teach them, in common with man, to submit to necessity, instead of giving, to render them more pleasing, a sex to morals.	If, I say—for I do not want to make an impression by declamation when Reason offers her sober light—if they are really capable of acting like rational creatures, let them not be treated like slaves, or like the animals that depend on man's reason when they live with him. Instead, cultivate their minds, give them the healthy, sublime restraint of principle, and let them attain a conscious dignity by feeling themselves dependent only on God. Teach them, along with men, to submit to necessity, instead of giving morals a sex in order to make women more pleasing.
2.71	Further, should experience prove that they cannot attain the same degree of strength of mind, perseverance, and fortitude, let their virtues be the same in kind, though they may vainly struggle for the same degree; and the superiority of man will be equally clear, if not clearer; and truth, as it is a simple principle, which admits of no modification, would be common to both. Nay, the order of society as it is at present regulated would not be inverted, for woman would then only have the rank that reason assigned her, and arts could not be	Further, should experience prove that they cannot reach the same degree of strength of mind, perseverance, and fortitude, let their virtues be the same in kind, even if they struggle in vain for the same degree. The superiority of man will be just as clear, if not clearer. And truth, being a simple principle that allows no modification, would be common to both. Indeed, the order of society as it is now arranged would not be overturned. Woman would then have only the rank that reason as-

21 Matthew Prior (1664–1721), in his tale "Hans Carvel."

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practised to bring the balance even, much less to turn it.

2.72 These may be termed Utopian dreams.—Thanks to that Being who impressed them on my soul, and gave me sufficient strength of mind to dare to exert my own reason, till, becoming dependent only on him for the support of my virtue, I view, with indignation, the mistaken notions that enslave my sex.

2.73 I love man as my fellow; but his scepter, real, or usurped, extends not to me, unless the reason of an individual demands my homage; and even then the submission is to reason, and not to man. In fact, the conduct of an accountable being must be regulated by the operations of its own reason; or on what foundation rests the throne of God?

2.74 It appears to me necessary to dwell on these obvious truths, because females have been insulated, as it were; and, while they have been stripped of the virtues that should clothe humanity, they have been decked with artificial graces that enable them to exercise a short-lived tyranny. Love, in their bosoms, taking place of every nobler passion, their sole ambition is to be fair, to raise emotion instead of inspiring respect; and this ignoble desire, like the servility in absolute monarchies, destroys all strength of character.

Liberty is the mother of virtue, and if women are, by their very constitution, slaves, and not allowed to breathe the sharp invigorating air of freedom, they must ever languish like exotics, and be reckoned beautiful flaws in nature;—let it also be remembered, that they are the only flaw.

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signed her, and no arts could be practiced to even the balance, much less to tip it.

These may be called utopian dreams.—Thanks, then, to that Being who impressed them on my soul and gave me enough strength of mind to dare to use my own reason. Depending now on him alone for the support of my virtue, I look with indignation on the mistaken notions that enslave my sex.

I love man as my fellow; but his scepter, real or usurped, does not extend to me, unless the reason of an individual demands my homage. And even then the submission is to reason, not to man. In fact, the conduct of an accountable being must be governed by the workings of its own reason. Otherwise, on what foundation does the throne of God rest?

It seems necessary to me to dwell on these obvious truths because women have been, as it were, isolated. While they have been stripped of the virtues that should clothe humanity, they have been decked out with artificial graces that allow them to exercise a short-lived tyranny. Love takes the place of every nobler passion in their hearts, so their only ambition is to be beautiful, to arouse emotion instead of inspiring respect. And this ignoble desire, like the servility found in absolute monarchies, destroys all strength of character.

Liberty is the mother of virtue. If women are slaves by their very constitution, and are not allowed to breathe the sharp, invigorating air of freedom, they must always languish like exotic plants and be counted beautiful flaws in nature. Let it also be remembered that they are the only flaw.

THE ARGUMENT FROM SUBJECTION

She answers the claim that women's long subjection proves their inferiority by pointing to men's submission to kings.

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2.75 As to the argument respecting the subjection in which the sex has ever been held, it retorts on man. The many have always been enthralled by the few; and monsters, who scarcely have shewn any discernment of human excellence, have tyrannized over thousands of their fellow creatures. Why have men of superior

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As for the argument drawn from the subjection in which women have always been held, it turns back against men. The many have always been enslaved by the few, and monsters who have shown hardly any discernment of human excellence have tyrannized over thousands of their fellow

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endowments submitted to such degradation? For, is it not universally acknowledged that kings, viewed collectively, have ever been inferior, in abilities and virtue, to the same number of men taken from the common mass of mankind—yet, have they not, and are they not still treated with a degree of reverence that is an insult to reason; China is not the only country where a living man has been made a God.

Men have submitted to superior strength to enjoy with impunity the pleasure of the moment—*women* have only done the same, and therefore till it is proved that the courtier, who servilely resigns the birthright of a man, is not a moral agent, it cannot be demonstrated that woman is essentially inferior to man because she has always been subjugated.

2.76 Brutal force has hitherto governed the world, and that the science of politics is in its infancy, is evident from philosophers scrupling to give the knowledge most useful to man that determinate distinction.

2.77 I shall not pursue this argument any further than to establish an obvious inference, that as sound politics diffuse liberty, mankind, including woman, will become more wise and virtuous.

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creatures. Why have men of superior gifts submitted to such degradation? For is it not universally acknowledged that kings, taken as a group, have always been inferior in ability and virtue to the same number of men taken from the common mass of humanity? And yet have they not been treated, and are they not still treated, with a reverence that is an insult to reason? China is not the only country where a living man has been made a god.

Men have submitted to superior strength so as to enjoy the pleasure of the moment without penalty. *Women* have only done the same. So until it is proved that the courtier, who servilely gives up the birthright of a man, is not a moral agent, it cannot be shown that woman is essentially inferior to man because she has always been subjugated.

Brute force has so far governed the world. And that the science of politics is still in its infancy is evident from the fact that philosophers hesitate to give that definite standing to the knowledge most useful to humanity.

I will pursue this argument no further than to establish an obvious inference: as sound politics spreads liberty, humankind, women included, will become wiser and more virtuous.

Chapter III: The Same Subject Continued

Bodily strength, health and a strong mind go together; women are taught weakness and then despised for it.

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3.1	Bodily strength from being the distinction of heroes is now sunk into such unmerited contempt, that men, as well as women, seem to think it unnecessary: the latter, as it takes from their feminine graces, and from that lovely weakness, the source of their undue power; and the former, because it appears inimical with the character of a gentleman.	Bodily strength was once the distinguishing mark of heroes. It has now sunk into such undeserved contempt that men as well as women seem to think it unnecessary. Women think so because it takes away from their feminine graces and from that lovely weakness which is the source of their undue power. Men think so because it seems at odds with the character of a gentleman.
3.2	That they have both by departing from one extreme run into another, may easily be proved; but first it may be proper to observe, that a vulgar error has obtained a degree of credit, which has given force to a false conclusion, in which an effect has been mistaken for a cause.	It can easily be proved that both, in leaving one extreme, have run into the other. But first it may be proper to note that a popular error has gained enough credit to lend force to a false conclusion, one in which an effect has been mistaken for a cause.
3.3	People of genius have, very frequently, impaired their constitutions by study or careless inattention to their health, and the violence of their passions bearing a proportion to the vigour of their intellects, the sword's destroying the scabbard has become almost proverbial, and superficial observers have inferred from thence, that men of genius have commonly weak, or, to use a more fashionable phrase, delicate constitutions. Yet the contrary, I believe, will appear to be the fact; for, on diligent inquiry, I find that strength of mind has, in most cases, been accompanied by superior strength of body,—natural soundness of constitution,—not that robust tone of nerves and vigour of muscles, which arise from bodily labour, when the mind is quiescent, or only directs the hands.	People of genius have very often damaged their health by study or by careless neglect of their bodies. Since the violence of their passions has matched the vigor of their intellects, the sword wearing out the scabbard has become almost proverbial. Superficial observers have concluded from this that men of genius usually have weak, or, to use a more fashionable word, delicate constitutions. Yet I believe the opposite will turn out to be the fact. On careful inquiry I find that strength of mind has, in most cases, gone with superior strength of body. By this I mean natural soundness of constitution, not the robust nerves and vigorous muscles that come from physical labor when the mind is idle or only directs the hands.
3.4	Dr. Priestley has remarked, in the preface to his biographical chart, that the majority of great men have lived beyond forty-five. And, considering the thoughtless manner in which they have lavished their strength, when investigating a favourite science they have wasted the lamp of life, forgetful of the midnight hour; or, when lost in poetic dreams, fancy has peopled the scene, and the soul has been disturbed, till it shook the	Dr. Priestley has remarked, in the preface to his biographical chart, that most great men have lived beyond forty-five. And consider how thoughtlessly they have squandered their strength. Investigating a favorite science, they have burned down the lamp of life, forgetting the midnight hour. Or, lost in poetic dreams, their imagination has peopled the scene, and the soul has been disturbed by the

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constitution, by the passions that meditation had raised; whose objects, the baseless fabric of a vision, faded before the exhausted eye, they must have had iron frames.

Shakespeare never grasped the airy dagger with a nerveless hand, nor did Milton tremble when he led Satan far from the confines of his dreary prison.—These were not the ravings of imbecility, the sickly effusions of distempered brains; but the exuberance of fancy, that 'in a fine phrenzy' wandering, was not continually reminded of its material shackles.

3.5 I am aware that this argument would carry me further than it may be supposed I wish to go; but I follow truth, and, still adhering to my first position, I will allow that bodily strength seems to give man a natural superiority over woman; and this is the only solid basis on which the superiority of the sex can be built.

But I still insist, that not only the virtue, but the *knowledge* of the two sexes should be the same in nature, if not in degree, and that women, considered not only as moral, but rational creatures, ought to endeavour to acquire human virtues (or perfections) by the *same* means as men, instead of being educated like a fanciful kind of *half* being—one of Rousseau's wild chimeras[1].

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passions that meditation had raised, until it shook the body too; and the objects of those passions, the baseless fabric of a vision, faded before the exhausted eye. Given all this, they must have had iron frames.[1]

Shakespeare never grasped the airy dagger with a feeble hand, nor did Milton tremble when he led Satan far from the borders of his dreary prison.—These were not the ravings of weakness, the sickly outpourings of disordered brains. They were the abundance of an imagination that, wandering "in a fine frenzy," was not constantly reminded of its material shackles.[2]

I am aware that this argument would take me further than I may be supposed to want to go. But I follow truth, and, still holding to my first position, I will grant that bodily strength seems to give man a natural superiority over woman. This is the only solid basis on which the superiority of men can be built.

But I still insist that not only the virtue but also the *knowledge* of the two sexes should be the same in nature, if not in degree. Women, considered not only as moral but as rational creatures, ought to try to acquire human virtues (or perfections) by the *same* means as men, instead of being educated like some fanciful kind of *half* being—one of Rousseau's wild fantasies[1].

1 Joseph Priestley (1733–1804), scientist and Dissenting minister, published *A Chart of Biography* in 1765. "The baseless fabric of this vision" is from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

2 The dagger is Macbeth's; "in a fine frenzy" is from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act 5.

3

[1] 'Researches into abstract and speculative truths, the principles and axioms of sciences, in short, every thing which tends to generalize our ideas, is not the proper province of women; their studies should be relative to point of practice; it belongs to them to apply those principles which men have discovered; and it is their part to make observations, which direct men to the establishment of general principles.

[1] "Researches into abstract and speculative truths, the principles and axioms of the sciences—in short, everything that tends to generalize our ideas—are not the proper province of women. Their studies should relate to matters of practice. It is for them to apply the principles that men have discovered, and it is their part to make observations that lead men to establish general principles.

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All the ideas of women, which have not the immediate tendency to points of duty, should be directed to the study of men, and to the attainment of those agreeable accomplishments which have taste for their object; for as to works of genius, they are beyond their capacity; neither have they sufficient precision or power of attention to succeed in sciences which require accuracy: and as to physical knowledge, it belongs to those only who are most active, most inquisitive; who comprehend the greatest variety of objects: in short, it belongs to those who have the strongest powers, and who exercise them most, to judge of the relations between sensible beings and the laws of nature.

All the ideas of women that do not bear directly on points of duty should be directed to the study of men, and to acquiring those pleasant accomplishments whose object is taste. For works of genius are beyond their capacity. Nor do they have enough precision or power of attention to succeed in sciences that require accuracy. And as for knowledge of nature, it belongs only to those who are most active, most inquisitive, and who take in the greatest variety of objects. In short, it belongs to those who have the strongest powers, and who exercise them most, to judge the relations between sentient beings and the laws of nature.

PRIDE IN WEAKNESS

She attacks Rousseau's excuse for women's pride in physical weakness and the power it gives them.

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3.6	But, if strength of body be, with some shew of reason, the boast of men, why are women so infatuated as to be proud of a defect? Rousseau has furnished them with a plausible excuse, which could only have occurred to a man, whose imagination had been allowed to run wild, and refine on the impressions made by exquisite senses;—that they might, forsooth, have a pretext for yielding to a natural appetite without violating a romantic species of modesty, which gratifies the pride and libertinism of man.	But if bodily strength is, with some show of reason, men's boast, why are women so infatuated as to be proud of a defect? Rousseau has supplied them with a plausible excuse. It could only have occurred to a man whose imagination had been allowed to run wild and to refine on the impressions of exquisite senses. The excuse is that they might, if you please, have a pretext for yielding to a natural appetite without violating a romantic sort of modesty, which gratifies the pride and libertinism of man.
3.7	Women, deluded by these sentiments, sometimes boast of their weakness, cunningly obtaining power by playing on the *weakness* of men; and they may well glory in their illicit sway, for, like Turkish bashaws, they have more real power than their masters: but virtue is sacrificed to temporary gratifications, and the respectability of life to the triumph of an hour.	Women, deceived by these sentiments, sometimes boast of their weakness, cunningly gaining power by playing on the *weakness* of men. And well they may glory in their illicit sway, for, like Turkish pashas, they have more real power than their masters. But virtue is sacrificed to passing gratifications, and a respectable life to the triumph of an hour.
5	A woman who is naturally weak, and does not carry her ideas to any great extent, knows how to judge and make a proper estimate of those movements which she sets to work, in order to aid her weakness; and these movements are the passions of men. The mechanism she employs is much more powerful than ours; for all her levers move the human heart.	A woman who is naturally weak, and does not carry her ideas very far, knows how to judge and properly estimate the movements she sets working to help her weakness; and these movements are the passions of men. The machinery she uses is much more powerful than ours, for all her levers move the human heart.
6	She must have the skill to incline us to do every thing which her sex will not enable her to do of herself, and which is necessary or agreeable to her; therefore she ought to study the mind of man thoroughly, not the mind of man in general, abstracted, but the dispositions of those men to whom she is subject, either by the laws of her country or by the force of opinion. She should learn to penetrate into their real sentiments from their conversation, their actions, their looks, and gestures. She should also have the art, by her own conversation, actions, looks, and gestures, to communicate those sentiments which are agreeable to them, without seeming to intend it.	She must have the skill to incline us to do everything that her sex will not let her do for herself and that is necessary or pleasant to her. She ought therefore to study the mind of man thoroughly. She should study not the mind of man in general, in the abstract, but the dispositions of those men to whom she is subject, either by the laws of her country or by the force of opinion. She should learn to see into their real feelings from their conversation, their actions, their looks, and their gestures. She should also have the art of conveying, through her own conversation, actions, looks, and gestures, the feelings that are agreeable to them, without seeming to intend it.
7	Men will argue more philosophically about the human heart; but women will read the heart of man better than they. It belongs to women, if I may be allowed the expression, to form an experimental morality, and to reduce the study of man to a system. Women have most wit, men have most genius; women observe, men reason: from the concurrence of both we derive the clearest light and the most perfect knowledge, which the human mind is, of itself, capable of attaining.	Men will reason more philosophically about the human heart, but women will read the heart of man better than men do. It belongs to women, if I may put it this way, to form an experimental morality, and to reduce the study of man to a system. Women have more wit, men more genius; women observe, men reason. From the two together we get the clearest light and the most perfect knowledge that the human mind is capable of attaining on its own.
8	In one word, from hence we acquire the most intimate acquaintance, both with ourselves and others, of which our nature is capable; and it is thus that art has a constant tendency to perfect those endowments which nature has bestowed.—The world is the book of women.' *Rousseau's Emilius*. I hope my readers still remember the comparison, which I have brought forward, between women and officers.	In a word, from this we acquire the most intimate acquaintance with ourselves and with others that our nature allows. It is in this way that art constantly tends to perfect the gifts nature has bestowed.—The world is the book of women." *Rousseau's Emile*. I hope my readers still remember the comparison I drew earlier between women and army officers.

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3.8 Women, as well as despots have now, perhaps, more power than they would have if the world, divided and subdivided into kingdoms and families, was governed by laws deduced from the exercise of reason; but in obtaining it, to carry on the comparison, their character is degraded, and licentiousness spread through the whole aggregate of society. The many become pedestal to the few. I, therefore, will venture to assert, that till women are more rationally educated, the progress of human virtue and improvement in knowledge must receive continual checks.

And if it be granted that woman was not created merely to gratify the appetite of man, nor to be the upper servant, who provides his meals and takes care of his linen, it must follow, that the first care of those mothers or fathers, who really attend to the education of females, should be, if not to strengthen the body, at least, not to destroy the constitution by mistaken notions of beauty and female excellence; nor should girls ever be allowed to imbibe the pernicious notion that a defect can, by any chemical process of reasoning, become an excellence.

In this respect, I am happy to find, that the author of one of the most instructive books, that our country has produced for children, coincides with me in opinion; I shall quote his pertinent remarks to give the force of his respectable authority to reason[2].

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Women, like despots, may now have more power than they would have if the world, divided and subdivided into kingdoms and families, were governed by laws drawn from the exercise of reason. But in gaining it, to carry the comparison further, their character is degraded, and licentiousness spreads through the whole of society. The many become a pedestal for the few. I will therefore venture to assert that until women are more rationally educated, the progress of human virtue and the growth of knowledge must be continually held back.

Suppose it is granted that woman was not created merely to gratify man's appetite, or to be the upper servant who provides his meals and looks after his linen. Then it must follow that parents who really attend to the education of girls should make this their first concern: if not to strengthen the body, at least not to ruin the constitution through mistaken notions of beauty and female excellence. Nor should girls ever be allowed to absorb the harmful notion that a defect can, by any chemical process of reasoning, become an excellence.

On this point, I am happy to find that the author of one of the most instructive books for children our country has produced agrees with me. I will quote his apt remarks, to lend the force of his respectable authority to reason[2].

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[2] A respectable old man gives the following sensible account of the method he pursued when educating his daughter. 'I endeavoured to give both to her mind and body a degree of vigour, which is seldom found in the female sex. As soon as she was sufficiently advanced in strength to be capable of the lighter labours of husbandry and gardening, I employed her as my constant companion. Selene, for that was her name, soon acquired a dexterity in all these rustic employments, which I considered with equal pleasure and admiration. If women are in general feeble both in body and mind, it arises less from nature than from education.

[2] A respectable old man gives the following sensible account of the method he followed in educating his daughter. "I tried to give both her mind and her body a degree of vigor seldom found in the female sex. As soon as she was strong enough for the lighter work of farming and gardening, I made her my constant companion. Selene, for that was her name, soon became skilled in all these country occupations, and I watched her with equal pleasure and admiration. If women are generally feeble in both body and mind, this comes less from nature than from education.

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We encourage a vicious indolence and inactivity, which we falsely call delicacy; instead of hardening their minds by the severer principles of reason and philosophy, we breed them to useless arts, which terminate in vanity and sensuality. In most of the countries which I had visited, they are taught nothing of an higher nature than a few modulations of the voice, or useless postures of the body; their time is consumed in sloth or trifles, and trifles become the only pursuits capable of interesting them. We seem to forget, that it is upon the qualities of the female sex that our own domestic comforts and the education of our children must depend.

We encourage a vicious indolence and inactivity, which we falsely call delicacy. Instead of hardening their minds with the sterner principles of reason and philosophy, we train them in useless arts that end in vanity and sensuality. In most of the countries I had visited, they are taught nothing higher than a few modulations of the voice or useless postures of the body. Their time is consumed in idleness or trifles, and trifles become the only pursuits that can interest them. We seem to forget that our own domestic comforts and the education of our children must depend on the qualities of women.

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3.9	But should it be proved that woman is naturally weaker than man, from whence does it follow that it is natural for her to labour to become still weaker than nature intended her to be? Arguments of this cast are an insult to common sense, and savour passion. The *divine right* of husbands, like the divine right of kings, may, it is to be hoped, in this enlightened age, be contested without danger, and, though conviction may not silence many boisterous disputants, yet when any prevailing prejudice is attacked, the wise will consider, and leave the narrow-minded to rail with thoughtless vehemence at innovation.	But even if it should be proved that woman is naturally weaker than man, how does it follow that it is natural for her to work at becoming still weaker than nature intended? Arguments of this kind are an insult to common sense and smack of passion. The *divine right* of husbands, like the divine right of kings, may, it is to be hoped, be challenged without danger in this enlightened age. Conviction may not silence many loud disputants. Still, when any prevailing prejudice is attacked, the wise will consider, and leave the narrow-minded to rail with thoughtless vehemence against innovation.
3.10	The mother, who wishes to give true dignity of character to her daughter, must, regardless of the sneers of ignorance, proceed on a plan diametrically opposite to that which Rousseau has recommended with all the deluding charms of eloquence and philosophical sophistry: for his eloquence renders absurdities plausible, and his dogmatic conclusions puzzle, without convincing, those who have not ability to refute them.	The mother who wants to give her daughter true dignity of character must ignore the sneers of ignorance. She must proceed on a plan diametrically opposed to the one Rousseau has recommended with all the deceptive charms of eloquence and philosophical sophistry. His eloquence makes absurdities plausible, and his dogmatic conclusions puzzle, without convincing, those who lack the ability to refute them.

GIRLS, PLAY AND DOLLS

She argues that girls' fondness for dolls and dress comes from confinement and example, not nature.

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3.11	Throughout the whole animal kingdom every young creature requires almost continual exercise, and the infancy of children, conformable to this intimation, should be passed in harmless gambols, that exercise the feet and hands, without requiring very minute direction from the head, or the constant attention of a nurse. In fact, the care necessary for self-	Throughout the whole animal kingdom, every young creature needs almost constant exercise. Following this hint, children's infancy should be spent in harmless romping that exercises the feet and hands without needing very detailed direction from the head or the constant attention of a nurse. In fact, the care needed for self-preservation is the first natural exercise of the understand-

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> And what are the comforts or the education which a race of beings, corrupted from their infancy, and unacquainted with all the duties of life, are fitted to bestow? To touch a musical instrument with useless skill, to exhibit their natural or affected graces to the eyes of indolent and debauched young men, to dissipate their husband's patrimony in riotous and unnecessary expenses, these are the only arts cultivated by women in most of the polished nations I had seen. And the consequences are uniformly such as may be expected to proceed from such polluted sources, private misery and public servitude.

> And what comforts, or what education, is a race of beings fit to provide when they have been corrupted from infancy and know nothing of the duties of life? To play a musical instrument with useless skill; to display their natural or affected graces to the eyes of idle and debauched young men; to squander their husbands' inheritance on wild and needless expenses: these are the only arts women cultivate in most of the polished nations I had seen. And the consequences are invariably what one would expect from such polluted sources: private misery and public servitude.

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> 'But Selene's education was regulated by different views, and conducted upon severer principles; if that can be called severity which opens the mind to a sense of moral and religious duties, and most effectually arms it against the inevitable evils of life.' *Mr. Day's Sanford and Merton*, Vol. III.

> "But Selene's education was governed by different aims and conducted on sterner principles—if that can be called severity which opens the mind to a sense of moral and religious duties, and most effectively arms it against the inevitable evils of life." *Mr. Day's Sandford and Merton*, Vol. III.

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preservation is the first natural exercise of the understanding, as little inventions to amuse the present moment unfold the imagination. But these wise designs of nature are counteracted by mistaken fondness or blind zeal. The child is not left a moment to its own direction, particularly a girl, and thus rendered dependent—dependence is called natural.

3.12 To preserve personal beauty, woman's glory! the limbs and faculties are cramped with worse than Chinese bands, and the sedentary life which they are condemned to live, whilst boys frolic in the open air, weakens the muscles and relaxes the nerves.—As for Rousseau's remarks, which have since been echoed by several writers, that they have naturally, that is from their birth, independent of education, a fondness for dolls, dressing, and talking—they are so puerile as not to merit a serious refutation.

That a girl, condemned to sit for hours together listening to the idle chat of weak nurses, or to attend at her mother's toilet, will endeavour to join the conversation, is, indeed, very natural; and that she will imitate her mother or aunts, and amuse herself by adorning her lifeless doll, as they do in dressing her, poor innocent babe! is undoubtedly a most natural consequence. For men of the greatest abilities have seldom had sufficient strength to rise above the surrounding atmosphere; and, if the page of genius has always been blurred by the prejudices of the age, some allowance should be made for a sex, who like kings, always see things through a false medium.

3.13 In this manner may the fondness for dress, conspicuous in women, be easily accounted for, without supposing it the result of a desire to please the sex on which they are dependent. The absurdity, in short, of supposing that a girl is naturally a coquette, and that a desire connected with the impulse of nature to propagate the species, should appear even before an improper education has, by heating the imagination, called it forth prematurely, is so unphilosophical, that such a sagacious observer as Rousseau would not have adopted it, if he had not been accustomed to make reason give way to his desire of singularity, and truth to a favourite paradox.

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ing, just as little inventions to amuse the moment unfold the imagination. But these wise designs of nature are thwarted by misguided fondness or blind zeal. The child, especially a girl, is not left to her own direction for a moment, and is thus made dependent—and then dependence is called natural.

To preserve personal beauty—woman's glory!—the limbs and faculties are cramped with worse than Chinese bindings. The sedentary life that girls are condemned to lead, while boys frolic in the open air, weakens the muscles and slackens the nerves. —Rousseau remarks, and several writers have since echoed him, that girls naturally have a fondness for dolls, dressing up, and talking, meaning that they have it from birth, independent of education. These remarks are so childish that they do not deserve a serious refutation.[13]

A girl condemned to sit for hours on end listening to the idle chatter of foolish nurses, or to attend her mother at her dressing table, will try to join in the conversation. That is, indeed, very natural. And she will imitate her mother or aunts, and amuse herself by adorning her lifeless doll just as they adorn her, poor innocent babe! That is undoubtedly a most natural consequence. For men of the greatest abilities have seldom had strength enough to rise above the atmosphere around them. And if the page of genius has always been blotted by the prejudices of its age, some allowance should be made for a sex who, like kings, always see things through a distorting medium.

In this way the fondness for dress so conspicuous in women can easily be explained, without supposing that it springs from a desire to please the sex on which they depend. In short, it is absurd to suppose that a girl is naturally a coquette. It is absurd to suppose that a desire connected with the natural impulse to propagate the species should appear even before an improper education has called it forth prematurely by heating the imagination. The idea is so unphilosophical that so shrewd an observer as Rousseau would never have adopted it, had he not been in the habit of making

13 The binding of girls' feet in China.

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	reason give way to his love of being singular, and truth to a favorite paradox.
3.14 Yet thus to give a sex to mind was not very consistent with the principles of a man who argued so warmly, and so well, for the immortality of the soul.—But what a weak barrier is truth when it stands in the way of an hypothesis! Rousseau respected—almost adored virtue—and yet he allowed himself to love with sensual fondness. His imagination constantly prepared inflammable fewel for his inflammable senses; but, in order to reconcile his respect for self-denial, fortitude, and those heroic virtues, which a mind like his could not coolly admire, he labours to invert the law of nature, and broaches a doctrine pregnant with mischief and derogatory to the character of supreme wisdom.	Yet giving a sex to the mind in this way was hardly consistent with the principles of a man who argued so warmly, and so well, for the immortality of the soul.—But what a weak barrier truth is when it stands in the way of a hypothesis! Rousseau respected, almost adored, virtue, and yet he allowed himself to love with sensual fondness. His imagination constantly prepared inflammable fuel for his inflammable senses. But he also respected self-denial, fortitude, and those heroic virtues that a mind like his could not coolly admire. To reconcile the two, he labors to invert the law of nature, and puts forward a doctrine full of mischief and insulting to the character of supreme wisdom.
3.15 His ridiculous stories, which tend to prove that girls are *naturally* attentive to their persons, without laying any stress on daily example, are below contempt.—And that a little miss should have such a correct taste as to neglect the pleasing amusement of making O's, merely because she perceived that it was an ungraceful attitude, should be selected with the anecdotes of the learned pig[3]. I have, probably, had an opportunity of observing more girls in their infancy than J. J.	His ridiculous stories, meant to prove that girls are *naturally* attentive to their appearance without giving any weight to daily example, are beneath contempt.—He tells of a little miss with such correct taste that she gave up the pleasant amusement of making O's merely because she saw it was an ungraceful posture. That tale should be filed alongside the anecdotes of the learned pig[3]. I have probably had more chances to observe girls in their infancy than J. J.[14]
Rousseau—I can recollect my own feelings, and I have looked steadily around me; yet, so far from coinciding with him in opinion respecting the first dawn of the female character, I will venture to affirm, that a girl, whose spirits have not been damped by inactivity, or innocence tainted by false shame, will always be a romp, and the doll will never excite attention unless confinement allows her no alternative.	Rousseau—I can remember my own feelings, and I have looked steadily around me. Yet, far from agreeing with him about the first dawn of the female character, I will venture to affirm the opposite. A girl whose spirits have not been dampened by inactivity, and whose innocence has not been tainted by false shame, will always be a romp. The doll will never hold her attention unless confinement leaves her no alternative.
Girls and boys, in short, would play harmlessly together, if the distinction of sex was not inculcated long before nature makes any difference.—I will go further, and affirm, as an indisputable fact, that most of the women, in the circle of my observation, who have acted like rational creatures, or shewn any vigour of intellect, have accidentally been allowed to run wild—as some of the elegant formers of the fair sex would insinuate.	In short, girls and boys would play harmlessly together if the distinction of sex were not drummed into them long before nature makes any difference.—I will go further, and affirm as an indisputable fact that most of the women within my observation who have acted like rational creatures, or shown any vigor of intellect, have happened to be allowed to run wild, as some of the elegant shapers of the fair sex would put it.

14 The "learned pig" was a performing pig shown in London in the 1780s that supposedly spelled out words with lettered cards.

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3.16 The baneful consequences which flow from inattention to health during infancy, and youth, extend further than is supposed—dependence of body naturally produces dependence of mind; and how can she be a good wife or mother, the greater part of whose time is employed to guard against or endure sickness? Nor can it be expected that a woman will resolutely endeavour to strengthen her constitution and abstain from enervating indulgencies, if artificial notions of beauty, and false descriptions of sensibility, have been early entangled with her motives of action. Most men are sometimes obliged to bear with bodily inconveniencies, and to endure, occasionally, the inclemency of the elements; but genteel women are, literally speaking, slaves to their bodies, and glory in their subjection.

The harmful consequences of neglecting health in infancy and youth reach further than people suppose. Dependence of body naturally produces dependence of mind. And how can a woman be a good wife or mother when most of her time is spent guarding against sickness or enduring it? Nor can we expect a woman to work resolutely at strengthening her constitution, and to give up enervating indulgences, if artificial notions of beauty and false descriptions of sensibility were tangled up early with her motives for acting. Most men are sometimes obliged to put up with bodily discomfort, and now and then to endure harsh weather. But genteel women are, quite literally, slaves to their bodies—and they glory in their subjection.

3.17 I once knew a weak woman of fashion, who was more than commonly proud of her delicacy and sensibility. She thought a distinguishing taste and puny appetite the height of all human perfection, and acted accordingly.—I have seen this weak sophisticated being neglect all the duties of life, yet recline with self-complacency on a sofa, and boast of her want of appetite as a proof of delicacy that extended to, or, perhaps, arose from, her

I once knew a weak woman of fashion who was more than usually proud of her delicacy and sensibility. She thought a fastidious taste and a puny appetite the height of all human perfection, and acted accordingly. I have seen this weak, artificial creature neglect all the duties of life, yet recline complacently on a sofa and boast of her lack of appetite as proof of a delicacy that extended to—or perhaps arose from—her exquisite sensibility. It is

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[3] 'I once knew a young person who learned to write before she learned to read, and began to write with her needle before she could use a pen. At first, indeed, she took it into her head to make no other letter than the O: this letter she was constantly making of all sizes, and always the wrong way. Unluckily, one day, as she was intent on this employment, she happened to see herself in the looking-glass; when, taking a dislike to the constrained attitude in which she sat while writing, she threw away her pen, like another Pallas, and determined against making the O any more.

[3] “I once knew a young girl who learned to write before she learned to read, and began to write with her needle before she could use a pen. At first, indeed, she took it into her head to make no letter but the O. She was always making this letter, in all sizes, and always the wrong way. Unluckily, one day, while she was intent on this occupation, she happened to see herself in the mirror. Taking a dislike to the awkward posture she sat in while writing, she threw away her pen, like another Pallas, and resolved never to make the O again.[15]

15 In the myth, Pallas Athena threw away the flute she had invented after seeing her puffed-out cheeks reflected in water.

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Her brother was also equally averse to writing; it was the confinement, however, and not the constrained attitude, that most disgusted him.' *Rousseau's Emilius.*

Her brother was just as averse to writing; but it was the confinement, not the awkward posture, that most disgusted him.” *Rousseau’s Emile.*

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exquisite sensibility: for it is difficult to render intelligible such ridiculous jargon.—Yet, at the moment, I have seen her insult a worthy old gentlewoman, whom unexpected misfortunes had made dependent on her ostentatious bounty, and who, in better days, had claims on her gratitude.

Is it possible that a human creature could have become such a weak and depraved being, if, like the Sybarites, dissolved in luxury, every thing like virtue had not been worn away, or never impressed by precept, a poor substitute, it is true, for cultivation of mind, though it serves as a fence against vice?

3.18 Such a woman is not a more irrational monster than some of the Roman emperors, who were depraved by lawless power. Yet, since kings have been more under the restraint of law, and the curb, however weak, of honour, the records of history are not filled with such unnatural instances of folly and cruelty, nor does the despotism that kills virtue and genius in the bud, hover over Europe with that destructive blast which desolates Turky, and renders the men, as well as the soil, unfruitful.

3.19 Women are every where in this deplorable state; for, in order to preserve their innocence, as ignorance is courteously termed, truth is hidden from them, and they are made to assume an artificial character before their faculties have acquired any strength. Taught from their infancy that beauty is woman's sceptre, the mind shapes itself to the body, and, roaming round its gilt cage, only seeks to adorn its prison. Men have various employments and pursuits which engage their attention, and give a character to the opening mind; but women, confined to one, and having their thoughts constantly directed to the most insignificant part of themselves, seldom extend their views beyond the triumph of the hour.

But was their understanding once emancipated from the slavery to which the pride and sensuality of man and their short-sighted desire, like that of dominion in tyrants, of present sway, has subjected them, we should probably read of their weaknesses with surprise. I must be allowed to pursue the argument a little farther.

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hard to make such ridiculous jargon intelligible. Yet at that very moment I have seen her insult a worthy old gentlewoman whom unexpected misfortunes had made dependent on her showy charity, and who, in better days, had earned her gratitude.

Could a human creature possibly have become so weak and depraved a being unless, as with the Sybarites dissolved in luxury, everything resembling virtue had been worn away, or had never been impressed on her by precept? Precept is a poor substitute, it is true, for cultivation of the mind, but it does serve as a fence against vice.[18]

Such a woman is no more irrational a monster than some of the Roman emperors, who were depraved by lawless power. Yet since kings have been more restrained by law, and by the curb of honor, however weak, the records of history are no longer filled with such unnatural examples of folly and cruelty. Nor does the despotism that kills virtue and genius in the bud hang over Europe with the destructive blast that lays Turkey waste and makes the men, as well as the soil, barren.

Women everywhere are in this deplorable state. To preserve their innocence—as ignorance is politely called—truth is hidden from them, and they are made to take on an artificial character before their faculties have gained any strength. Taught from infancy that beauty is woman's scepter, the mind shapes itself to the body and, roaming around its gilded cage, seeks only to decorate its prison. Men have various occupations and pursuits that engage their attention and give character to the developing mind. But women are confined to one, and their thoughts are constantly directed to the most insignificant part of themselves, so they rarely look beyond the triumph of the hour.

But suppose their understanding were once freed from the slavery to which they have been subjected by the pride and sensuality of man, and by their own short-sighted desire for present sway, which is like tyrants' desire for dominion. We would probably read of their weaknesses with sur-

18 The Sybarites, citizens of the ancient Greek city of Sybaris in southern Italy, were proverbial for luxury and self-indulgence.

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	prise. I must be allowed to pursue the argument a little further.
3.20 Perhaps, if the existence of an evil being was allowed, who, in the allegorical language of scripture, went about seeking whom he should devour, he could not more effectually degrade the human character than by giving a man absolute power.	Perhaps, if we granted the existence of an evil being who, in the allegorical language of scripture, went about seeking whom he might devour, he could not degrade human character more effectively than by giving a man absolute power.
3.21 This argument branches into various ramifications.—Birth, riches, and every extrinsic advantage that exalt a man above his fellows, without any mental exertion, sink him in reality below them. In proportion to his weakness, he is played upon by designing men, till the bloated monster has lost all traces of humanity. And that tribes of men, like flocks of sheep, should quietly follow such a leader, is a solecism that only a desire of present enjoyment and narrowness of understanding can solve. Educated in slavish dependence, and enervated by luxury and sloth, where shall we find men who will stand forth to assert the rights of man;—or claim the privilege of moral beings, who should have but one road to excellence?	This argument branches out in various directions. Birth, riches, and every external advantage that raise a man above his fellows without any effort of mind actually sink him below them. In proportion to his weakness, he is played upon by scheming men, until the bloated monster has lost every trace of humanity. And that tribes of men should quietly follow such a leader, like flocks of sheep, is an absurdity that only a desire for present enjoyment and narrowness of understanding can explain. Men are raised in slavish dependence and weakened by luxury and idleness. Where, then, will we find men who will stand up to assert the rights of man, or claim the privilege of moral beings, who should have only one road to excellence?
Slavery to monarchs and ministers, which the world will be long in freeing itself from, and whose deadly grasp stop the progress of the human mind, is not yet abolished.	Slavery to monarchs and ministers has not yet been abolished. The world will take a long time to free itself from it, and its deadly grip stops the progress of the human mind.
3.22 Let not men then in the pride of power, use the same arguments that tyrannic kings and venal ministers have used, and fallaciously assert that woman ought to be subjected because she has always been so.—But, when man, governed by reasonable laws, enjoys his natural freedom, let him despise woman, if she do not share it with him; and till that glorious period arrives, in descanting on the folly of the sex, let him not overlook his own.	So let men not, in the pride of power, use the same arguments that tyrannical kings and corrupt ministers have used, and falsely assert that woman ought to be subjected because she always has been. But when man, governed by reasonable laws, enjoys his natural freedom, let him despise woman if she does not share it with him. And until that glorious time arrives, when he holds forth on the folly of women, let him not overlook his own.
3.23 Women, it is true, obtaining power by unjust means, by practising or fostering vice, evidently lose the rank which reason would assign them, and they become either abject slaves or capricious tyrants. They lose all simplicity, all dignity of mind, in acquiring power, and act as men are observed to act when they have been exalted by the same means.	Women, it is true, when they obtain power by unjust means, by practicing or fostering vice, clearly lose the rank that reason would assign them. They become either abject slaves or capricious tyrants. In acquiring power they lose all simplicity and all dignity of mind, and they act as men are seen to act when they have been raised up by the same means.

A REVOLUTION IN FEMALE MANNERS

She calls for women to reform themselves and the world, and grounds morality in God's balanced attributes.

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3.24	It is time to effect a revolution in female manners —time to restore to them their lost dignity—and make them, as a part of the human species, labour by reforming themselves to reform the world. It is time to separate unchangeable morals from local manners.—If men be demi-gods—why let us serve them! And if the dignity of the female soul be as disputable as that of animals—if their reason does not afford sufficient light to direct their conduct whilst unerring instinct is denied—they are surely of all creatures the most miserable! and, bent beneath the iron hand of destiny, must submit to be a *fair defect* in creation.	It is time to effect a revolution in female manners —time to restore to them their lost dignity—and to make them, as a part of the human species, labor to reform the world by reforming themselves. It is time to separate unchangeable morals from local manners. If men are demigods—why, let us serve them! And if the dignity of the female soul is as debatable as that of animals—if their reason does not give them enough light to direct their conduct, while unerring instinct is denied them—then surely they are the most miserable of all creatures! Bent beneath the iron hand of destiny, they must submit to being a *fair defect* in creation.[19]
	But to justify the ways of Providence respecting them, by pointing out some irrefragable reason for thus making such a large portion of mankind accountable and not accountable, would puzzle the subtilest casuist.	But try to justify the ways of Providence toward women by pointing to some unanswerable reason for making so large a portion of humanity both accountable and not accountable. That task would baffle the subtlest casuist.
3.25	The only solid foundation for morality appears to be the character of the supreme Being; the harmony of which arises from a balance of attributes;—and, to speak with reverence, one attribute seems to imply the *necessity* of another. He must be just, because he is wise, he must be good, because he is omnipotent. For to exalt one attribute at the expense of another equally noble and necessary, bears the stamp of the warped reason of man—the homage of passion.	The only solid foundation for morality seems to be the character of the Supreme Being. The harmony of that character arises from a balance of attributes, and, to speak with reverence, one attribute seems to imply the *necessity* of another. He must be just, because he is wise; he must be good, because he is omnipotent. To exalt one attribute at the expense of another equally noble and necessary bears the stamp of man's warped reason: it is the homage of passion.
	Man, accustomed to bow down to power in his *[pre-civilized]* state, can seldom divest himself of this barbarous prejudice, even when civilization determines how much superior mental is to bodily strength; and his reason is clouded by these crude opinions, even when he thinks of the Deity. His omnipotence is made to swallow up, or preside over his other attributes, and those mortals are supposed to limit his power irreverently, who think that it must be regulated by his wisdom.	Man is used to bowing down to power in his precivilized state, and he can rarely rid himself of this barbarous prejudice, even when civilization shows how far mental strength surpasses bodily strength. These crude opinions cloud his reason even when he thinks of the Deity. God's omnipotence is made to swallow up his other attributes, or to preside over them. Those mortals who think that his power must be regulated by his wisdom are supposed to be irreverently limiting it.
3.26	I disclaim that specious humility which, after investigating nature, stops at the author.—The High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity,	I reject that plausible humility which, after investigating nature, stops short at its author. The High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity doubtless

19 "Fair defect" is from Milton's *Paradise Lost* (10.891–92), where Adam calls Eve "this fair defect / Of Nature."

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doubtless possesses many attributes of which we can form no conception; but reason tells me that they cannot clash with those I adore—and I am compelled to listen to her voice.	possesses many attributes of which we can form no idea. But reason tells me that they cannot clash with those I adore, and I am compelled to listen to her voice.
3.27 It seems natural for man to search for excellence, and either to trace it in the object that he worships, or blindly to invest it with perfection, as a garment. But what good effect can the latter mode of worship have on the moral conduct of a rational being? He bends to power; he adores a dark cloud, which may open a bright prospect to him, or burst in angry, lawless fury, on his devoted head—he knows not why. And, supposing that the Deity acts from the vague impulse of an undirected will, man must also follow his own, or act according to rules, deduced from principles which he disclaims as irreverent.	It seems natural for man to look for excellence. He either traces it in the object he worships, or blindly wraps that object in perfection, like a garment. But what good effect can the second kind of worship have on the moral conduct of a rational being? He bows to power; he adores a dark cloud, which may open a bright prospect to him, or burst in angry, lawless fury on his doomed head—he does not know why. And if we suppose that the Deity acts from the vague impulse of an undirected will, then man too must follow his own will, or else act by rules deduced from principles that he rejects as irreverent.
Into this dilemma have both enthusiasts and cooler thinkers fallen, when they laboured to free men from the wholesome restraints which a just conception of the character of God imposes.	Both religious enthusiasts and cooler thinkers have fallen into this dilemma, when they labored to free people from the healthy restraints that a just conception of God's character imposes.
3.28 It is not impious thus to scan the attributes of the Almighty: in fact, who can avoid it that exercises his faculties? For to love God as the fountain of wisdom, goodness, and power, appears to be the only worship useful to a being who wishes to acquire either virtue or knowledge. A blind unsettled affection may, like human passions, occupy the mind and warm the heart, whilst, to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God, is forgotten. I shall pursue this subject still further, when I consider religion in a light opposite to that recommended by Dr. Gregory, who treats it as a matter of sentiment or taste.	It is not impious to examine the attributes of the Almighty in this way. Indeed, who that uses his faculties can avoid it? To love God as the source of wisdom, goodness, and power seems to be the only worship useful to a being who wishes to acquire either virtue or knowledge. A blind, unsettled affection may, like human passions, occupy the mind and warm the heart, while doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God are forgotten. I shall pursue this subject further when I consider religion in a light opposite to the one recommended by Dr. Gregory, who treats it as a matter of sentiment or taste.
3.29 To return from this apparent digression. It were to be wished that women would cherish an affection for their husbands, founded on the same principle that devotion ought to rest upon. No other firm base is there under heaven—for let them beware of the fallacious light of sentiment; too often used as a softer phrase for sensuality. It follows then, I think, that from their infancy women should either be shut up like eastern princes, or educated in such a manner as to be able to think and act for themselves.	To return from this apparent digression: it is to be wished that women would cherish an affection for their husbands founded on the same principle that devotion ought to rest on. There is no other firm foundation under heaven. Let them beware of the deceptive light of sentiment, which is too often used as a softer word for sensuality. It follows, then, I think, that from infancy women should either be shut up like Eastern princes, or be educated so as to be able to think and act for themselves.
3.30 Why do men halt between two opinions, and expect impossibilities? Why do they expect virtue	Why do men waver between two opinions and expect the impossible? Why do they expect virtue

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from a slave, from a being whom the constitution of civil society has rendered weak, if not vicious?

3.31 Still I know that it will require a considerable length of time to eradicate the firmly rooted prejudices which sensualists have planted; it will also require some time to convince women that they act contrary to their real interest on an enlarged scale, when they cherish or affect weakness under the name of delicacy, and to convince the world that the poisoned source of female vices and follies, if it be necessary, in compliance with custom, to use synonymous terms in a lax sense, has been the sensual homage paid to beauty:—to beauty of features; for it has been shrewdly observed by a German writer, that a pretty woman, as an object of desire, is generally allowed to be so by men of all descriptions; whilst a fine woman, who inspires more sublime emotions by displaying intellectual beauty, may be overlooked or observed with indifference, by those men who find their happiness in the gratification of their appetites.

I foresee an obvious retort—whilst man remains such an imperfect being as he appears hitherto to have been, he will, more or less, be the slave of his appetites; and those women obtaining most power who gratify a predominant one, the sex is degraded by a physical, if not by a moral necessity.

3.32 This objection has, I grant, some force; but while such a sublime precept exists, as, 'be pure as your heavenly Father is pure;' it would seem that the virtues of man are not limited by the Being who alone could limit them; and that he may press forward without considering whether he steps out of his sphere by indulging such a noble ambition.

To the wild billows it has been said, 'thus far shalt thou go, and no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.' Vainly then do they beat and foam, restrained by the power that confines the struggling planets in their orbits, matter yields to the great governing Spirit.—But an immortal soul, not restrained by mechanical laws and struggling to free itself from the shackles of matter, contributes to, instead of disturbing, the order of creation, when, co-operating with the Father of spirits, it tries to govern itself by the invariable

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from a slave—from a being whom the constitution of civil society has made weak, if not vicious?

Still, I know it will take a considerable time to root out the firmly established prejudices that sensualists have planted. It will also take some time to convince women that they act against their real interest, on a larger scale, when they cherish or affect weakness under the name of delicacy. And it will take time to convince the world that the poisoned source of female vices and follies has been the sensual homage paid to beauty (if I may, following custom, use those two terms loosely as synonyms). I mean beauty of features. A German writer has shrewdly observed that men of every sort generally agree that a pretty woman is pretty, as an object of desire. A fine woman, however, who inspires more sublime emotions by displaying intellectual beauty, may be overlooked or regarded with indifference by those men who find their happiness in gratifying their appetites.

I foresee an obvious retort. As long as man remains the imperfect being he seems so far to have been, he will be, more or less, the slave of his appetites. Since the women who gratify his predominant appetite gain the most power, women are degraded by a physical, if not a moral, necessity.

This objection has some force, I grant. But while so sublime a precept exists as “be pure as your heavenly Father is pure,” it would seem that man’s virtues are not limited by the Being who alone could limit them. He may press forward without worrying whether he steps out of his sphere by indulging so noble an ambition.

To the wild waves it has been said, “thus far you shall go, and no further; and here your proud waves shall be stopped.” So they beat and foam in vain, held back by the power that keeps the struggling planets in their orbits. Matter yields to the great governing Spirit. But an immortal soul is not restrained by mechanical laws, and it struggles to free itself from the shackles of matter. When such a soul cooperates with the Father of spirits and tries to govern itself by the same unvarying rule by which the universe is regulated—to a degree be-

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	rule that, in a degree, before which our imagination faints, the universe is regulated.	fore which our imagination faints—it contributes to the order of creation instead of disturbing it.
3.33	Besides, if women are educated for dependence; that is, to act according to the will of another fallible being, and submit, right or wrong, to power, where are we to stop? Are they to be considered as vicegerents allowed to reign over a small domain, and answerable for their conduct to a higher tribunal, liable to error?	Besides, if women are educated for dependence, that is, to act according to the will of another fallible being and to submit to power, right or wrong, where are we to stop? Are they to be regarded as deputies allowed to rule over a small domain, and answerable for their conduct to a higher tribunal that is itself liable to error?
3.34	It will not be difficult to prove that such delegates will act like men subjected by fear, and make their children and servants endure their tyrannical oppression. As they submit without reason, they will, having no fixed rules to square their conduct by, be kind, or cruel, just as the whim of the moment directs; and we ought not to wonder if sometimes, galled by their heavy yoke, they take a malignant pleasure in resting it on weaker shoulders.	It will not be hard to prove that such deputies will act like men ruled by fear, and make their children and servants endure their tyrannical oppression. Since they submit without reason, they will have no fixed rules to square their conduct by. They will be kind or cruel just as the whim of the moment directs. And we ought not to wonder if sometimes, chafed by their heavy yoke, they take a malicious pleasure in laying it on weaker shoulders.

TWO WIDOWS

She contrasts a widow trained only to please with one whose mind and body have been strengthened.

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3.35	But, supposing a woman, trained up to obedience, be married to a sensible man, who directs her judgment without making her feel the servility of her subjection, to act with as much propriety by this reflected light as can be expected when reason is taken at second hand, yet she cannot ensure the life of her protector; he may die and leave her with a large family.	But suppose a woman trained up to obedience is married to a sensible man. He directs her judgment without making her feel the servility of her subjection, so that she acts with as much propriety by this reflected light as can be expected when reason is taken secondhand. Still, she cannot guarantee the life of her protector. He may die and leave her with a large family.
3.36	A double duty devolves on her; to educate them in the character of both father and mother; to form their principles and secure their property. But, alas! she has never thought, much less acted for herself. She has only learned to please[4] men, to depend gracefully on them; yet, encumbered with children, how is she to obtain another protector—a husband to supply the place of reason? A rational man, for we are not treading on romantic ground, though he may think her a pleasing docile creature, will not choose to marry a *family* for love, when the world contains many more pretty creatures. What is then to become of her?	A double duty then falls on her. She must educate the children as both father and mother, form their principles and secure their property. But, alas! she has never thought for herself, much less acted for herself. She has only learned to please[4] men, to depend on them gracefully. Yet, burdened with children, how is she to find another protector—a husband to take the place of reason? A rational man (for we are not walking on romantic ground) may think her a pleasing, docile creature. But he will not choose to marry a *family* for love, when the world contains so many other pretty creatures. What, then, is to become of her?
	She either falls an easy prey to some mean fortune-hunter, who defrauds her children of	Either she falls easy prey to some mean fortune hunter, who cheats her children of their father's

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their paternal inheritance, and renders her miserable; or becomes the victim of discontent and blind indulgence. Unable to educate her sons, or impress them with respect; for it is not a play on words to assert, that people are never respected, though filling an important station, who are not respectable; she pines under the anguish of unavailing impotent regret. The serpent's tooth enters into her very soul, and the vices of licentious youth bring her with sorrow, if not with poverty also, to the grave.

21 22 22 32 4 25

3.37 This is not an overcharged picture; on the contrary, it is a very possible case, and something similar must have fallen under every attentive eye.

3.38 I have, however, taken it for granted, that she was well-disposed, though experience shews, that the blind may as easily be led into a ditch as along the beaten road. But supposing no very improbable conjecture, that a being only taught to please must still find her happiness in pleasing;—what

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inheritance and makes her miserable; or she becomes the victim of discontent and blind indulgence. She is unable to educate her sons or to impress them with respect, for it is no play on words to say that people who are not respectable are never respected, however important their position. So she pines in the anguish of useless, impotent regret. The serpent's tooth enters her very soul, and the vices of dissolute youth bring her with sorrow, if not also with poverty, to the grave.[20]

This is not an exaggerated picture. On the contrary, it is a very possible case, and something like it must have come before every attentive eye.

I have, however, assumed that she meant well, though experience shows that the blind may as easily be led into a ditch as along the beaten road. But suppose, as is not very improbable, that a being taught only to please must still find her happiness in pleasing. What an example of folly, not to

20 The "serpent's tooth" echoes Shakespeare's *King Lear*: "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is / To have a thankless child!"

21

[4] 'In the union of the sexes, both pursue one common object, but not in the same manner. From their diversity in this particular, arises the first determinate difference between the moral relations of each. The one should be active and strong, the other passive and weak: it is necessary the one should have both the power and the will, and that the other should make little resistance.

[4] "In the union of the sexes, both pursue one common object, but not in the same manner. From their difference in this respect arises the first definite difference between the moral relations of each. The one should be active and strong, the other passive and weak: it is necessary that the one should have both the power and the will, and that the other should make little resistance.

22

'This principle being established, it follows that woman is expressly formed to please the man; if the obligation be reciprocal also, and the man ought to please in his turn, it is not so immediately necessary: his great merit is in his power, and he pleases merely because he is strong. This, I must confess, is not one of the refined maxims of love; it is, however, one of the laws of nature, prior to love itself.

"This principle being established, it follows that woman is expressly formed to please the man. If the obligation is mutual too, and the man ought to please in his turn, it is not so immediately necessary: his great merit lies in his power, and he pleases simply because he is strong. This, I must admit, is not one of the refined maxims of love; it is, however, one of the laws of nature, prior to love itself.

23

'If woman be formed to please and be subjected to man it is her place, doubtless, to render herself agreeable to him, instead of challenging his passion. The violence of his desires depends on her charms; it is by means of these she should urge him to the exertion of those powers which nature hath given him. The most successful method of exciting them, is, to render such exertion necessary by their resistance; as, in that case, self-love is added to desire, and the one triumphs in the victory which the other was obliged to acquire.

"If woman is formed to please and to be subjected to man, it is her place, doubtless, to make herself agreeable to him, instead of provoking his passion. The violence of his desires depends on her charms; it is by means of these that she should urge him to exert the powers that nature has given him. The most successful way of exciting those powers is to make such exertion necessary by resistance; for in that case self-love is added to desire, and the one triumphs in the victory that the other was obliged to win.

24

Hence arise the various modes of attack and defence between the sexes; the boldness of one sex and the timidity of the other; and, in a word, that bashfulness and modesty with which nature hath armed the weak, in order to subdue the strong.' *Rousseau's Emilius.*

Hence arise the various modes of attack and defense between the sexes: the boldness of one sex and the timidity of the other; and, in a word, that bashfulness and modesty with which nature has armed the weak in order to subdue the strong." *Rousseau's Emile.*

25

I shall make no other comment on this ingenious passage, than just to observe, that it is the philosophy of lasciviousness.

I shall make no other comment on this ingenious passage than simply to observe that it is the philosophy of lasciviousness.

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an example of folly, not to say vice, will she be to her innocent daughters! The mother will be lost in the coquette, and instead of making friends of her daughters, view them with eyes askance, for they are rivals—rivals more cruel than any other, because they invite a comparison, and drive her from the throne of beauty, who has never thought of a seat on the bench of reason.	say vice, she will be to her innocent daughters! The mother will be lost in the coquette. Instead of making friends of her daughters, she will look at them askance, for they are rivals. They are crueler rivals than any others, because they invite comparison and drive her from the throne of beauty, and she has never thought of a seat on the bench of reason.
3.39 It does not require a lively pencil, or the discriminating outline of a caricature, to sketch the domestic miseries and petty vices which such a mistress of a family diffuses. Still she only acts as a woman ought to act, brought up according to Rousseau's system. She can never be reproached for being masculine, or turning out of her sphere; nay, she may observe another of his grand rules, and cautiously preserving her reputation free from spot, be reckoned a good kind of woman. Yet in what respect can she be termed good? She abstains, it is true, without any great struggle, from committing gross crimes; but how does she fulfil her duties?	It takes no lively pencil, nor the sharp outline of a caricature, to sketch the domestic miseries and petty vices that such a mistress of a household spreads around her. Yet she only acts as a woman brought up according to Rousseau's system ought to act. She can never be reproached for being masculine or stepping out of her sphere. Indeed, she may observe another of his grand rules, carefully keep her reputation spotless, and so be reckoned a good sort of woman. Yet in what respect can she be called good? She refrains, it is true, without any great struggle, from committing gross crimes. But how does she fulfill her duties?
Duties!—in truth she has enough to think of to adorn her body and nurse a weak constitution.	Duties!—truly, she has enough to think about in adorning her body and nursing a weak constitution.
3.40 With respect to religion, she never presumed to judge for herself; but conformed, as a dependent creature should, to the ceremonies of the church which she was brought up in, piously believing that wiser heads than her own have settled that business:—and not to doubt is her point of perfection. She therefore pays her tythe of mint and cummin—and thanks her God that she is not as other women are. These are the blessed effects of a good education! These the virtues of man's help-mate[5]!	As for religion, she never presumed to judge for herself. She conformed, as a dependent creature should, to the ceremonies of the church she was brought up in, piously believing that wiser heads than hers have settled that business. Not to doubt is her idea of perfection. So she pays her tithe of mint and cumin, and thanks her God that she is not as other women are. These are the blessed effects of a good education! These are the virtues of man's helpmate[5]![26]

27 28

26 An echo of Jesus' rebuke of the Pharisees, who tithe "mint and cumin" but neglect justice (Matthew 23:23), and of the Pharisee who thanks God he is "not as other men are" (Luke 18:11).

27

[5] 'O how lovely,' exclaims Rousseau, speaking of Sophia, 'is her ignorance! Happy is he who is destined to instruct her! She will never pretend to be the tutor of her husband, but will be content to be his pupil. Far from attempting to subject him to her taste, she will accommodate herself to his. She will be more estimable to him, than if she was learned: he will have a pleasure in instructing her.' *Rousseau's Emilius*.	[5] "Oh, how lovely," exclaims Rousseau, speaking of Sophie, "is her ignorance! Happy is he who is destined to instruct her! She will never pretend to be her husband's tutor, but will be content to be his pupil. Far from trying to subject him to her taste, she will adapt herself to his. She will be worth more to him than if she were learned: he will take pleasure in instructing her." *Rousseau's Emile*.

28

I shall content myself with simply asking, how friendship can subsist, when love expires, between the master and his pupil?	I shall content myself with simply asking how friendship can survive between the master and his pupil when love dies.

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3.41	I must relieve myself by drawing a different picture.	I must relieve my feelings by drawing a different picture.
3.42	Let fancy now present a woman with a tolerable understanding, for I do not wish to leave the line of mediocrity, whose constitution, strengthened by exercise, has allowed her body to acquire its full vigour; her mind, at the same time, gradually expanding itself to comprehend the moral duties of life, and in what human virtue and dignity consist.	Let the imagination now picture a woman of fair understanding (for I do not wish to leave the level of the ordinary). Her constitution, strengthened by exercise, has let her body reach its full vigor. At the same time her mind has gradually expanded to grasp the moral duties of life, and what human virtue and dignity consist in.
3.43	Formed thus by the discharge of the relative duties of her station, she marries from affection, without losing sight of prudence, and looking beyond matrimonial felicity, she secures her husband's respect before it is necessary to exert mean arts to please him and feed a dying flame, which nature doomed to expire when the object became familiar, when friendship and forbearance take place of a more ardent affection. —This is the natural death of love, and domestic peace is not destroyed by struggles to prevent its extinction. I also suppose the husband to be virtuous; or she is still more in want of independent principles.	Formed in this way by carrying out the duties of her relationships and her station, she marries for love, without losing sight of prudence. Looking beyond married bliss, she secures her husband's respect before she needs to use mean arts to please him and feed a dying flame. Nature doomed that flame to go out once its object became familiar, when friendship and forbearance take the place of a more ardent affection. This is the natural death of love, and domestic peace is not destroyed by struggles to prevent its extinction. I also assume the husband to be virtuous; otherwise she needs independent principles all the more.
3.44	Fate, however, breaks this tie.—She is left a widow, perhaps, without a sufficient provision; but she is not desolate! The pang of nature is felt; but after time has softened sorrow into melancholy resignation, her heart turns to her children with redoubled fondness, and anxious to provide for them, affection gives a sacred heroic cast to her maternal duties.	Fate, however, breaks this bond. She is left a widow, perhaps without sufficient means; but she is not desolate! She feels nature's pang. But after time has softened sorrow into melancholy resignation, her heart turns to her children with redoubled fondness. In her anxiety to provide for them, affection gives her maternal duties a sacred and heroic cast.
	She thinks that not only the eye sees her virtuous efforts from whom all her comfort now must flow, and whose approbation is life; but her imagination, a little abstracted and exalted by grief, dwells on the fond hope that the eyes which her trembling hand closed, may still see how she subdues every wayward passion to fulfil the double duty of being the father as well as the mother of her children. Raised to heroism by misfortunes, she represses the first faint dawning of a natural inclination, before it ripens into love, and in the bloom of life forgets her sex—forgets the pleasure of an awakening passion, which might again have been inspired and returned.	She thinks that her virtuous efforts are seen by the eye from which all her comfort must now flow, and whose approval is life. Her imagination, a little withdrawn and exalted by grief, also dwells on the fond hope that the eyes her trembling hand closed may still see how she subdues every wayward passion to fulfill the double duty of being both father and mother to her children. Raised to heroism by misfortune, she represses the first faint dawn of a natural inclination before it ripens into love. In the bloom of life she forgets her sex—forgets the pleasure of an awakening passion, which might have been inspired and returned once more.

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	She no longer thinks of pleasing, and conscious dignity prevents her from priding herself on account of the praise which her conduct demands. Her children have her love, and her brightest hopes are beyond the grave, where her imagination often strays.	She no longer thinks of pleasing, and a sense of her own dignity keeps her from priding herself on the praise her conduct deserves. Her children have her love, and her brightest hopes lie beyond the grave, where her imagination often wanders.
3.45	I think I see her surrounded by her children, reaping the reward of her care. The intelligent eye meets hers, whilst health and innocence smile on their chubby cheeks, and as they grow up the cares of life are lessened by their grateful attention. She lives to see the virtues which she endeavoured to plant on principles fixed into habits, to see her children attain a strength of character sufficient to enable them to endure adversity without forgetting their mother's example.	I think I see her surrounded by her children, reaping the reward of her care. Their intelligent eyes meet hers, while health and innocence smile on their chubby cheeks. As they grow up, their grateful attention lightens the cares of life. She lives to see the virtues she tried to plant on principle fixed into habits. She sees her children gain enough strength of character to endure adversity without forgetting their mother's example.
3.46	The task of life thus fulfilled, she calmly waits for the sleep of death, and rising from the grave, may say—Behold, thou gavest me a talent—and here are five talents.	Her life's task thus fulfilled, she calmly awaits the sleep of death, and, rising from the grave, may say: Behold, you gave me a talent—and here are five talents.[29]

NO SEXUAL VIRTUES

She denies that there are separate virtues for each sex and insists on one standard of truth.

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3.47	I wish to sum up what I have said in a few words, for I here throw down my gauntlet, and deny the existence of sexual virtues, not excepting modesty. For man and woman, truth, if I understand the meaning of the word, must be the same; yet the fanciful female character, so prettily drawn by poets and novelists, demanding the sacrifice of truth and sincerity, virtue becomes a relative idea, having no other foundation than utility, and of that utility men pretend arbitrarily to judge, shaping it to their own convenience.	I want to sum up what I have said in a few words, for here I throw down my gauntlet and deny that there are separate virtues for each sex—not excepting modesty. For man and woman, truth must be the same, if I understand the meaning of the word. Yet the fanciful female character, so prettily drawn by poets and novelists, demands the sacrifice of truth and sincerity. So virtue becomes a relative idea, with no foundation but utility. And men claim the arbitrary right to judge that utility, shaping it to their own convenience.
3.48	Women, I allow, may have different duties to fulfil; but they are *human* duties, and the principles that should regulate the discharge of them, I sturdily maintain, must be the same.	Women, I grant, may have different duties to fulfill. But they are *human* duties, and I stoutly maintain that the principles that should govern how they are carried out must be the same.
3.49	To become respectable, the exercise of their understanding is necessary, there is no other foundation for independence of character; I mean	To become respectable, women must exercise their understanding. There is no other foundation for independence of character. I mean to say expli-

29 An allusion to the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14–30), in which faithful servants return their master's money multiplied.

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explicitly to say that they must only bow to the authority of reason, instead of being the *modest* slaves of opinion.

3.50 In the superiour ranks of life how seldom do we meet with a man of superior abilities, or even common acquirements? The reason appears to me clear, the state they are born in was an unnatural one. The human character has ever been formed by the employments the individual, or class, pursues; and if the faculties are not sharpened by necessity, they must remain obtuse. The argument may fairly be extended to women; for, seldom occupied by serious business, the pursuit of pleasure gives that insignificancy to their character which renders the society of the *great* so insipid.

The same want of firmness, produced by a similar cause, forces them both to fly from themselves to noisy pleasures, and artificial passions, till vanity takes place of every social affection, and the characteristics of humanity can scarcely be discerned. Such are the blessings of civil governments, as they are at present organized, that wealth and female softness equally tend to debase mankind, and are produced by the same cause; but allowing women to be rational creatures, they should be incited to acquire virtues which they may call their own, for how can a rational being be ennobled by any thing that is not obtained by its *own* exertions?

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citly that they must bow only to the authority of reason, instead of being the *modest* slaves of opinion.

In the upper ranks of life, how rarely do we meet a man of superior abilities, or even of ordinary attainments? The reason seems clear to me: the state they are born into is an unnatural one. Human character has always been formed by the occupations that the individual or class pursues. If the faculties are not sharpened by necessity, they must stay dull. The argument may fairly be extended to women. Rarely occupied with serious business, they pursue pleasure, and that pursuit gives their character the insignificance that makes the society of the *great* so insipid.

The same lack of firmness, produced by a similar cause, drives both of them to flee from themselves into noisy pleasures and artificial passions. In the end vanity takes the place of every social affection, and the marks of humanity can hardly be made out. Such are the blessings of civil governments as they are now organized: wealth and female softness equally tend to debase humanity, and they are produced by the same cause. But if women are granted to be rational creatures, they should be urged to acquire virtues they can call their own. For how can a rational being be ennobled by anything that is not obtained by its *own* exertions?

Chapter IV: Observations on the State of Degradation to Which Woman Is Reduced by Various Causes

How pleasure, sensibility, dependence and the wish to please keep women from reason and make them tyrants and slaves.

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4.1	That woman is naturally weak, or degraded by a concurrence of circumstances, is, I think, clear. But this position I shall simply contrast with a conclusion, which I have frequently heard fall from sensible men in favour of an aristocracy: that the mass of mankind cannot be any thing, or the obsequious slaves, who patiently allow themselves to be penned up, would feel their own consequence, and spurn their chains. Men, they further observe, submit every where to oppression, when they have only to lift up their heads to throw off the yoke; yet, instead of asserting their birthright, they quietly lick the dust, and say, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.	It is clear, I think, that woman is either naturally weak or degraded by a combination of circumstances. I shall simply set this proposition beside a conclusion I have often heard sensible men draw in favor of aristocracy. They say that the mass of mankind cannot amount to anything; otherwise the servile slaves who patiently let themselves be penned up would feel their own importance and spurn their chains. Men everywhere submit to oppression, these sensible men go on to observe, when they have only to lift up their heads to throw off the yoke. Yet instead of asserting their birthright, they quietly lick the dust and say, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.
	Women, I argue from analogy, are degraded by the same propensity to enjoy the present moment; and, at last, despise the freedom which they have not sufficient virtue to struggle to attain. But I must be more explicit.	Women, I argue by analogy, are degraded by the same tendency to enjoy the present moment. In the end they despise the freedom they lack the virtue to struggle for. But I must be more explicit.
4.2	With respect to the culture of the heart, it is unanimously allowed that sex is out of the question; but the line of subordination in the mental powers is never to be passed over[1]. Only 'absolute in loveliness,' the portion of rationality granted to woman, is indeed very scanty; for, denying her genius and judgment, it is scarcely possible to divine what remains to characterize intellect.	As regards cultivating the heart, all agree that sex does not come into it; but the line of subordination in the powers of the mind must never be crossed[1]. Being only "absolute in loveliness," woman is granted a very scanty portion of rationality indeed. For once genius and judgment are denied her, it is hard to guess what is left to characterize intellect.[1]
2		
4.3	The stamina of immortality, if I may be allowed the phrase, is the perfectibility of human reason: for, was man created perfect, or did a flood of knowledge break in upon him, when he arrived at maturity, that precluded error, I should doubt whether his existence would be continued after	The essential ground of immortality, if I may put it that way, is the perfectibility of human reason. Suppose man had been created perfect, or a flood of knowledge had broken in on him when he reached maturity and ruled out error. Then I would doubt whether his existence would contin-

1 "Absolute in loveliness" is from Milton's *Paradise Lost* (8.547), where Adam describes Eve.

the dissolution of the body. But, in the present state of things, every difficulty in morals that escapes from human discussion, and equally baffles the investigation of profound thinking, and the lightning glance of genius, is an argument on which I build my belief of the immortality of the soul. Reason is, consequentially, the simple power of improvement; or, more properly speaking, of discerning truth. Every individual is in this respect a world in itself.

More or less may be conspicuous in one being than another; but the nature of reason must be the same in all, if it be an emanation of divinity, the tie that connects the creature with the Creator; for, can that soul be stamped with the heavenly image, that is not perfected by the exercise of its own reason[2]? Yet outwardly ornamented with elaborate care, and so adorned to delight man, 'that with honour he may love[3],' the soul of woman is not allowed to have this distinction, and man, ever placed between her and reason, she is always represented as only created to see through a gross medium, and to take things on trust.

But, dismissing these fanciful theories, and considering woman as a whole, let it be what it will, instead of a part of man, the inquiry is whether she has reason or not. If she has, which, for a moment, I will take for granted, she was not created merely to be the solace of man, and the sexual should not destroy the human character.

ue after the body dissolved. But in the present state of things, some moral difficulties escape human discussion and baffle both the investigations of deep thought and the lightning glance of genius. Every such difficulty is an argument on which I build my belief in the immortality of the soul. Reason, consequently, is simply the power of improvement—or, more properly, of discerning truth. Every individual is in this respect a world in itself.

Reason may show itself more in one being than in another. But its nature must be the same in all, if it is an emanation of divinity, the tie that connects the creature with the Creator. For can a soul bear the stamp of the heavenly image if it is not perfected by the exercise of its own reason[2]? Yet the soul of woman is outwardly decorated with elaborate care, and so adorned to delight man, “that with honor he may love[3].” It is not allowed this distinction. With man always placed between her and reason, she is always represented as created only to see through a coarse medium and to take things on trust.

But let us dismiss these fanciful theories and consider woman as a whole, whatever that may be, rather than as a part of man. The question is whether she has reason or not. If she has (which for the moment I will take for granted), she was not created merely to be man’s comfort, and her character as a woman should not destroy her character as a human being.

46

2

[1] Into what inconsistencies do men fall when they argue without the compass of principles. Women, weak women, are compared with angels; yet, a superiour order of beings should be supposed to possess more intellect than man; or, in what does their superiority consist? In the same style, to drop the sneer, they are allowed to possess more goodness of heart, piety, and benevolence.—I doubt the fact, though it be courteously brought forward, unless ignorance be allowed to be the mother of devotion; for I am firmly persuaded that, on an average, the proportion between virtue and knowledge, is more upon a par than is commonly granted.

[1] What inconsistencies men fall into when they argue without the compass of principles! Women—weak women—are compared to angels. Yet a superior order of beings must be supposed to possess more intellect than man, or in what does their superiority consist? In the same style (to drop the sneer), women are allowed to possess more goodness of heart, piety, and benevolence. I doubt the fact, however courteously it is put forward, unless ignorance is granted to be the mother of devotion. For I am firmly convinced that, on average, virtue keeps pace with knowledge more closely than is commonly admitted.

3 James Burnett, Lord Monboddo (1714–1799), Scottish judge and author of *Of the Origin and Progress of Language*.

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4.4 Into this error men have, probably, been led by viewing education in a false light; not considering it as the first step to form a being advancing gradually towards perfection[4]; but only as a preparation for life. On this sensual error, for I must call it so, has the false system of female manners been reared, which robs the whole sex of its dignity, and classes the brown and fair with the smiling flowers that only adorn the land. This has ever been the language of men, and the fear of departing from a supposed sexual character, has made even women of superiour sense adopt the same sentiments[5].

Thus understanding, strictly speaking, has been denied to woman; and instinct, sublimated into wit and cunning, for the purposes of life, has been substituted in its stead.

Men have probably been led into this error by viewing education in a false light. They have not seen it as the first step in forming a being who advances gradually toward perfection[4], but only as a preparation for life. On this sensual error (for I must call it that) the false system of female manners has been built. That system robs the whole sex of its dignity and classes women, dark and fair alike, with the smiling flowers that merely decorate the land. This has always been the language of men. Even women of superior sense have adopted the same views, for fear of departing from a supposed character proper to their sex[5].

Thus understanding, strictly speaking, has been denied to woman. Instinct, refined into wit and cunning for the purposes of life, has been put in its place.

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THE POWER OF GENERALIZING

She argues that women are kept from forming general ideas, the only knowledge worth the name.

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4.5 The power of generalizing ideas, of drawing comprehensive conclusions from individual observations, is the only acquirement, for an immortal being, that really deserves the name of knowledge. Merely to observe, without

The power of generalizing ideas, of drawing broad conclusions from individual observations, is the only acquirement that truly deserves the name of knowledge for an immortal being. Merely observing, without trying to account for anything,

4

[2] 'The brutes,' says Lord Monboddo, 'remain in the state in which nature has placed them, except in so far as their natural instinct is improved by the culture *we* bestow upon them.'

[2] “Animals,” says Lord Monboddo, “remain in the state in which nature has placed them, except insofar as their natural instinct is improved by the training *we* give them.”[3]

5 *Paradise Lost* 8.576–77, where the angel Raphael tells Adam to value Eve’s outward beauty “that with honour thou may’st love / Thy mate.”

6

[3] Vide Milton.

[3] See Milton.[5]

7

[4] This word is not strictly just, but I cannot find a better.

[4] This word is not strictly accurate, but I cannot find a better one.

8

[5] 'Pleasure's the portion of th' *inferiour* kind; / But glory, virtue, Heaven for *man* design'd.'

[5] “Pleasure’s the portion of th’ *inferior* kind; / But glory, virtue, Heaven for *man* designed.”

10

After writing these lines, how could Mrs. Barbauld write the following ignoble comparison?

After writing these lines, how could Mrs. Barbauld write the following ignoble comparison?[9]

9 Anna Laetitia Barbauld (1743–1825), English poet and essayist; both passages come from her *Poems* (1773).

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endeavouring to account for any thing, may (in a very incomplete manner) serve as the common sense of life; but where is the store laid up that is to clothe the soul when it leaves the body?	may serve (in a very incomplete way) as the common sense of life. But where is the store laid up that is to clothe the soul when it leaves the body?
4.6 This power has not only been denied to women; but writers have insisted that it is inconsistent, with a few exceptions, with their sexual character. Let men prove this, and I shall grant that woman only exists for man. I must, however, previously remark, that the power of generalizing ideas, to any great extent, is not very common amongst men or women. But this exercise is the true cultivation of the understanding; and every thing conspires to render the cultivation of the understanding more difficult in the female than the male world.	This power has not only been denied to women. Writers have also insisted that, with a few exceptions, it is inconsistent with their character as women. Let men prove this, and I will grant that woman exists only for man. I must first remark, however, that the power of generalizing ideas to any great extent is not very common among men or women. But this exercise is the true cultivation of the understanding, and everything conspires to make cultivating the understanding harder in the female world than in the male.
4.7 I am naturally led by this assertion to the main subject of the present chapter, and shall now attempt to point out some of the causes that degrade the sex, and prevent women from generalizing their observations.	This assertion leads me naturally to the main subject of the present chapter. I shall now try to point out some of the causes that degrade women and prevent them from generalizing their observations.
4.8 I shall not go back to the remote annals of antiquity to trace the history of woman; it is sufficient to allow that she has always been either a slave, or a despot, and to remark, that each of these situations equally retards the progress of reason. The grand source of female folly and vice has ever appeared to me to arise from narrowness of mind; and the very constitution of civil	I shall not go back to the distant annals of antiquity to trace the history of woman. It is enough to grant that she has always been either a slave or a despot, and to remark that each of these situations equally holds back the progress of reason. The great source of female folly and vice has always seemed to me to be narrowness of mind. The very constitution of civil governments has put al-

11

' *To a Lady, with some painted flowers.*' 'Flowers to the fair: to you these flowers I bring, And strive to greet you with an earlier spring. *Flowers* sweet, *and gay, and* delicate like you; *Emblems of innocence, and beauty too*. With flowers the Graces bind their yellow hair, And flowery wreaths consenting lovers wear. *Flowers, the sole luxury which nature knew,* In Eden's pure and guiltless garden grew. *To loftier forms are rougher tasks asign'd;* *The sheltering oak resists the stormy wind,* *The tougher yew repels invading foes,* *And the tall pine for future navies grows*; *But this soft family, to cares unknown,* *Were born for pleasure and delight* alone.	"*To a Lady, with some painted flowers.*" "Flowers to the fair: to you these flowers I bring, And strive to greet you with an earlier spring. *Flowers* sweet, *and gay, and* delicate like you; *Emblems of innocence, and beauty too*. With flowers the Graces bind their yellow hair, And flowery wreaths consenting lovers wear. *Flowers, the sole luxury which nature knew,* In Eden's pure and guiltless garden grew. *To loftier forms are rougher tasks assigned*; *The sheltering oak resists the stormy wind,* *The tougher yew repels invading foes,* *And the tall pine for future navies grows*; *But this soft family, to cares unknown,* *Were born for pleasure and delight* alone.

12

/ Gay without toil, and lovely without art, *They spring to* cheer *the sense, and* glad *the heart,* Nor blush, my fair, to own you copy these; *Your* best, *your* sweetest *empire* is—to please.'	/ Gay without toil, and lovely without art, *They spring to* cheer *the sense, and* glad *the heart,* Nor blush, my fair, to own you copy these; *Your* best, *your* sweetest *empire* is—to please."

13

So the men tell us; but virtue must be acquired by *rough* toils, and useful struggles with worldly *cares*.	So the men tell us; but virtue must be acquired by *rough* toil and useful struggles with worldly *cares*.

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governments has put almost insuperable obstacles in the way to prevent the cultivation of the female understanding:—yet virtue can be built on no other foundation! The same obstacles are thrown in the way of the rich, and the same consequences ensue.

4.9 Necessity has been proverbially termed the mother of invention—the aphorism may be extended to virtue. It is an acquirement, and an acquirement to which pleasure must be sacrificed—and who sacrifices pleasure when it is within the grasp, whose mind has not been opened and strengthened by adversity, or the pursuit of knowledge goaded on by necessity?—Happy is it when people have the cares of life to struggle with; for these struggles prevent their becoming a prey to enervating vices, merely from idleness!

But, if from their birth men and women are placed in a torrid zone, with the meridian sun of pleasure darting directly upon them, how can they sufficiently brace their minds to discharge the duties of life, or even to relish the affections that carry them out of themselves?

4.10 Pleasure is the business of woman's life, according to the present modification of society, and while it continues to be so, little can be expected from such weak beings. Inheriting, in a lineal descent from the first fair defect in nature, the sovereignty of beauty, they have, to maintain their power, resigned the natural rights, which the exercise of reason might have procured them, and chosen rather to be short-lived queens than labour to obtain the sober pleasures that arise from equality.

Exalted by their inferiority (this sounds like a contradiction) they constantly demand homage as women, though experience should teach them that the men who pride themselves upon paying this arbitrary insolent respect to the sex, with the most scrupulous exactness, are most inclined to tyrannize over, and despise, the very weakness they cherish. Often do they repeat Mr. Hume's sentiments; when, comparing the French and Athenian character, he alludes to women.

'But what is more singular in this whimsical nation, say I to the Athenians, is, that a frolick of

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most insurmountable obstacles in the way of cultivating the female understanding—yet virtue can be built on no other foundation! The same obstacles are thrown in the way of the rich, with the same consequences.

Necessity has proverbially been called the mother of invention—the saying may be extended to virtue. Virtue is an acquirement, and an acquirement for which pleasure must be sacrificed. And who sacrifices pleasure when it is within reach, unless their mind has been opened and strengthened by adversity, or by the pursuit of knowledge spurred on by necessity? Happy are people who have the cares of life to struggle with! These struggles keep them from falling prey to enervating vices merely out of idleness.

But suppose that from birth men and women are placed in a torrid zone, with the noonday sun of pleasure beating straight down on them. How can they brace their minds enough to carry out the duties of life, or even to enjoy the affections that carry them out of themselves?

Pleasure is the business of woman’s life, as society is now arranged, and while it remains so, little can be expected from such weak beings. They have inherited the sovereignty of beauty in direct descent from the first fair defect in nature. To keep their power, they have given up the natural rights that the exercise of reason might have won them. They have chosen to be short-lived queens rather than work to gain the sober pleasures that arise from equality.

Exalted by their inferiority (this sounds like a contradiction), they constantly demand homage as women. Yet experience should teach them better. The men who pride themselves on paying this arbitrary, insolent respect to the sex with the most scrupulous exactness are the most inclined to tyrannize over, and despise, the very weakness they cherish. Such men often repeat Mr. Hume’s sentiments, when, comparing the French and Athenian character, he alludes to women.[14]

“But what is more singular in this whimsical nation, I say to the Athenians, is that a frolic of yours during the Saturnalia, when the slaves are served

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yours during the Saturnalia, when the slaves are served by their masters, is, seriously, continued by them through the whole year, and through the whole course of their lives; accompanied too with some circumstances, which still further augment the absurdity and ridicule. Your sport only elevates for a few days those whom fortune has thrown down, and whom she too, in sport, may really elevate for ever above you. But this nation gravely exalts those, whom nature has subjected to them, and whose inferiority and infirmities are absolutely incurable. The women, though without virtue, are their masters and sovereigns.'	by their masters, is seriously continued by them through the whole year and the whole course of their lives—accompanied, too, by some circumstances that further increase the absurdity and ridicule. Your sport only raises up for a few days those whom fortune has thrown down, and whom she too, in sport, may really raise forever above you. But this nation gravely exalts those whom nature has subjected to them, and whose inferiority and infirmities are absolutely incurable. The women, though without virtue, are their masters and sovereigns."
4.11 Ah! why do women, I write with affectionate solicitude, condescend to receive a degree of attention and respect from strangers, different from that reciprocation of civility which the dictates of humanity and the politeness of civilization authorise between man and man? And, why do they not discover, when 'in the noon of beauty's power,' that they are treated like queens only to be deluded by hollow respect, till they are led to resign, or not assume, their natural prerogatives? Confined then in cages like the feathered race, they have nothing to do but to plume themselves, and stalk with mock majesty from perch to perch.	Ah! why do women (I write with affectionate concern) stoop to receive from strangers a kind of attention and respect that differs from the reciprocal civility that the dictates of humanity and the politeness of civilization authorize between man and man? And why do they not discover, when "in the noon of beauty's power," that they are treated like queens only to be deluded by hollow respect, until they are led to give up their natural prerogatives, or never take them up? Confined then in cages like birds, they have nothing to do but preen themselves and strut with mock majesty from perch to perch.
It is true they are provided with food and raiment, for which they neither toil nor spin; but health, liberty, and virtue, are given in exchange. But, where, amongst mankind has been found sufficient strength of mind to enable a being to resign these adventitious prerogatives; one who, rising with the calm dignity of reason above opinion, dared to be proud of the privileges inherent in man? And it is vain to expect it whilst hereditary power chokes the affections and nips reason in the bud.	It is true they are provided with food and clothing, for which they neither toil nor spin; but health, liberty, and virtue are given in exchange. Yet where among humankind has anyone been found with enough strength of mind to give up these accidental prerogatives? Who has risen with the calm dignity of reason above opinion, and dared to be proud of the privileges inherent in being human? And it is vain to expect it while hereditary power chokes the affections and nips reason in the bud.
4.12 The passions of men have thus placed women on thrones, and, till mankind become more reasonable, it is to be feared that women will avail themselves of the power which they attain with the least exertion, and which is the most indisputable. They will smile,—yes, they will smile, though told that—	The passions of men have thus placed women on thrones. Until humanity becomes more reasonable, it is to be feared that women will make use of the power that they gain with the least effort, and that is the least disputed. They will smile—yes, they will smile, though told that—
4.13	

14 David Hume, "A Dialogue," appended to his *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751); the speaker imagines explaining French customs to the ancient Athenians.

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	'In beauty's empire is no mean, And woman, either slave or queen, Is quickly scorn'd when not ador'd.'	"In beauty's empire is no mean, And woman, either slave or queen, Is quickly scorned when not adored."
4.14	But the adoration comes first, and the scorn is not anticipated.	But the adoration comes first, and no one sees the scorn coming.
4.15	Lewis the XIVth, in particular, spread factitious manners, and caught, in a specious way, the whole nation in his toils; for, establishing an artful chain of despotism, he made it the interest of the people at large, individually to respect his station and support his power. And women, whom he flattered by a puerile attention to the whole sex, obtained in his reign that prince-like distinction so fatal to reason and virtue.	Louis XIV in particular spread artificial manners, and with a plausible show he caught the whole nation in his net. By building an artful chain of despotism, he made it in the interest of every individual to respect his position and support his power. And women, whom he flattered with a childish attentiveness to their whole sex, gained in his reign that princely distinction which is so fatal to reason and virtue.[15]
4.16	A king is always a king—and a woman always a woman[6]: his authority and her sex, ever stand between them and rational converse. With a lover, I grant, she should be so, and her sensibility will naturally lead her to endeavour to excite emotion, not to gratify her vanity, but her heart. This I do not allow to be coquetry, if is the artless impulse of nature, I only exclaim against the sexual desire of conquest when the heart is out of the question.	A king is always a king—and a woman always a woman[6]: his authority and her sex always stand between them and rational conversation. With a lover, I grant, she should be a woman, and her sensibility will naturally lead her to try to stir his emotions, to gratify not her vanity but her heart. I do not count this as coquetry if it is the artless impulse of nature. I only protest against the sexual appetite for conquest when the heart has nothing to do with it.
16		
4.17	This desire is not confined to women; 'I have endeavoured,' says Lord Chesterfield, 'to gain the hearts of twenty women, whose persons I would not have given a fig for.' The libertine, who, in a gust of passion, takes advantage of unsuspecting tenderness, is a saint when compared with this cold-hearted rascal; for I like to use significant words. Yet only taught to please, women are always on the watch to please, and with true heroic ardour endeavour to gain hearts merely to resign, or spurn them, when the victory is decided, and conspicuous.	This desire is not confined to women. "I have tried," says Lord Chesterfield, "to win the hearts of twenty women whose persons I would not have given a fig for." The libertine who, in a gust of passion, takes advantage of unsuspecting tenderness is a saint compared with this cold-hearted rascal—for I like to use words that mean something. Yet because they are taught only to please, women are always on the watch to please. With truly heroic ardor they try to win hearts merely to give them up, or spurn them, once the victory is decided and on display.[17]
4.18	I must descend to the minutiæ of the subject.	I must now get down to the small details of the subject.

15 Louis XIV (reigned 1643–1715), king of France, whose court at Versailles set the pattern of aristocratic manners for Europe.

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[6] And a wit, always a wit, might be added; for the vain fooleries of wits and beauties to obtain attention, and make conquests, are much upon a par.

[6] One might add that a wit is always a wit. The vain antics by which wits and beauties try to attract attention and make conquests are much of a piece.

17 Philip Stanhope, 4th Earl of Chesterfield (1694–1773), whose *Letters to His Son* became a byword for polished worldly cynicism.

TRIVIAL ATTENTIONS

She condemns the gallantries paid to women and compares women to the idle rich and nobility.

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4.19	I lament that women are systematically degraded by receiving the trivial attentions, which men think it manly to pay to the sex, when, in fact, they are insultingly supporting their own superiority, It is not condescension to bow to an inferiour. So ludicrous, in fact, do these ceremonies appear to me, that I scarcely am able to govern my muscles, when I see a man start with eager, and serious solicitude to lift a handkerchief, or shut a door, when the *lady* could have done it herself, had she only moved a pace or two.	I lament that women are systematically degraded by accepting the trivial attentions that men think it manly to pay them. In fact, by paying them, men are insultingly asserting their own superiority. It is no condescension to bow to an inferior. These ceremonies strike me as so ludicrous that I can scarcely keep a straight face when I see a man leap up with eager, serious concern to pick up a handkerchief or shut a door, when the *lady* could have done it herself had she only moved a step or two.
4.20	A wild wish has just flown from my heart to my head, and I will not stifle it though it may excite a horse-laugh.—I do earnestly wish to see the distinction of sex confounded in society, unless where love animates the behaviour. For this distinction is, I am firmly persuaded, the foundation of the weakness of character ascribed to woman; is the cause why the understanding is neglected, whilst accomplishments are acquired with sedulous care: and the same cause accounts for their preferring the graceful before the heroic virtues.	A wild wish has just flown from my heart to my head, and I will not stifle it, though it may provoke a horse-laugh.—I earnestly wish to see the distinction of sex blurred in society, except where love animates behavior. I am firmly convinced that this distinction is the foundation of the weakness of character attributed to woman. It is the reason why the understanding is neglected while accomplishments are acquired with painstaking care. The same cause explains why women prefer the graceful virtues to the heroic ones.
4.21	Mankind, including every description, wish to be loved and respected for *something*; and the common herd will always take the nearest road to the completion of their wishes. The respect paid to wealth and beauty is the most certain, and unequivocal; and, of course, will always attract the vulgar eye of common minds. Abilities and virtues are absolutely necessary to raise men from the middle rank of life into notice; and the natural consequence is notorious, the middle rank contains most virtue and abilities.	People of every kind wish to be loved and respected for *something*, and the common herd will always take the shortest road to getting what they want. The respect paid to wealth and beauty is the surest and least ambiguous, so it will always catch the vulgar eye of common minds. Men from the middle rank of life can rise into notice only through ability and virtue, and the natural consequence is well known: the middle rank contains the most virtue and ability.
	Men have thus, in one station, at least, an opportunity of exerting themselves with dignity, and of rising by the exertions which really improve a rational creature; but the whole female sex are, till their character is formed, in the same condition as the rich: for they are born, I now speak of a state of civilization, with certain sexual privileges, and whilst they are gratuitously granted them, few will ever think of works of	So men, in one station at least, have the chance to exert themselves with dignity and to rise by the kind of effort that really improves a rational creature. But until their character is formed, all women are in the same condition as the rich. They are born (I am speaking now of a civilized state) with certain sexual privileges, and while these are handed to them for nothing, few will ever think of doing more than is required in order to win the esteem of a small number of superior people.

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supererogation, to obtain the esteem of a small number of superiour people.

4.22 When do we hear of women who, starting out of obscurity, boldly claim respect on account of their great abilities or daring virtues? Where are they to be found?—'To be observed, to be attended to, to be taken notice of with sympathy, complacency, and approbation, are all the advantages which they seek.'—True! my male readers will probably exclaim; but let them, before they draw any conclusion, recollect that this was not written originally as descriptive of women, but of the rich. In Dr. Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments, I have found a general character of people of rank and fortune, that, in my opinion, might with the greatest propriety be applied to the female sex.

I refer the sagacious reader to the whole comparison; but must be allowed to quote a passage to enforce an argument that I mean to insist on, as the one most conclusive against a sexual character.

For if, excepting warriors, no great men, of any denomination, have ever appeared amongst the nobility, may it not be fairly inferred that their local situation swallowed up the man, and produced a character similar to that of women, who are *localized*, if I may be allowed the word, by the rank they are placed in, by *courtesy?* Women, commonly called Ladies, are not to be contradicted in company, are not allowed to exert any manual strength; and from them the negative virtues only are expected, when any virtues are expected, patience, docility, good-humour, and flexibility; virtues incompatible with any vigorous exertion of intellect.

Besides, by living more with each other, and being seldom absolutely alone, they are more under the influence of sentiments than passions. Solitude and reflection are necessary to give to wishes the force of passions, and to enable the imagination to enlarge the object, and make it the most desirable. The same may be said of the rich; they do not sufficiently deal in general ideas, collected by impassioned thinking, or calm investigation, to acquire that strength of character on which great resolves are built. But hear what an acute observer says of the great.

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When do we hear of women who rise out of obscurity and boldly claim respect for their great abilities or daring virtues? Where are they to be found?—"To be observed, to be attended to, to be noticed with sympathy, satisfaction, and approval, are all the advantages they seek."—True! my male readers will probably exclaim. But before they draw any conclusion, let them remember that this was not originally written as a description of women, but of the rich. In Dr. Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* I have found a general portrait of people of rank and fortune that, in my opinion, could quite properly be applied to women.[18]

I refer the shrewd reader to the whole comparison. But I must be allowed to quote a passage to reinforce an argument I intend to press, because I think it is the most conclusive one against the idea of a distinct sexual character.

Apart from warriors, no great men of any kind have ever appeared among the nobility. May we not fairly infer that their particular situation swallowed up the man and produced a character like that of women? Women are *localized*, if I may use the word, by the rank they are given by *courtesy*. Women, commonly called Ladies, are not to be contradicted in company and are not allowed to use any physical strength. Only the negative virtues are expected of them, when any virtues are expected at all: patience, docility, good humor, and flexibility. These virtues are incompatible with any vigorous use of the intellect.

Besides, because they live more with one another and are seldom entirely alone, they are more under the influence of sentiments than of passions. Solitude and reflection are needed to give wishes the force of passions, and to let the imagination enlarge the object until it becomes the most desirable of all. The same may be said of the rich. They do not deal enough in general ideas, gathered by impassioned thinking or calm inquiry, to acquire that strength of character on which great resolu-

18 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), Part I, section iii, chapter 2.

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4.23 'Do the great seem insensible of the easy price at which they may acquire the publick admiration; or do they seem to imagine that to them, as to other men, it must be the purchase either of sweat or of blood? By what important accomplishments is the young nobleman instructed to support the dignity of his rank, and to render himself worthy of that superiority over his fellow-citizens, to which the virtue of his ancestors had raised them? Is it by knowledge, by industry, by patience, by self-denial, or by virtue of any kind?

As all his words, as all his motions are attended to, he learns an habitual regard to every circumstance of ordinary behaviour, and studies to perform all those small duties with the most exact propriety. As he is conscious how much he is observed, and how much mankind are disposed to favour all his inclinations, he acts, upon the most indifferent occasions with that freedom and elevation which the thought of this naturally inspires. His air, his manner, his deportment, all mark that elegant and graceful sense of his own superiority, which those who are born to inferiour station can hardly ever arrive at.

These are the arts by which he proposes to make mankind more easily submit to his authority, and to govern their inclinations according to his own pleasure: and in this he is seldom disappointed. These arts, supported by rank and pre-eminence, are, upon ordinary occasions, sufficient to govern the world. Lewis XIV. during the greater part of his reign, was regarded, not only in France, but over all Europe, as the most perfect model of a great prince. But what were the talents and virtues by which he acquired this great reputation?

Was it by the scrupulous and inflexible justice of all his undertakings, by the immense dangers and difficulties with which they were attended, or by the unwearied and unrelenting application with which he pursued them? Was it by his extensive knowledge, by his exquisite judgment, or by his heroic valour? It was by none of these qualities. But he was, first of all, the most powerful prince in Europe, and consequently held the highest rank among kings; and then, says his historian, "he surpassed all his courtiers in the gracefulness

tions are built. But hear what a sharp observer says of the great.

“Do the great seem unaware of how cheaply they may buy public admiration? Or do they seem to imagine that, for them as for other men, it must be paid for with sweat or with blood? By what important accomplishments is the young nobleman taught to uphold the dignity of his rank, and to make himself worthy of that superiority over his fellow citizens to which the virtue of his ancestors raised them? Is it by knowledge, by hard work, by patience, by self-denial, or by virtue of any kind?

As all his words and all his movements are watched, he learns a habitual attention to every detail of ordinary behavior, and he studies to perform all those small duties with the most exact propriety. He knows how much he is observed, and how inclined people are to indulge his every wish, so he acts on the most trivial occasions with the freedom and loftiness that this thought naturally inspires. His air, his manner, his bearing all display that elegant and graceful sense of his own superiority which those born to a lower station can hardly ever attain.

These are the arts by which he means to make people submit more readily to his authority and to steer their wishes as he pleases, and in this he is seldom disappointed. Backed by rank and pre-eminence, these arts are enough to govern the world on ordinary occasions. For most of his reign, Louis XIV was regarded, not only in France but throughout Europe, as the most perfect model of a great prince. But what were the talents and virtues by which he acquired this great reputation?

Was it the scrupulous and inflexible justice of all his undertakings, the immense dangers and difficulties that attended them, or the tireless, unrelenting application with which he pursued them? Was it his wide knowledge, his exquisite judgment, or his heroic courage? It was none of these qualities. But he was, first of all, the most powerful prince in Europe, and therefore held the highest rank among kings. And then, says his historian, ‘he surpassed all his courtiers in the grace-

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	of his shape, and the majestic beauty of his features. The sound of his voice, noble and affecting, gained those hearts which his presence intimidated.	fulness of his figure and the majestic beauty of his features. The sound of his voice, noble and moving, won the hearts that his presence intimidated.
	He had a step and a deportment which could suit only him and his rank, and which would have been ridiculous in any other person. The embarrassment which he occasioned to those who spoke to him, flattered that secret satisfaction with which he felt his own superiority." These frivolous accomplishments, supported by his rank, and, no doubt too, by a degree of other talents and virtues, which seems, however, not to have been much above mediocrity, established this prince in the esteem of his own age, and have drawn, even from posterity, a good deal of respect for his memory. Compared with these, in his own times, and in his own presence, no other virtue, it seems, appeared to have any merit.	He had a walk and a bearing that could suit only him and his rank, and that would have been ridiculous in anyone else. The embarrassment he caused those who spoke to him flattered the secret satisfaction with which he felt his own superiority.' These frivolous accomplishments established this prince in the esteem of his own age, and have won a good deal of respect for his memory even from posterity. They were backed by his rank, and no doubt also by some degree of other talents and virtues, though these do not seem to have risen much above mediocrity. Compared with these accomplishments, in his own times and in his own presence, no other virtue, it seems, appeared to have any merit.
	Knowledge, industry, valour, and beneficence, trembled, were abashed, and lost all dignity before them.'	Knowledge, industry, courage, and generosity trembled, were abashed, and lost all dignity before them."
4.24	Woman also thus 'in herself complete,' by possessing all these *frivolous* accomplishments, so changes the nature of things	Woman too, "in herself complete" in this way by possessing all these *frivolous* accomplishments, so changes the nature of things
4.25	———'That what she wills to do or say Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best; All higher knowledge in *her presence* falls Degraded. Wisdom in discourse with her Loses discountenanc'd, and, like Folly, shows; Authority and Reason on her wait.'—	—"That what she wills to do or say Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best; All higher knowledge in *her presence* falls Degraded. Wisdom in discourse with her Loses, discountenanced, and like Folly shows; Authority and Reason on her wait."—[19]
4.26	And all this is built on her loveliness!	And all this is built on her loveliness!

PLEASURE AS WOMAN'S BUSINESS

She shows how the pursuit of marriage and pleasure makes women creatures of sensation rather than reason.

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4.27	In the middle rank of life, to continue the comparison, men, in their youth, are prepared for professions, and marriage is not considered as the grand feature in their lives; whilst women, on the contrary, have no other scheme to sharpen their faculties. It is not business, extensive plans, or any of the excursive flights of ambition, that engross their attention; no, their thoughts are not	To continue the comparison: in the middle rank of life, men are prepared in their youth for professions, and marriage is not seen as the great event of their lives. Women, on the contrary, have no other scheme to sharpen their faculties. It is not business, far-reaching plans, or any of the roving flights of ambition that occupy their attention. No,

19 Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book 8, where Adam describes to the angel Raphael the effect Eve has on him.

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employed in rearing such noble structures. To rise in the world, and have the liberty of running from pleasure to pleasure, they must marry advantageously, and to this object their time is sacrificed, and their persons often legally prostituted.

A man when he enters any profession has his eye steadily fixed on some future advantage (and the mind gains great strength by having all its efforts directed to one point) and, full of his business, pleasure is considered as mere relaxation; whilst women seek for pleasure as the main purpose of existence. In fact, from the education, which they receive from society, the love of pleasure may be said to govern them all; but does this prove that there is a sex in souls?

It would be just as rational to declare that the courtiers in France, when a destructive system of despotism had formed their character, were not men, because liberty, virtue, and humanity, were sacrificed to pleasure and vanity.—Fatal passions, which have ever domineered over the *whole* race!

4.28 The same love of pleasure, fostered by the whole tendency of their education, gives a trifling turn to the conduct of women in most circumstances: for instance, they are ever anxious about secondary things; and on the watch for adventures, instead of being occupied by duties.

4.29 A man, when he undertakes a journey, has, in general, the end in view; a woman thinks more of the incidental occurrences, the strange things that may possibly occur on the road; the impression that she may make on her fellow-travellers; and, above all, she is anxiously intent on the care of the finery that she carries with her, which is more than ever a part of herself, when going to figure on a new scene; when, to use an apt French turn of expression, she is going to produce a sensation.—Can dignity of mind exist with such trivial cares?

4.30 In short, women, in general, as well as the rich of both sexes, have acquired all the follies and vices of civilization, and missed the useful fruit. It is not necessary for me always to premise, that I speak of the condition of the whole sex, leaving exceptions out of the question. Their senses are inflamed, and their understandings neglected,

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their thoughts are not employed in raising such noble structures. To rise in the world and be free to run from pleasure to pleasure, they must marry advantageously. To this goal their time is sacrificed, and their persons are often legally prostituted.

A man entering a profession keeps his eye steadily fixed on some future advantage (and the mind gains great strength when all its efforts are directed at one point). Absorbed in his business, he regards pleasure as mere relaxation, whereas women seek pleasure as the main purpose of existence. In fact, given the education they receive from society, the love of pleasure may be said to govern them all. But does this prove that souls have a sex?

It would be just as rational to declare that the courtiers of France, once a destructive system of despotism had formed their character, were not men, because they sacrificed liberty, virtue, and humanity to pleasure and vanity.—Fatal passions, which have always tyrannized over the *whole* human race!

The same love of pleasure, fostered by the whole drift of their education, gives a trifling cast to women's conduct in most circumstances. For instance, they are always anxious about secondary things, and they look out for adventures instead of attending to their duties.

A man setting out on a journey generally has the destination in view. A woman thinks more about the incidental events: the strange things that might happen on the road, and the impression she may make on her fellow travelers. Above all, she is anxiously intent on looking after the finery she carries with her. It is more than ever a part of herself when she is going to cut a figure on a new stage, when, to use an apt French turn of phrase, she is going to produce a sensation.—Can dignity of mind coexist with such trivial cares?

In short, women in general, like the rich of both sexes, have acquired all the follies and vices of civilization and missed its useful fruit. I need not keep stating in advance that I am speaking of the condition of the whole sex, leaving exceptions aside. Their senses are inflamed and their under-

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consequently they become the prey of their senses, delicately termed sensibility, and are blown about by every momentary gust of feeling. They are, therefore, in a much worse condition than they would be in were they in a state nearer to nature. Ever restless and anxious, their over exercised sensibility not only renders them uncomfortable themselves, but troublesome, to use a soft phrase, to others.

All their thoughts turn on things calculated to excite emotion; and feeling, when they should reason, their conduct is unstable, and their opinions are wavering—not the wavering produced by deliberation or progressive views, but by contradictory emotions. By fits and starts they are warm in many pursuits; yet this warmth, never concentrated into perseverance, soon exhausts itself; exhaled by its own heat, or meeting with some other fleeting passion, to which reason has never given any specific gravity, neutrality ensues. Miserable, indeed, must be that being whose cultivation of mind has only tended to inflame its passions! A distinction should be made between inflaming and strengthening them.

The passions thus pampered, whilst the judgment is left unformed, what can be expected to ensue?—Undoubtedly, a mixture of madness and folly!

4.31 This observation should not be confined to the *fair* sex; however, at present, I only mean to apply it to them.

4.32 Novels, music, poetry, and gallantry, all tend to make women the creatures of sensation, and their character is thus formed during the time they are acquiring accomplishments, the only improvement they are excited, by their station in society, to acquire. This overstretched sensibility naturally relaxes the other powers of the mind, and prevents intellect from attaining that sovereignty which it ought to attain to render a rational creature useful to others, and content with its own station: for the exercise of the understanding, as life advances, is the only method pointed out by nature to calm the passions.

4.33 Satiety has a very different effect, and I have often been forcibly struck by an emphatical description

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standings neglected. As a result they become the prey of their senses, which is delicately called sensibility, and they are blown about by every passing gust of feeling. They are therefore in a much worse condition than they would be in a state closer to nature. They are forever restless and anxious, and their overexercised sensibility not only makes them uncomfortable themselves but also, to put it gently, troublesome to others.

All their thoughts turn on things designed to stir emotion. Because they feel when they should reason, their conduct is unstable and their opinions waver. This is not the wavering that comes from deliberation or developing views, but the wavering produced by contradictory emotions. By fits and starts they are enthusiastic about many pursuits. Yet this enthusiasm is never concentrated into perseverance, and it soon exhausts itself. Either it burns off in its own heat, or it meets some other fleeting passion to which reason has never given any particular weight, and neutrality follows. Miserable indeed must be the being whose cultivation of mind has only served to inflame its passions! We should distinguish between inflaming the passions and strengthening them.

When the passions are pampered like this and the judgment is left unformed, what can we expect to follow?—A mixture of madness and folly, without a doubt!

This observation need not be confined to the *fair* sex. For the present, however, I mean to apply it only to women.

Novels, music, poetry, and gallantry all tend to make women creatures of sensation. Their character is formed this way while they are acquiring accomplishments, which are the only improvement their position in society encourages them to seek. This overstretched sensibility naturally slackens the other powers of the mind. It keeps the intellect from gaining the sovereignty it ought to have if a rational creature is to be useful to others and content with its own station. For as life goes on, the exercise of the understanding is the only method nature has pointed out for calming the passions.

Satiety has a very different effect. I have often been forcibly struck by a vivid description of dam-

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	of damnation:—when the spirit is represented as continually hovering with abortive eagerness round the defiled body, unable to enjoy any thing without the organs of sense. Yet, to their senses, are women made slaves, because it is by their sensibility that they obtain present power.	nation, in which the spirit is pictured endlessly hovering, with frustrated eagerness, around the defiled body, unable to enjoy anything without the organs of sense. Yet women are made slaves to their senses, because it is through their sensibility that they gain power in the present.
4.34	And will moralists pretend to assert, that this is the condition in which one half of the human race should be encouraged to remain with listless inactivity and stupid acquiescence? Kind instructors! what were we created for? To remain, it may be said, innocent; they mean in a state of childhood.—We might as well never have been born, unless it were necessary that we should be created to enable man to acquire the noble privilege of reason, the power of discerning good from evil, whilst we lie down in the dust from whence we were taken, never to rise again.—	And will moralists presume to assert that this is the condition in which half the human race should be encouraged to remain, in listless inactivity and stupid acquiescence? Kind instructors! What were we created for? To remain innocent, it may be said, by which they mean in a state of childhood.—We might as well never have been born, unless we had to be created only so that man could acquire the noble privilege of reason, the power of telling good from evil, while we lie down in the dust from which we were taken, never to rise again.—
4.35	It would be an endless task to trace the variety of meannesses, cares, and sorrows, into which women are plunged by the prevailing opinion, that they were created rather to feel than reason, and that all the power they obtain, must be obtained by their charms and weakness:	It would be an endless task to trace all the kinds of meanness, worry, and sorrow into which women are plunged by the prevailing opinion that they were created to feel rather than to reason, and that all the power they gain must be gained through their charms and their weakness:
4.36	'Fine by defect, and amiably weak!'	“Fine by defect, and amiably weak!”[20]
4.37	And, made by this amiable weakness entirely dependent, excepting what they gain by illicit sway, on man, not only for protection, but advice, is it surprising that, neglecting the duties that reason alone points out, and shrinking from trials calculated to strengthen their minds, they only exert themselves to give their defects a graceful covering, which may serve to heighten their charms in the eye of the voluptuary, though it sink them below the scale of moral excellence?	This amiable weakness makes them entirely dependent on man, except for what they gain by illicit influence, not only for protection but for advice. Is it surprising, then, that they neglect the duties that reason alone points out, shrink from the trials meant to strengthen their minds, and exert themselves only to give their defects a graceful covering, which may heighten their charms in the eyes of the sensualist even as it sinks them below the scale of moral excellence?
4.38	Fragile in every sense of the word, they are obliged to look up to man for every comfort. In the most trifling dangers they cling to their support, with parasitical tenacity, piteously demanding succour; and their *natural* protector extends his arm, or lifts up his voice, to guard the lovely trembler—from what? Perhaps the frown of an old cow, or the jump of a mouse; a rat, would be a serious danger. In the name of reason, and	Fragile in every sense of the word, they are forced to look to man for every comfort. In the most trivial dangers they cling to their support with parasitic tenacity, pitifully begging for help. Their *natural* protector then extends his arm or raises his voice to guard the lovely trembler—from what? Perhaps the frown of an old cow, or the jump of a mouse. A rat would be a serious danger. In the name of reason, and even of common sense, what can save

20 Adapted from Pope’s *Epistle to a Lady*, which has “delicately weak.”

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even common sense, what can save such beings from contempt; even though they be soft and fair?	such beings from contempt, however soft and fair they may be?
4.39 These fears, when not affected, may be very pretty; but they shew a degree of imbecility that degrades a rational creature in a way women are not aware of—for love and esteem are very distinct things.	These fears, when they are not put on, may be very pretty. But they show a degree of feebleness that degrades a rational creature in a way women do not realize, for love and esteem are very different things.
4.40 I am fully persuaded that we should hear of none of these infantile airs, if girls were allowed to take sufficient exercise, and not confined in close rooms till their muscles are relaxed, and their powers of digestion destroyed. To carry the remark still further, if fear in girls, instead of being cherished, perhaps, created, was treated in the same manner as cowardice in boys, we should quickly see women with more dignified aspects. It is true, they could not then with equal propriety be termed the sweet flowers that smile in the walk of man; but they would be more respectable members of society, and discharge the important duties of life by the light of their own reason.	I am fully convinced that we would hear of none of these childish airs if girls were allowed enough exercise, instead of being shut up in stuffy rooms until their muscles go slack and their digestion is ruined. To carry the point further: fear in girls is cherished and perhaps even created. If it were treated the way cowardice is treated in boys, we would soon see women with a more dignified bearing. It is true that they could not then so fittingly be called the sweet flowers that smile along man's path. But they would be more respectable members of society, and they would carry out the important duties of life by the light of their own reason.
'Educate women like men,' says Rousseau, 'and the more they resemble our sex the less power will they have over us.' This is the very point I aim at. I do not wish them to have power over men; but over themselves.	"Educate women like men," says Rousseau, "and the more they resemble our sex, the less power they will have over us." This is the very point I am aiming at. I do not wish them to have power over men; but over themselves.
4.41 In the same strain have I heard men argue against instructing the poor; for many are the forms that aristocracy assumes. 'Teach them to read and write,' say they, 'and you take them out of the station assigned them by nature.' An eloquent Frenchman has answered them, I will borrow his sentiments. But they know not, when they make man a brute, that they may expect every instant to see him transformed into a ferocious beast. Without knowledge there can be no morality!	I have heard men argue in the same strain against educating the poor, for aristocracy takes many forms. "Teach them to read and write," they say, "and you take them out of the station nature assigned them." An eloquent Frenchman has answered them, and I will borrow his ideas. When they make a man a brute, they do not realize that they may expect at any moment to see him turned into a ferocious beast. Without knowledge there can be no morality!
4.42 Ignorance is a frail base for virtue! Yet, that it is the condition for which woman was organized, has been insisted upon by the writers who have most vehemently argued in favour of the superiority of man; a superiority not in degree, but essence; though, to soften the argument, they have laboured to prove, with chivalrous generosity, that the sexes ought not to be compared; man was made to reason, woman to feel; and that together, flesh and spirit, they make	Ignorance is a frail foundation for virtue! Yet the writers who have argued most vehemently for man's superiority (a superiority not of degree but of essence) have insisted that ignorance is the condition for which woman was designed. To soften the argument, though, they have labored with chivalrous generosity to prove that the sexes ought not to be compared. Man was made to reason, woman to feel, and together, flesh and spirit, they make the most perfect whole, happily blending reason and sensibility into one character.

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the most perfect whole, by blending happily reason and sensibility into one character.

4.43 And what is sensibility? 'Quickness of sensation; quickness of perception; delicacy.' Thus is it defined by Dr. Johnson; and the definition gives me no other idea than of the most exquisitely polished instinct. I discern not a trace of the image of God in either sensation or matter. Refined seventy times seven, they are still material; intellect dwells not there; nor will fire ever make lead gold!

4.44 I come round to my old argument; if woman be allowed to have an immortal soul, she must have, as the employment of life, an understanding to improve. And when, to render the present state more complete, though every thing proves it to be but a fraction of a mighty sum, she is incited by present gratification to forget her grand destination, Nature is counteracted, or she was born only to procreate and die.

Or, granting brutes, of every description, a soul, though not a reasonable one, the exercise of instinct and sensibility may be the step, which they are to take, in this life, towards the attainment of reason in the next; so that through all eternity they will lag behind man, who, why we cannot tell, had the power given him of attaining reason in his first mode of existence.

4.45 When I treat of the peculiar duties of women, as I should treat of the peculiar duties of a citizen or father, it will be found that I do not mean to insinuate that they should be taken out of their families, speaking of the majority. 'He that hath wife and children,' says Lord Bacon, 'hath given hostages to fortune; for they are impediments to great enterprises, either of virtue or mischief. Certainly the best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men.' I say the same of women.

But, the welfare of society is not built on extraordinary exertions; and were it more reasonably organized, there would be still less need of great abilities, or heroic virtues.

4.46 In the regulation of a family, in the education of children, understanding, in an unsophisticated

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And what is sensibility? "Quickness of sensation; quickness of perception; delicacy." That is how Dr. Johnson defines it, and the definition gives me no other idea than that of a most exquisitely polished instinct. I see no trace of the image of God in either sensation or matter. Refine them seventy times seven, and they are still material. Intellect does not live there, and fire will never turn lead into gold![21]

I come back to my old argument. If woman is allowed to have an immortal soul, she must have an understanding to improve as the business of her life. Everything shows this present life to be only a fraction of a vast sum. So when she is lured by immediate gratification into forgetting her great destiny, in order to make this present life more complete, then Nature is thwarted. Otherwise she was born only to breed and die.

Or, if we grant animals of every kind a soul, though not a rational one, then the exercise of instinct and sensibility may be the step they are meant to take in this life toward attaining reason in the next. In that case they will lag behind man through all eternity, because man, for reasons we cannot tell, was given the power of attaining reason in his first mode of existence.

When I discuss the particular duties of women, as I would discuss the particular duties of a citizen or a father, it will be clear that I do not mean to suggest that women should be taken out of their families. I am speaking of the majority. "He that has wife and children," says Lord Bacon, "has given hostages to fortune; for they are impediments to great enterprises, whether of virtue or of mischief. Certainly the best works, and those of greatest merit for the public, have come from unmarried or childless men." I say the same of women.[22]

But the welfare of society is not built on extraordinary efforts. If society were more reasonably organized, there would be even less need for great abilities or heroic virtues.

Running a household and educating children particularly require understanding, in a plain and un-

21 Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755).

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sense, is particularly required: strength both of body and mind; yet the men who, by their writings, have most earnestly laboured to domesticate women, have endeavoured, by arguments dictated by a gross appetite, that satiety had rendered fastidious, to weaken their bodies and cramp their minds. But, if even by these sinister methods they really *persuaded* women, by working on their feelings, to stay at home, and fulfil the duties of a mother and mistress of a family, I should cautiously oppose opinions that led women to right conduct, by prevailing on them to make the discharge of a duty the business of life, though reason were insulted.

Yet, and I appeal to experience, if by neglecting the understanding they are as much, nay, more detached from these domestic duties, than they could be by the most serious intellectual pursuit, though it may be observed that the mass of mankind will never vigourously pursue an intellectual object[7], I may be allowed to infer that reason is absolutely necessary to enable a woman to perform any duty properly, and I must again repeat, that sensibility is not reason.

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4.47 The comparison with the rich still occurs to me; for, when men neglect the duties of humanity, women will do the same; a common stream hurries them both along with thoughtless celerity. Riches and honours prevent a man from enlarging his understanding, and enervate all his powers by reversing the order of nature, which has ever made true pleasure the reward of labour. Pleasure—enervating pleasure is, likewise, within women's reach without earning it. But, till hereditary possessions are spread abroad, how can we expect men to be proud of virtue? And, till they are, women will govern them by the most direct means, neglecting their dull domestic duties to catch the pleasure that is on the wing of time.

4.48 'The power of the woman,' says some author, 'is her sensibility;' and men, not aware of the

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pretentious sense: strength of both body and mind. Yet the men whose writings have worked hardest to domesticate women have tried to weaken their bodies and cramp their minds, using arguments dictated by a gross appetite that satiety had made fastidious. Even so, suppose that by these sinister methods they really *persuaded* women, by working on their feelings, to stay at home and fulfill the duties of a mother and mistress of a household. Then I would be cautious about opposing opinions that led women to right conduct by getting them to make the performance of a duty the business of their lives, even though reason was insulted in the process.

Yet (and I appeal to experience) neglecting the understanding detaches women from these domestic duties as much as the most serious intellectual pursuit could, or even more. It may be observed, of course, that most people will never vigorously pursue an intellectual object[7]. Still, I may be allowed to infer that reason is absolutely necessary for a woman to perform any duty properly. And I must repeat once more that sensibility is not reason.

The comparison with the rich keeps coming back to me, for when men neglect the duties of humanity, women will do the same. A common current sweeps them both along with thoughtless speed. Riches and honors keep a man from enlarging his understanding and sap all his powers, because they reverse the order of nature, which has always made true pleasure the reward of labor. Pleasure (enervating pleasure) is likewise within women's reach without their earning it. But until inherited wealth is more widely spread, how can we expect men to take pride in virtue? And until they do, women will govern them by the most direct means, neglecting their dull domestic duties to snatch the pleasure that flies past on the wing of time.

“The power of woman,” says some author, “is her sensibility.” Men do not see the consequences, and

22 Francis Bacon, essay “Of Marriage and Single Life” (1612; revised 1625).
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[7] The mass of mankind are rather the slaves of their appetites than of their passions.

[7] Most people are slaves of their appetites rather than of their passions.

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consequence, do all they can to make this power swallow up every other. Those who constantly employ their sensibility will have most; for example; poets, painters, and composers[8]. Yet, when the sensibility is thus increased at the expense of reason, and even the imagination, why do philosophical men complain of their fickleness? The sexual attention of man particularly acts on female sensibility, and this sympathy has been exercised from their youth up.

A husband cannot long pay those attentions with the passion necessary to excite lively emotions, and the heart, accustomed to lively emotions, turns to a new lover, or pines in secret, the prey of virtue or prudence. I mean when the heart has really been rendered susceptible, and the taste formed; for I am apt to conclude, from what I have seen in fashionable life, that vanity is oftener fostered than sensibility by the mode of education, and the intercourse between the sexes, which I have reprobated; and that coquetry more frequently proceeds from vanity than from that inconstancy, which overstrained sensibility naturally produces.

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they do everything they can to make this power swallow up every other. Those who constantly use their sensibility will have the most of it: poets, painters, and composers, for example[8]. Yet when sensibility is increased in this way at the expense of reason, and even of imagination, why do philosophical men complain of women's fickleness? Man's sexual attentions act especially on female sensibility, and women have been exercising this responsiveness since they were young.

A husband cannot keep up those attentions for long with the passion needed to excite lively emotions. The heart, used to lively emotions, then turns to a new lover, or pines in secret, the victim of virtue or prudence. I mean when the heart has really been made susceptible and the taste formed. From what I have seen of fashionable life, I am inclined to conclude that the kind of education and the relations between the sexes I have condemned foster vanity more often than sensibility. I also conclude that coquetry springs more often from vanity than from the inconstancy that overstrained sensibility naturally produces.

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THE DEPENDENT SISTER

She describes the unmarried sister left dependent on a brother and his jealous wife.

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4.49 Another argument that has had a great weight with me, must, I think, have some force with every considerate, benevolent heart. Girls who have been thus weakly educated, are often cruelly left by their parents without any provision; and, of course, are dependent on, not only the reason, but the bounty of their brothers. These brothers are, to view the fairest side of the question, good sort of men, and give as a favour, what children of the same parents had an equal right to. In this equivocal humiliating situation, a docile female may remain some time, with a tolerable degree of comfort.

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Another argument has weighed heavily with me, and I think it must have some force with every thoughtful, kind heart. Girls who have been educated in this weak way are often cruelly left by their parents without any provision. They are then dependent not only on the reason but on the charity of their brothers. To look at the brighter side of the question, these brothers are decent enough men, and they give as a favor what children of the same parents had an equal right to. A docile woman may remain for some time in this ambiguous, humiliating position with a reasonable degree of comfort.

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[8] Men of these descriptions pour it into their compositions, to amalgamate the gross materials; and, moulding them with passion, give to the inert body a soul; but, in woman's imagination, love alone concentrates these etherial beams.

[8] Men of these kinds pour it into their works to fuse the crude materials, and, molding them with passion, they give the inert body a soul. But in a woman's imagination, love alone gathers these ethereal rays to a single point.

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But, when the brother marries, a probable circumstance, from being considered as the mistress of the family, she is viewed with averted looks as an intruder, an unnecessary burden on the benevolence of the master of the house, and his new partner.

4.50 Who can recount the misery, which many unfortunate beings, whose minds and bodies are equally weak, suffer in such situations—unable to work, and ashamed to beg? The wife, a cold-hearted, narrow-minded, woman, and this is not an unfair supposition; for the present mode of education does not tend to enlarge the heart any more than the understanding, is jealous of the little kindness which her husband shews to his relations; and her sensibility not rising to humanity, she is displeased at seeing the property of *her* children lavished on an helpless sister.

4.51 These are matters of fact, which have come under my eye, again and again. The consequence is obvious, the wife has recourse to cunning to undermine the habitual affection, which she is afraid openly to oppose; and neither tears nor caresses are spared till the spy is worked out of her home, and thrown on the world, unprepared for its difficulties; or sent, as a great effort of generosity, or from some regard to propriety, with a small stipend, and an uncultivated mind, into joyless solitude.

4.52 These two women may be much upon a par, with respect to reason and humanity; and changing situations might have acted just the same selfish part; but had they been differently educated, the case would also have been very different. The wife would not have had that sensibility, of which self is the centre, and reason might have taught her not to expect, and not even to be flattered, by the affection of her husband, if it led him to violate prior duties. She would wish not to love him merely because he loved her, but on account of his virtues; and the sister might have been able to struggle for herself instead of eating the bitter bread of dependence.

4.53 I am, indeed, persuaded that the heart, as well as the understanding, is opened by cultivation; and by, which may not appear so clear, strengthening the organs; I am not now talking of momentary

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But when the brother marries, as he probably will, she goes from being regarded as the mistress of the household to being viewed with averted eyes as an intruder, an unnecessary burden on the kindness of the master of the house and his new partner.

Who can recount the misery that many unfortunate beings, whose minds and bodies are equally weak, suffer in such situations—unable to work and ashamed to beg? Suppose the wife is a cold-hearted, narrow-minded woman. This is not an unfair supposition, for the present mode of education does no more to enlarge the heart than the understanding. She is jealous of the little kindness her husband shows his relations. Her sensibility does not rise to humanity, so she is displeased to see the property of *her* children lavished on a helpless sister.

These are facts that I have seen for myself again and again. The consequence is obvious. The wife resorts to cunning to undermine the habitual affection she is afraid to oppose openly. She spares neither tears nor caresses until the spy is worked out of her home and thrown on the world, unprepared for its difficulties. Or else the sister is sent off into joyless solitude with a small allowance and an uncultivated mind, as a great act of generosity or out of some regard for propriety.

These two women may be much on a par in reason and humanity, and had their situations been reversed, each might have played exactly the same selfish part. But had they been educated differently, the case would also have been very different. The wife would not have had that sensibility of which self is the center. Reason might have taught her not to expect her husband's affection, or even to be flattered by it, if it led him to violate prior duties. She would wish to love him not merely because he loved her, but for his virtues. And the sister might have been able to fight her own way instead of eating the bitter bread of dependence.

I am indeed convinced that the heart, as well as the understanding, is opened by cultivation. It is also opened by strengthening the bodily organs, though this may seem less obvious. I am not talk-

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flashes of sensibility, but of affections. And, perhaps, in the education of both sexes, the most difficult task is so to adjust instruction as not to narrow the understanding, whilst the heart is warmed by the generous juices of spring, just raised by the electric fermentation of the season; nor to dry up the feelings by employing the mind in investigations remote from life.

4.54 With respect to women, when they receive a careful education, they are either made fine ladies, brimful of sensibility, and teeming with capricious fancies; or mere notable women. The latter are often friendly, honest creatures, and have a shrewd kind of good sense joined with worldly prudence, that often render them more useful members of society than the fine sentimental lady, though they possess neither greatness of mind nor taste. The intellectual world is shut against them; take them out of their family or neighbourhood, and they stand still; the mind finding no employment, for literature affords a fund of amusement which they have never sought to relish, but frequently to despise.

The sentiments and taste of more cultivated minds appear ridiculous, even in those whom chance and family connections have led them to love; but in mere acquaintance they think it all affectation.

4.55 A man of sense can only love such a woman on account of her sex, and respect her, because she is a trusty servant. He lets her, to preserve his own peace, scold the servants, and go to church in clothes made of the very best materials. A man of her own size of understanding would, probably, not agree so well with her; for he might wish to encroach on her prerogative, and manage some domestic concerns himself.

Yet women, whose minds are not enlarged by cultivation, or the natural selfishness of sensibility expanded by reflection, are very unfit to manage a family; for, by an undue stretch of power, they are always tyrannizing to support a superiority that only rests on the arbitrary distinction of fortune. The evil is sometimes more serious, and domestics are deprived of innocent indulgences, and made to work beyond their

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ing now of momentary flashes of sensibility, but of the affections. Perhaps the hardest task in educating both sexes is to adjust instruction so that it does not narrow the understanding while the heart is warmed by the generous juices of spring, just raised by the electric ferment of the season. Nor should it dry up the feelings by occupying the mind with inquiries remote from life.

As for women, when they do receive a careful education, they are made either into fine ladies, brimming with sensibility and teeming with capricious fancies, or into mere "notable" women. The latter are often friendly, honest creatures. They have a shrewd sort of good sense joined to worldly prudence, which often makes them more useful members of society than the fine sentimental lady, though they have neither greatness of mind nor taste. The intellectual world is closed to them. Take them out of their family or neighborhood and they come to a standstill, because the mind finds nothing to do. Literature offers a store of amusement, but they have never tried to enjoy it and have often despised it.[25]

The sentiments and taste of more cultivated minds seem ridiculous to them, even in people whom chance and family ties have led them to love. In mere acquaintances they think it all affectation.

A man of sense can love such a woman only because of her sex, and respect her only because she is a trusty servant. To keep his own peace, he lets her scold the servants and go to church in clothes made of the very best materials. A man of her own size of understanding would probably not get along with her so well, because he might want to encroach on her prerogative and manage some household matters himself.

Yet some women's minds have not been enlarged by cultivation, and their natural selfishness of sensibility has not been widened by reflection. Such women are very unfit to run a household. They overstretch their power, always tyrannizing in order to prop up a superiority that rests only on the arbitrary distinction of fortune. Sometimes the evil is more serious. Servants are denied innocent pleasures and made to work beyond their

25 "Notable" here means capable and industrious in housekeeping.

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strength, in order to enable the notable woman to keep a better table, and outshine her neighbours in finery and parade. If she attend to her children, it is, in general, to dress them in a costly manner —and, whether this attention arises from vanity or fondness, it is equally pernicious.

4.56 Besides, how many women of this, description pass their days; or, at least, their evenings, discontentedly. Their husbands acknowledge that they are good managers, and chaste wives; but leave home to seek for more agreeable, may I be allowed to use a significant French word, *piquant* society; and the patient drudge, who fulfils her task, like a blind horse in a mill, is defrauded of her just reward; for the wages due to her are the caresses of her husband; and women who have so few resources in themselves, do not very patiently bear this privation of a natural right.

4.57 A fine lady, on the contrary, has been taught to look down with contempt on the vulgar employments of life; though she has only been incited to acquire accomplishments that rise a degree above sense; for even corporeal accomplishments cannot be acquired with any degree of precision unless the understanding has been strengthened by exercise. Without a foundation of principles taste is superficial; and grace must arise from something deeper than imitation. The imagination, however, is heated, and the feelings rendered fastidious, if not sophisticated; or, a counterpoise of judgment is not acquired, when the heart still remains artless, though it becomes too tender.

4.58 These women are often amiable; and their hearts are really more sensible to general benevolence, more alive to the sentiments that civilize life, than the square-elbowed family drudge; but, wanting a due proportion of reflection and self-government, they only inspire love; and are the mistresses of their husbands, whilst they have any hold on their affections; and the platonic friends of his male acquaintance. These are the fair defects in nature; the women who appear to be created not to enjoy the fellowship of man, but to save him from sinking into absolute brutality, by rubbing off the rough angles of his character; and by playful dalliance to give some dignity to the appetite that draws him to them.

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strength so that the notable housewife can keep a better table and outshine her neighbors in finery and display. If she attends to her children, it is generally to dress them expensively. Whether this attention comes from vanity or fondness, it is equally harmful.

Besides, how many women of this type spend their days, or at least their evenings, in discontent! Their husbands acknowledge that they are good managers and chaste wives, but they leave home to seek more agreeable company, more *piquant* company, if I may use an expressive French word. The patient drudge, who does her task like a blind horse in a mill, is cheated of her just reward. The wages due to her are her husband's caresses, and women who have so few resources in themselves do not bear this deprivation of a natural right very patiently.

A fine lady, on the other hand, has been taught to look down with contempt on the ordinary tasks of life. Yet she has only been encouraged to acquire accomplishments that rise one notch above the senses. Even physical accomplishments cannot be acquired with any precision unless the understanding has been strengthened by exercise. Without a foundation of principles, taste is superficial, and grace must spring from something deeper than imitation. Her imagination, however, is heated, and her feelings are made fastidious, if not artificial. Or else no counterweight of judgment is acquired, even when the heart remains artless, though it becomes too tender.

These women are often lovable. Their hearts are really more responsive to general benevolence, and more alive to the sentiments that civilize life, than the square-elbowed household drudge. But they lack a due measure of reflection and self-government, so they inspire only love. They are their husbands' mistresses as long as they have any hold on their affections, and the platonic friends of his male acquaintances. These are the fair defects in nature. They are the women who seem created not to enjoy man's companionship, but to save him from sinking into sheer brutality by rubbing off the rough edges of his character, and to lend some dignity, by playful flirtation, to the appetite that draws him to them.

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Gracious Creator of the whole human race! hast thou created such a being as woman, who can trace thy wisdom in thy works, and feel that thou alone art by thy nature, exalted above her,—for no better purpose?—Can she believe that she was only made to submit to man, her equal; a being, who, like her, was sent into the world to acquire virtue?—Can she consent to be occupied merely to please him; merely to adorn the earth, when her soul is capable of rising to thee?—And can she rest supinely dependent on man for reason, when she ought to mount with him the arduous steeps of knowledge?—

4.59 Yet, if love be the supreme good, let women be only educated to inspire it, and let every charm be polished to intoxicate the senses; but, if they are moral beings, let them have a chance to become intelligent; and let love to man be only a part of that glowing flame of universal love, which, after encircling humanity, mounts in grateful incense to God.

4.60 To fulfil domestic duties much resolution is necessary, and a serious kind of perseverance that requires a more firm support than emotions, however lively and true to nature. To give an example of order, the soul of virtue, some austerity of behaviour must be adopted, scarcely to be expected from a being who, from its infancy, has been made the weathercock of its own sensations. Whoever rationally means to be useful must have a plan of conduct; and, in the discharge of the simplest duty, we are often obliged to act contrary to the present impulse of tenderness or compassion.

Severity is frequently the most certain, as well as the most sublime proof of affection; and the want of this power over the feelings, and of that lofty, dignified affection, which makes a person prefer the future good of the beloved object to a present gratification, is the reason why so many fond mothers spoil their children, and has made it questionable whether negligence or indulgence is most hurtful: but I am inclined to think, that the latter has done most harm.

4.61 Mankind seem to agree that children should be left under the management of women during their childhood. Now, from all the observation that I have been able to make, women of

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Gracious Creator of the whole human race! Have you created such a being as woman, who can trace your wisdom in your works and feel that you alone are by your nature exalted above her—for no better purpose?—Can she believe that she was made only to submit to man, her equal, a being who, like her, was sent into the world to acquire virtue?—Can she consent to be occupied merely with pleasing him, merely with adorning the earth, when her soul is capable of rising to you?—And can she rest in lazy dependence on man for reason, when she ought to climb with him the arduous heights of knowledge?—

Yet if love is the supreme good, let women be educated only to inspire it, and let every charm be polished to intoxicate the senses. But if they are moral beings, let them have a chance to become intelligent. And let love for man be only one part of that glowing flame of universal love which, after encircling humanity, rises in grateful incense to God.

Fulfilling domestic duties takes a great deal of resolution, and a serious kind of perseverance that needs firmer support than emotions, however lively and true to nature. To set an example of order, which is the soul of virtue, one must adopt a certain austerity of behavior. This can hardly be expected from a being who has been made, from infancy, the weathervane of its own sensations. Whoever rationally intends to be useful must have a plan of conduct. Even in performing the simplest duty, we are often obliged to act against the immediate impulse of tenderness or compassion.

Severity is often the surest, as well as the most sublime, proof of affection. Many doting mothers lack this power over the feelings. They also lack that lofty, dignified affection which makes a person prefer the future good of the one they love to a present gratification. This lack is the reason why so many of them spoil their children, and it has made it an open question whether neglect or indulgence does more harm. I am inclined to think the latter has done the most.

Everyone seems to agree that children should be left in women's care during their early years. Now, from all the observation I have been able to make, women of sensibility are the least fit for this task,

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sensibility are the most unfit for this task, because they will infallibly, carried away by their feelings, spoil a child's temper. The management of the temper, the first, and most important branch of education, requires the sober steady eye of reason; a plan of conduct equally distant from tyranny and indulgence: yet these are the extremes that people of sensibility alternately fall into; always shooting beyond the mark.

I have followed this train of reasoning much further, till I have concluded, that a person of genius is the most improper person to be employed in education, public or private. Minds of this rare species see things too much in masses, and seldom, if ever, have a good temper. That habitual cheerfulness, termed good-humour, is, perhaps, as seldom united with great mental powers, as with strong feelings.

And those people who follow, with interest and admiration, the flights of genius; or, with cooler approbation suck in the instruction which has been elaborately prepared for them by the profound thinker, ought not to be disgusted, if they find the former choleric, and the latter morose; because liveliness of fancy, and a tenacious comprehension of mind, are scarcely compatible with that pliant urbanity which leads a man, at least, to bend to the opinions and prejudices of others, instead of roughly confronting them.

4.62 But, treating of education or manners, minds of a superior class are not to be considered, they may be left to chance; it is the multitude, with moderate abilities, who call for instruction, and catch the colour of the atmosphere they breathe. This respectable concourse, I contend, men and women, should not have their sensations heightened in the hot-bed of luxurious indolence, at the expense of their understanding; for, unless there be a ballast of understanding, they will never become either virtuous or free: aristocracy, founded on property, or sterling talents, will ever sweep before it, the alternately timid, and ferocious slaves of feeling.

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because they will infallibly be carried away by their feelings and spoil a child's temper. Managing the temper is the first and most important branch of education, and it requires the sober, steady eye of reason: a plan of conduct equally far from tyranny and from indulgence. Yet these are exactly the extremes that people of sensibility fall into by turns, always overshooting the mark.

I have followed this line of reasoning much further, until I concluded that a person of genius is the worst possible choice to employ in education, public or private. Minds of this rare kind see things too much in the mass, and seldom if ever have an even temper. That habitual cheerfulness called good humor is perhaps as rarely joined with great mental powers as with strong feelings.

Some people follow the flights of genius with interest and admiration. Others, with cooler approval, drink in the instruction that the profound thinker has carefully prepared for them. Neither should be put off if they find the genius hot-tempered and the thinker morose. A lively imagination and a tenacious grasp of mind are hardly compatible with that pliant courtesy which leads a man, at least, to bend to the opinions and prejudices of others instead of bluntly confronting them.

But in discussing education or manners, we need not consider minds of a superior class; they may be left to chance. It is the multitude of moderate abilities who need instruction, and who take on the color of the atmosphere they breathe. I contend that this respectable crowd, men and women alike, should not have their sensations heightened in the hothouse of luxurious idleness at the expense of their understanding. For without a ballast of understanding, they will never become either virtuous or free. Aristocracy, whether founded on property or on genuine talent, will always sweep these slaves of feeling before it, timid and ferocious by turns.

ARGUMENTS FROM NATURE

She answers claims about women's early maturity and the supposed natural basis of polygamy.

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4.63 Numberless are the arguments, to take another view of the subject, brought forward with a shew of reason: because supposed to be deduced from nature, that men have used morally and physically, to degrade the sex. I must notice a few.

4.64 The female understanding has often been spoken of with contempt, as arriving sooner at maturity than the male. I shall not answer this argument by alluding to the early proofs of reason, as well as genius, in Cowley, Milton, and Pope[9], but only appeal to experience to decide whether young men, who are early introduced into company (and examples now abound) do not acquire the same precocity. So notorious is this fact, that the bare mentioning of it must bring before people, who at all mix in the world, the idea of a number of swaggering apes of men, whose understandings are narrowed by being brought into the society of men when they ought to have been spinning a top or twirling a hoop.

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4.65 It has also been asserted, by some naturalists, that men do not attain their full growth and strength till thirty; but that, women arrive at maturity by twenty. I apprehend that they reason on false ground, led astray by the male prejudice, which deems beauty the perfection of woman—mere beauty of features and complexion, the vulgar acceptation of the word, whilst male beauty is allowed to have some connection with the mind. Strength of body, and that character of countenance, which the French term a *physionomie*, women do not acquire before thirty, any more than men.

The little artless tricks of children, it is true, are particularly pleasing and attractive; yet, when the pretty freshness of youth is worn off, these artless graces become studied airs, and disgust every person of taste. In the countenance of girls we

[9] Many other names might be added.

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To look at the subject from another angle: men have brought forward countless arguments, morally and physically, to degrade women, and these arguments carry a show of reason because they are supposedly drawn from nature. I must notice a few.

Women's understanding has often been spoken of with contempt on the grounds that it reaches maturity sooner than men's. I will not answer this argument by pointing to the early proofs of reason, as well as genius, in Cowley, Milton, and Pope[9]. I will only appeal to experience to decide whether young men who are brought into company early (and examples now abound) do not acquire the same precocity. This fact is so well known that merely mentioning it must call up, for anyone who mixes in the world at all, a picture of a whole troop of swaggering apes of men, whose understandings have been narrowed by being brought into the society of men when they ought to have been spinning a top or rolling a hoop.[26]

Some naturalists have also claimed that men do not reach their full growth and strength until thirty, while women reach maturity by twenty. I believe they are reasoning from false premises. They have been led astray by the male prejudice that regards beauty as the perfection of woman—mere beauty of features and complexion, the vulgar sense of the word—while male beauty is allowed to have some connection with the mind. Strength of body, and that character of face which the French call a *physionomie*, women do not acquire before thirty, any more than men do.

It is true that the little artless tricks of children are especially pleasing and attractive. But once the pretty freshness of youth has worn off, these artless graces turn into studied airs and disgust every person of taste. In a girl's face we look only for

26 Abraham Cowley (1618–1667) published his first volume of poems at fifteen, and Alexander Pope was writing verse as a boy.

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[9] Many other names might be added.

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only look for vivacity and bashful modesty; but, the spring-tide of life over, we look for soberer sense in the face, and for traces of passion, instead of the dimples of animal spirits; expecting to see individuality of character, the only fastener of the affections[10]. We then wish to converse, not to fondle; to give scope to our imaginations as well as to the sensations of our hearts.

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4.66 At twenty the beauty of both sexes is equal; but the libertinism of man leads him to make the distinction, and superannuated coquettes are commonly of the same opinion; for, when they can no longer inspire love, they pay for the vigour and vivacity of youth. The French, who admit more of mind into their notions of beauty, give the preference to women of thirty. I mean to say that they allow women to be in their most perfect state, when vivacity gives place to reason, and to that majestic seriousness of character, which marks maturity;—or, the resting point.

In youth, till twenty, the body shoots out, till thirty the solids are attaining a degree of density; and the flexible muscles, growing daily more rigid, give character to the countenance; that is, they trace the operations of the mind with the iron pen of fate, and tell us not only what powers are within, but how they have been employed.

4.67 It is proper to observe, that animals who arrive slowly at maturity, are the longest lived, and of the noblest species. Men cannot, however, claim any natural superiority from the grandeur of longevity; for in this respect nature has not distinguished the male.

4.68 Polygamy is another physical degradation; and a plausible argument for a custom, that blasts every domestic virtue, is drawn from the well-attested fact, that in the countries where it is established, more females are born than males. This appears to be an indication of nature, and to nature, apparently reasonable speculations must yield. A further conclusion obviously presented

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liveliness and bashful modesty. When the springtide of life is over, we look instead for soberer sense in the face, and for traces of passion instead of the dimples of high spirits. We expect to see individuality of character, the only thing that fastens the affections[10]. We then want to converse, not to fondle; to give scope to our imaginations as well as to the feelings of our hearts.

At twenty the beauty of the two sexes is equal. But men's libertinism leads them to make the distinction, and aging coquettes are usually of the same opinion, for when they can no longer inspire love, they pay for the vigor and liveliness of youth. The French, who let more mind into their notions of beauty, prefer women of thirty. I mean that they consider women to be at their most perfect when liveliness gives way to reason, and to that majestic seriousness of character which marks maturity—or the resting point.

In youth, until twenty, the body shoots up. Until thirty, its solid parts are acquiring a certain density, and the flexible muscles, growing more rigid every day, give character to the face. That is, they trace the workings of the mind with the iron pen of fate, and tell us not only what powers lie within, but how they have been used.

It is worth noting that animals which reach maturity slowly live the longest and belong to the noblest species. Men cannot, however, claim any natural superiority on the grand score of longevity, for in this respect nature has not favored the male.

Polygamy is another physical degradation. This custom blights every domestic virtue, yet a plausible argument for it is drawn from the well-attested fact that in the countries where it is established more girls are born than boys. This appears to be a sign from nature, and before nature even apparently reasonable speculations must give way. A further conclusion obviously suggested it-

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[10] The strength of an affection is, generally, in the same proportion as the character of the species in the object beloved, is lost in that of the individual.

[10] The strength of an affection is generally proportionate to how far the beloved person's character as a member of the species is lost in their character as an individual.

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itself; if polygamy be necessary, woman must be inferiour to man, and made for him.	self: if polygamy is necessary, woman must be inferior to man, and made for him.
4.69 With respect to the formation of the fœtus in the womb, we are very ignorant; but it appears to me probable, that an accidental physical cause may account for this phenomenon, and prove it not to be a law of nature. I have met with some pertinent observations on the subject in Forster's Account of the Isles of the South-Sea, that will explain my meaning.	We know very little about how the fetus forms in the womb. But it seems probable to me that some accidental physical cause may account for this phenomenon, and show that it is not a law of nature. I have come across some pertinent observations on the subject in Forster's account of the South Sea islands, which will explain what I mean.[29]
After observing that of the two sexes amongst animals, the most vigorous and fiery constitution always prevails, and produces its kind; he adds, —'If this be applied to the inhabitants of Africa, it is evident that the men there, accustomed to polygamy, are enervated by the use of so many women, and therefore less vigorous; the women, on the contrary, are of a warmer constitution, not only on account of their more irritable nerves, more sensible organization, and more lively fancy; but likewise because they are deprived in their matrimony of that share of physical love which, in a monogamous condition, would all be theirs; and thus, for the above reasons, the generality of children are born females.'	He first observes that, of the two sexes among animals, the one with the more vigorous and fiery constitution always prevails and reproduces its own kind. Then he adds: "If this is applied to the inhabitants of Africa, it is evident that the men there, accustomed to polygamy, are weakened by having so many women, and are therefore less vigorous. The women, on the contrary, have a warmer constitution. This is not only because of their more irritable nerves, more sensitive organization, and livelier imagination, but also because in their marriages they are deprived of that share of physical love which, under monogamy, would be entirely theirs. And so, for these reasons, most children there are born female."
4.70 'In the greater part of Europe it has been proved by the most accurate lists of mortality, that the proportion of men to women is nearly equal, or, if any difference takes place, the males born are more numerous, in the proportion of 105 to 100.'	"In most of Europe the most accurate mortality tables have proved that the numbers of men and women are nearly equal, or, if there is any difference, that more males are born, in the proportion of 105 to 100."
4.71 The necessity of polygamy, therefore, does not appear; yet when a man seduces a woman, it should, I think, be termed a *left-handed* marriage, and the man should be *legally* obliged to maintain the woman and her children, unless adultery, a natural divorcement, abrogated the law. And this law should remain in force as long as the weakness of women caused the word seduction to be used as an excuse for their frailty and want of principle; nay, while they depend on man for a subsistence, instead of earning it by the exertion of their own hands or heads.	So the necessity of polygamy does not appear. Still, when a man seduces a woman, I think it should be called a *left-handed* marriage, and the man should be *legally* obliged to support the woman and her children—unless adultery, a natural divorce, canceled the obligation. And this law should remain in force as long as women's weakness led the word "seduction" to be used as an excuse for their frailty and lack of principle. Indeed, it should remain in force as long as they depend on men for their living instead of earning it by the work of their own hands or heads.[30]
But these women should not, in the full meaning of their relationship, be termed wives, or the very	But such women should not be called wives in the full sense of that relationship, or the very purpose

29 Johann Reinhold Forster, naturalist on Cook's second voyage, published *Observations Made during a Voyage Round the World* (1778).
30 A "left-handed" or morganatic marriage was one between a man of rank and a woman of lower station, in which the wife and children did not share his rank or inheritance.

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purpose of marriage would be subverted, and all those endearing charities that flow from personal fidelity, and give a sanctity to the tie, when neither love nor friendship unites the hearts, would melt into selfishness. The woman who is faithful to the father of her children demands respect, and should not be treated like a prostitute; though I readily grant that if it be necessary for a man and woman to live together in order to bring up their offspring, nature never intended that a man should have more than one wife.

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of marriage would be undermined. All those endearing kindnesses that flow from personal fidelity, and that make the bond sacred even when neither love nor friendship unites the hearts, would dissolve into selfishness. The woman who is faithful to the father of her children deserves respect and should not be treated like a prostitute. Even so, I readily grant that if a man and a woman need to live together to bring up their children, nature never intended a man to have more than one wife.

SEDUCTION AND PROSTITUTION

She pleads for women ruined by seduction and argues that they need justice, not charity.

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4.72 Still, highly as I respect marriage, as the foundation of almost every social virtue, I cannot avoid feeling the most lively compassion for those unfortunate females who are broken off from society, and by one error torn from all those affections and relationships that improve the heart and mind. It does not frequently even deserve the name of error; for many innocent girls become the dupes of a sincere affectionate heart, and still more are, as it may emphatically be termed, *ruined* before they know the difference between virtue and vice:—and thus prepared by their education for infamy, they become infamous. Asylums and Magdalens are not the proper remedies for these abuses. It is justice, not charity, that is wanting in the world!

4.73 A woman who has lost her honour, imagines that she cannot fall lower, and as for recovering her former station, it is impossible; no exertion can wash this stain away. Losing thus every spur, and having no other means of support, prostitution becomes her only refuge, and the character is quickly depraved by circumstances over which the poor wretch has little power, unless she possesses an uncommon portion of sense and loftiness of spirit. Necessity never makes prostitution the business of men's lives; though numberless are the women who are thus rendered systematically vicious.

This, however, arises, in a great degree, from the state of idleness in which women are educated,

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Still, highly as I respect marriage as the foundation of almost every social virtue, I cannot help feeling the most intense compassion for those unfortunate women who are cut off from society. By one error they are torn from all the affections and relationships that improve the heart and mind. Often it does not even deserve the name of error. Many innocent girls are deceived by their own sincere, affectionate hearts, and still more are—as it may pointedly be put—*ruined* before they know the difference between virtue and vice. Prepared for infamy in this way by their education, they become infamous. Asylums and Magdalen houses are not the proper remedies for these abuses. It is justice, not charity, that the world is lacking![31]

A woman who has lost her honor imagines she cannot fall any lower. As for regaining her former position, that is impossible—no effort can wash away this stain. She has lost every incentive and has no other means of support, so prostitution becomes her only refuge. Her character is quickly corrupted by circumstances over which the poor wretch has little power, unless she has an uncommon share of sense and loftiness of spirit. Necessity never makes prostitution the business of men's lives, yet countless women are made systematically vicious in this way.

This, however, arises to a great extent from the idleness in which women are brought up. They are

31 The Magdalen Hospital, founded in London in 1758, took in "penitent prostitutes"; similar institutions were called Magdalens.

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who are always taught to look up to man for a maintenance, and to consider their persons as the proper return for his exertions to support them. Meretricious airs, and the whole science of wantonness, has then a more powerful stimulous than either appetite or vanity; and this remark gives force to the prevailing opinion, that with chastity all is lost that is respectable in woman. Her character depends on the observance of one virtue, though the only passion fostered in her heart—is love. Nay, the honour of a woman is not made even to depend on her will.

4.74 When Richardson[11] makes Clarissa tell Lovelace that he had robbed her of her honour, he must have had strange notions of honour and virtue. For, miserable beyond all names of misery is the condition of a being, who could be degraded without its own consent! This excess of strictness I have heard vindicated as a salutary error. I shall answer in the words of Leibnitz–'Errors are often useful; but it is commonly to remedy other errors.'

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4.75 Most of the evils of life arise from a desire of present enjoyment that outruns itself. The obedience required of women in the marriage state comes under this description; the mind naturally weakened by depending on authority, never exerts its own powers, and the obedient wife is thus rendered a weak indolent mother. Or, supposing that this is not always the consequence, a future state of existence is scarcely taken into the reckoning when only negative virtues are cultivated.

For, in treating of morals, particularly when women are alluded to, writers have too often considered virtue in a very limited sense, and made the foundation of it *solely* worldly utility; nay, a still more fragile base has been given to this stupendous fabric, and the wayward fluctuating feelings of men have been made the standard of

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always taught to look to a man for their support, and to regard their bodies as the proper return for his efforts to maintain them. Seductive airs, and the whole art of wantonness, then have a more powerful motive than either appetite or vanity. This observation lends force to the prevailing opinion that when chastity is lost, everything respectable in a woman is lost. Her character depends on keeping one virtue, although the only passion encouraged in her heart is—love. Indeed, a woman's honor is not even made to depend on her own will.

When Richardson[11] has Clarissa tell Lovelace that he has robbed her of her honor, he must have had strange notions of honor and virtue. For miserable beyond every name for misery is the condition of a being who could be degraded without its own consent! I have heard this excessive strictness defended as a salutary error. I will answer in the words of Leibniz: "Errors are often useful; but usually to remedy other errors."[32]

Most of the evils of life arise from a desire for present enjoyment that outruns itself. The obedience demanded of women in marriage falls under this description. The mind, naturally weakened by depending on authority, never uses its own powers, and so the obedient wife becomes a weak, indolent mother. Or, supposing this is not always the result, a future state of existence is hardly taken into account when only negative virtues are cultivated.

For in writing about morals, especially where women are concerned, writers have too often taken virtue in a very narrow sense and based it *solely* on worldly usefulness. Worse, this stupendous structure has been set on a still flimsier base: the wayward, fluctuating feelings of men have been made

32 In Samuel Richardson's novel *Clarissa* (1747–48), the heroine is drugged and raped by the rake Lovelace.

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[11] Dr. Young supports the same opinion, in his plays, when he talks of the misfortune that shunned the light of day.

[11] Dr. Young takes the same view in his plays, when he speaks of the misfortune that shunned the light of day.[33]

33 Edward Young (1683–1765), best known for *Night Thoughts*, also wrote tragedies.

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virtue. Yes, virtue as well as religion, has been subjected to the decisions of taste.	the standard of virtue. Yes, virtue, like religion, has been made subject to the verdicts of taste.
4.76 It would almost provoke a smile of contempt, if the vain absurdities of man did not strike us on all sides, to observe, how eager men are to degrade the sex from whom they pretend to receive the chief pleasure of life; and I have frequently with full conviction retorted Pope's sarcasm on them; or, to speak explicitly, it has appeared to me applicable to the whole human race. A love of pleasure or sway seems to divide mankind, and the husband who lords it in his little haram thinks only of his pleasure or his convenience.	The vain absurdities of men strike us on every side. If they did not, it would almost provoke a smile of contempt to see how eager men are to degrade the sex from whom they claim to receive the chief pleasure of life. I have often, with full conviction, turned Pope's sarcasm back on them—or, to put it plainly, it has seemed to me to apply to the whole human race. A love of pleasure or of power seems to divide humanity, and the husband who lords it over his little harem thinks only of his pleasure or his convenience.[35]
To such lengths, indeed, does an intemperate love of pleasure carry some prudent men, or worn out libertines, who marry to have a safe bed-fellow, that they seduce their own wives.—Hymen banishes modesty, and chaste love takes its flight.	Indeed, an intemperate love of pleasure carries some men so far that they seduce their own wives. These are prudent men, or worn-out libertines who marry to have a safe bedfellow.—Marriage banishes modesty, and chaste love takes flight.
4.77 Love, considered as an animal appetite, cannot long feed on itself without expiring. And this extinction, in its own flame, may be termed the violent death of love. But the wife who has thus been rendered licentious, will probably endeavour to fill the void left by the loss of her husband's attentions; for she cannot contentedly become merely an upper servant after having been treated like a goddess. She is still handsome, and, instead of transferring her fondness to her children, she only dreams of enjoying the sunshine of life. Besides, there are many husbands so devoid of sense and parental affection, that during the first effervescence of voluptuous fondness they refuse to let their wives suckle their children.	Love, considered as an animal appetite, cannot feed on itself for long without dying out. And this extinction in its own flame may be called the violent death of love. But the wife who has been made licentious in this way will probably try to fill the void left by the loss of her husband's attentions. After being treated like a goddess, she cannot contentedly become a mere upper servant. She is still handsome, and instead of transferring her fondness to her children, she dreams only of enjoying the sunshine of life. Besides, many husbands are so lacking in sense and parental affection that, during the first effervescence of sensual fondness, they refuse to let their wives nurse their children.
They are only to dress and live to please them: and love—even innocent love, soon sinks into lasciviousness, when the exercise of a duty is sacrificed to its indulgence.	Their wives are only to dress, and to live to please them. And love—even innocent love—soon sinks into lasciviousness when the performance of a duty is sacrificed to its indulgence.
4.78 Personal attachment is a very happy foundation for friendship; yet, when even two virtuous young people marry, it would, perhaps, be happy if some circumstances checked their passion; if the recollection of some prior attachment, or disappointed affection, made it on one side, at least, rather a match founded on esteem. In that	Personal attraction is a very happy foundation for friendship. Yet even when two virtuous young people marry, it might perhaps be fortunate if some circumstances checked their passion. The memory of an earlier attachment, or a disappointed affection, might make it, on one side at least, more of a match founded on esteem. In that case

35 Pope's line "Every woman is at heart a rake" (*Epistle to a Lady*, 1735).

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	case they would look beyond the present moment, and try to render the whole of life respectable, by forming a plan to regulate a friendship which only death ought to dissolve.	they would look beyond the present moment and try to make their whole life respectable, by forming a plan to govern a friendship that only death ought to dissolve.
4.79	Friendship is a serious affection; the most sublime of all affections, because it is founded on principle, and cemented by time. The very reverse may be said of love. In a great degree, love and friendship cannot subsist in the same bosom; even when inspired by different objects they weaken or destroy each other, and for the same object can only be felt in succession. The vain fears and fond jealousies, the winds which fan the flame of love, when judiciously or artfully tempered, are both incompatible with the tender confidence and sincere respect of friendship.	Friendship is a serious affection. It is the most sublime of all affections, because it is founded on principle and cemented by time. The very opposite may be said of love. To a great extent, love and friendship cannot exist in the same heart. Even when they are inspired by different people they weaken or destroy each other, and for the same person they can only be felt one after the other. Vain fears and fond jealousies are the winds that fan the flame of love when they are judiciously or artfully tempered. Both are incompatible with the tender confidence and sincere respect of friendship.
4.80	Love, such as the glowing pen of genius has traced, exists not on earth, or only resides in those exalted, fervid imaginations that have sketched such dangerous pictures. Dangerous, because they not only afford a plausible excuse, to the voluptuary who disguises sheer sensuality under a sentimental veil; but as they spread affectation, and take from the dignity of virtue. Virtue, as the very word imports, should have an appearance of seriousness, if not austerity; and to endeavour to trick her out in the garb of pleasure, because the epithet has been used as another name for beauty, is to exalt her on a quicksand; a most insidious attempt to hasten her fall by apparent respect.	Love such as the glowing pen of genius has portrayed does not exist on earth. At most it exists only in those exalted, fervid imaginations that have sketched such dangerous pictures. They are dangerous because they not only give a plausible excuse to the sensualist who disguises sheer sensuality under a sentimental veil, but also spread affectation and detract from the dignity of virtue. Virtue, as the very word implies, should have an air of seriousness, if not austerity. To try to dress her up in the costume of pleasure, because the term has been used as another name for beauty, is to exalt her on quicksand—a most insidious attempt to hasten her fall under a show of respect.
	Virtue and pleasure are not, in fact, so nearly allied in this life as some eloquent writers have laboured to prove. Pleasure prepares the fading wreath, and mixes the intoxicating cup; but the fruit which virtue gives, is the recompence of toil: and, gradually seen as it ripens, only affords calm satisfaction; nay, appearing to be the result of the natural tendency of things, it is scarcely observed. Bread, the common food of life, seldom thought of as a blessing, supports the constitution and preserves health; still feasts delight the heart of man, though disease and even death lurk in the cup or dainty that elevates the spirits or tickles the palate.	Virtue and pleasure are not, in fact, as closely allied in this life as some eloquent writers have labored to prove. Pleasure prepares the fading wreath and mixes the intoxicating cup; but the fruit that virtue yields is the reward of toil. Seen gradually as it ripens, it affords only calm satisfaction. Indeed, since it appears to be the result of the natural course of things, it is hardly noticed. Bread, the common food of life, is seldom thought of as a blessing, yet it supports the constitution and preserves health. Still, feasts delight the human heart, though disease and even death lurk in the cup or the delicacy that lifts the spirits or tickles the palate.
	The lively heated imagination, in the same style, draws the picture of love, as it draws every other	In the same way, the lively, heated imagination paints the picture of love, as it paints every other

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picture, with those glowing colours, which the daring hand will steal from the rainbow that is directed by a mind, condemned in a world like this, to prove its noble origin by panting after unattainable perfection; ever pursuing what it acknowledges to be a fleeting dream. An imagination of this vigorous cast can give existence to insubstantial forms, and stability to the shadowy reveries which the mind naturally falls into when realities are found vapid.

It can then depict love with celestial charms, and dote on the grand ideal object—it can imagine a degree of mutual affection that shall refine the soul, and not expire when it has served as a 'scale to heavenly;' and, like devotion, make it absorb every meaner affection and desire. In each others arms, as in a temple, with its summit lost in the clouds, the world is to be shut out, and every thought and wish, that do not nurture pure affection and permanent virtue.—Permanent virtue! alas! Rousseau, respectable visionary! thy paradise would soon be violated by the entrance of some unexpected guest. Like Milton's it would only contain angels, or men sunk below the dignity of rational creatures.

Happiness is not material, it cannot be seen or felt! Yet the eager pursuit of the good which every one shapes to his own fancy, proclaims man the lord of this lower world, and to be an intelligent creature, who is not to receive, but to acquire happiness. They, therefore, who complain of the delusions of passion, do not recollect that they are exclaiming against a strong proof of the immortality of the soul.

4.81 But leaving superiour minds to correct themselves, and pay dearly for their experience, it is necessary to observe, that it is not against strong, persevering passions; but romantic wavering feelings that I wish to guard the female heart by exercising the understanding: for these paradisiacal reveries are oftener the effect of idleness than of a lively fancy.

4.82 Women have seldom sufficient serious employment to silence their feelings; a round of little cares, or vain pursuits frittering away all

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picture, in those glowing colors which the daring hand will steal from the rainbow. That hand is directed by a mind condemned, in a world like this, to prove its noble origin by yearning after unattainable perfection, forever pursuing what it admits to be a fleeting dream. An imagination of this vigorous kind can give existence to insubstantial forms. It can give solidity to the shadowy daydreams into which the mind naturally falls when realities are found flat.

It can then paint love with heavenly charms and dote on the grand ideal object. It can imagine a degree of mutual affection that will refine the soul and not expire once it has served as a “scale” to heavenly love; and, like religious devotion, it can make that affection absorb every lower affection and desire. In each other’s arms, as in a temple whose summit is lost in the clouds, the lovers are to shut out the world. They are to shut out every thought and wish that does not nourish pure affection and permanent virtue.—Permanent virtue! Alas, Rousseau, respectable visionary! Your paradise would soon be violated by the entrance of some unexpected guest. Like Milton’s, it would contain only angels, or men sunk below the dignity of rational creatures.[36]

Happiness is not material; it cannot be seen or felt! Yet everyone shapes the good to his own fancy, and the eager pursuit of it proclaims man the lord of this lower world. It shows him to be an intelligent creature who is not to receive happiness but to acquire it. Those who complain of the delusions of passion, then, forget that they are protesting against a strong proof of the immortality of the soul.

But let us leave superior minds to correct themselves, and pay dearly for their experience. I must point out that it is not against strong, persevering passions that I wish to guard the female heart by exercising the understanding. It is against romantic, wavering feelings. For these paradisal daydreams are more often the effect of idleness than of a lively imagination.

Women seldom have enough serious work to silence their feelings. A round of little cares or vain pursuits fritters away all their strength of mind

36 Milton, *Paradise Lost* VIII: love “is the scale / By which to heavenly love thou mayst ascend.”

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strength of mind and organs, they become naturally only objects of sense.—In short, the whole tenour of female education (the education of society) tends to render the best disposed romantic and inconstant; and the remainder vain and mean. In the present state of society this evil can scarcely be remedied, I am afraid, in the slightest degree; should a more laudable ambition ever gain ground they may be brought nearer to nature and reason; and become more virtuous and useful as they grow more respectable.

4.83 But, I will venture to assert that their reason will never acquire sufficient strength to enable it to regulate their conduct, whilst the making an appearance in the world is the first wish of the majority of mankind. To this weak wish the natural affections, and the most useful virtues are sacrificed. Girls marry merely to *better themselves,* to borrow a significant vulgar phrase, and have such perfect power over their hearts as not to permit themselves to *fall in love* till a man with a superiour fortune offers.

On this subject I mean to enlarge in a future chapter; it is only necessary to drop a hint at present, because women are so often degraded by suffering the selfish prudence of age to chill the ardour of youth.

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and body, and so they naturally become mere objects of sense.—In short, the whole drift of female education (the education given by society) tends to make the best-disposed women romantic and inconstant, and the rest vain and mean. In the present state of society this evil can hardly be remedied, I fear, even in the slightest degree. Should a more praiseworthy ambition ever gain ground, women may be brought nearer to nature and reason. They may then become more virtuous and useful as they grow more respectable.

But I will venture to assert that their reason will never become strong enough to govern their conduct as long as making a figure in the world is the first wish of most people. To this weak wish the natural affections and the most useful virtues are sacrificed. Girls marry merely to *better themselves*, to borrow an expressive vulgar phrase. They have such complete control over their hearts that they do not allow themselves to *fall in love* until a man with a larger fortune makes an offer.

I intend to enlarge on this subject in a later chapter. For now it is only necessary to drop a hint, because women are so often degraded by letting the selfish prudence of age chill the ardor of youth.

NEEDLEWORK AND DRESS

She argues that needlework and concern with dress narrow women's minds, and praises the virtue of poor women.

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4.84 From the same source flows an opinion that young girls ought to dedicate great part of their time to needle-work; yet, this employment contracts their faculties more than any other that could have been chosen for them, by confining their thoughts to their persons. Men order their clothes to be made, and have done with the subject; women make their own clothes, necessary or ornamental, and are continually talking about them; and their thoughts follow their hands. It is not indeed the making of necessaries that weakens the mind; but the frippery of dress.

For when a woman in the lower rank of life makes her husband's and children's clothes, she does her duty, this is a part of her business; but when women work only to dress better than they could

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From the same source comes the opinion that young girls ought to devote a large part of their time to needlework. Yet this occupation narrows their faculties more than any other that could have been chosen for them, because it confines their thoughts to their own persons. Men have their clothes made and are done with the subject. Women make their own clothes, necessary or ornamental, and are forever talking about them, and their thoughts follow their hands. It is not, in fact, making necessities that weakens the mind, but the frippery of dress.

For when a woman of the lower classes makes her husband's and children's clothes, she is doing her duty; that is part of her work. But when women sew only to dress better than they could otherwise

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otherwise afford, it is worse than sheer loss of time. To render the poor virtuous they must be employed, and women in the middle rank of life, did they not ape the fashions of the nobility, without catching their ease, might employ them, whilst they themselves managed their families, instructed their children, and exercised their own minds. Gardening, experimental philosophy, and literature, would afford them subjects to think of and matter for conversation, that in some degree would exercise their understandings.

The conversation of French women, who are not so rigidly nailed to their chairs to twist lappets, and knot ribbons, is frequently superficial; but, I contend, that it is not half so insipid as that of those English women whose time is spent in making caps, bonnets, and the whole mischief of trimmings, not to mention shopping, bargain-hunting, &c. &c. and it is the decent, prudent women, who are most degraded by these practices; for their motive is simply vanity. The wanton who exercises her taste to render her person alluring, has something more in view.

4.85 These observations all branch out of a general one, which I have before made, and which cannot be too often insisted upon, for, speaking of men, women, or professions, it will be found that the employment of the thoughts shapes the character both generally and individually. The thoughts of women ever hover round their persons, and is it surprising that their persons are reckoned most valuable? Yet some degree of liberty of mind is necessary even to form the person; and this may be one reason why some gentle wives have so few attractions beside that of sex.

Add to this, sedentary employments render the majority of women sickly—and false notions of female excellence make them proud of this delicacy, though it be another fetter, that by calling the attention continually to the body, cramps the activity of the mind.

4.86 Women of quality seldom do any of the manual part of their dress, consequently only their taste is exercised, and they acquire, by thinking less of the finery, when the business of their toilet is over, that ease, which seldom appears in the deportment of women, who dress merely for the sake of dressing. In fact, the observation with

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afford, it is worse than a sheer waste of time. To make the poor virtuous, they must be given work. Women of the middle class might employ them, if they did not ape the fashions of the nobility without catching their ease. They themselves could then manage their households, teach their children, and exercise their own minds. Gardening, experimental science, and literature would give them subjects to think about and matter for conversation that would exercise their understandings to some degree.

French women are not so rigidly nailed to their chairs twisting lappets and knotting ribbons, and their conversation is often superficial. But I maintain that it is not half so insipid as that of the English women whose time is spent making caps, bonnets, and the whole mischief of trimmings—not to mention shopping, bargain-hunting, etc., etc. And it is the respectable, prudent women who are most degraded by these practices, for their motive is simply vanity. The wanton who exercises her taste to make her person alluring has something more in view.

All these observations branch out of a general one that I have made before, and that cannot be insisted on too often. Whether we speak of men, women, or professions, we will find that what occupies the thoughts shapes the character, both generally and individually. Women's thoughts always hover around their persons—so is it surprising that their persons are considered their most valuable part? Yet some degree of freedom of mind is necessary even to form the person. This may be one reason why some gentle wives have so few attractions besides that of their sex.

Add to this that sedentary occupations make most women sickly. False notions of female excellence then make them proud of this delicacy, though it is yet another fetter: by constantly calling their attention to the body, it cramps the activity of the mind.

Women of rank seldom do any of the handwork on their clothes, so only their taste is exercised. Because they think less about the finery once the business of dressing is over, they acquire an ease that seldom appears in the bearing of women who dress merely for the sake of dressing. In fact, the observation about the middle class—the one in

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respect to the middle rank, the one in which talents thrive best, extends not to women; for those of the superior class, by catching, at least, a smattering of literature, and conversing more with men, on general topics, acquire more knowledge than the women who ape their fashions and faults without sharing their advantages.

With respect to virtue; to use the word in a comprehensive sense, I have seen most in low life. Many poor women maintain their children by the sweat of their brow, and keep together families that the vices of the fathers would have scattered abroad; but gentle-women are too indolent to be actively virtuous, and are softened rather than refined by civilization. Indeed, the good sense which I have met with, among the poor women who have had few advantages of education, and yet have acted heroically, strongly confirmed me in the opinion that trifling employments have rendered woman a trifler.

Men, taking her[12] body, the mind is left to rust; so that while physical love enervates man, as being his favourite recreation, he will endeavour to enslave woman:—and, who can tell, how many generations may be necessary to give vigour to the virtue and talents of the freed posterity of abject slaves[13]?

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4.87 In tracing the causes that, in my opinion, have degraded woman, I have confined my observations to such as universally act upon the morals and manners of the whole sex, and to me

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which talents thrive best—does not extend to women. Women of the upper class pick up at least a smattering of literature and converse more with men on general topics. They therefore acquire more knowledge than the women who ape their fashions and faults without sharing their advantages.

As for virtue—taking the word in a comprehensive sense—I have seen most of it among the poor. Many poor women support their children by the sweat of their brow, and hold together families that the vices of the fathers would have scattered. But gentlewomen are too indolent to be actively virtuous, and are softened rather than refined by civilization. Indeed, I have met with good sense among poor women who have had few advantages of education and yet have acted heroically. It strongly confirmed me in the opinion that trifling occupations have made woman a trifler.

Since men take her[12] body, the mind is left to rust. And so, as long as physical love weakens man, being his favorite recreation, he will try to enslave woman:—and who can tell how many generations may be needed to give vigor to the virtue and talents of the freed descendants of abject slaves[13]?

In tracing the causes that, in my view, have degraded woman, I have confined my observations to those that act universally on the morals and

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[12] 'I take her body,' says Ranger.

[12] "I take her body," says Ranger.[37]

37 Ranger is the young rake in Benjamin Hoadly's comedy *The Suspicious Husband* (1747).

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[13] 'Supposing that women are voluntary slaves—slavery of any kind is unfavourable to human happiness and improvement.' *Knox's Essays.*

[13] "Supposing that women are voluntary slaves—slavery of any kind is unfavorable to human happiness and improvement." *Knox's Essays.*[39]

39 Vicesimus Knox, *Essays, Moral and Literary* (1778).

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it appears clear that they all spring from want of understanding.

Whether this arise from a physical or accidental weakness of faculties, time alone can determine; for I shall not lay any great stress on the example of a few women[14] who, from having received a masculine education, have acquired courage and resolution; I only contend that the men who have been placed in similar situations, have acquired a similar character—I speak of bodies of men, and that men of genius and talents have started out of a class, in which women have never yet been placed.

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manners of the whole sex. It seems clear to me that they all spring from a lack of understanding.

Whether this arises from a physical or an accidental weakness of the faculties, only time can decide. I will not lay much stress on the example of a few women[14] who acquired courage and resolution from having received a masculine education. I only maintain that men placed in similar situations have acquired a similar character—I am speaking of men as groups. I also maintain that men of genius and talent have emerged from a class in which women have never yet been placed.

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[14] Sappho, Eloisa, Mrs. Macauley, the Empress of Russia, Madame d'Eon, &c. These, and many more, may be reckoned exceptions; and, are not all heroes, as well as heroines, exceptions to general rules? I wish to see women neither heroines nor brutes; but reasonable creatures.

[14] Sappho, Héloïse, Mrs. Macaulay, the Empress of Russia, Madame d'Éon, etc. These, and many more, may be counted as exceptions; and are not all heroes, as well as heroines, exceptions to general rules? I wish to see women neither heroines nor brutes, but reasonable creatures.[41]

41 Sappho, Greek lyric poet (about 600 BC); Héloïse (about 1100–1164), learned abbess and lover of Abelard; Catharine Macaulay (1731–1791), English historian; Catherine the Great of Russia (reigned 1762–96); the Chevalier d'Éon (1728–1810), French diplomat and soldier who lived as a woman from 1777.

Chapter V: Animadversions on Some of the Writers Who Have Rendered Women Objects of Pity, Bordering on Contempt

A detailed critique of Rousseau, Fordyce, Gregory, Piozzi, de Staël, Genlis and Chesterfield, with praise for Catharine Macaulay.

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5.1	The opinions speciously supported, in some modern publications on the female character and education, which have given the tone to most of the observations made, in a more cursory manner, on the sex, remain now to be examined.	It remains now to examine the opinions plausibly defended in some modern publications on women's character and education. These opinions have set the tone for most of the more casual remarks made about women.

ROUSSEAU'S SOPHIE

Wollstonecraft quotes Rousseau's plan for educating women to please men and answers it point by point.

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5.2	I shall begin with Rousseau, and give a sketch of the character of women, in his own words, interspersing comments and reflections. My comments, it is true, will all spring from a few simple principles, and might have been deduced from what I have already said; but the artificial structure has been raised with so much ingenuity, that it seems necessary to attack it in a more circumstantial manner, and make the application myself.	I will begin with Rousseau, and give a sketch of his picture of women in his own words, interspersed with comments and reflections. My comments, it is true, will all spring from a few simple principles, and might have been deduced from what I have already said. But the artificial structure has been built with so much ingenuity that it seems necessary to attack it in more detail, and make the application myself.
5.3	Sophia, says Rousseau, should be as perfect a woman as Emilius is a man, and to render her so, it is necessary to examine the character which nature has given to the sex.	Sophie, says Rousseau, should be as perfect a woman as Emile is a man, and to make her so, we must examine the character that nature has given to her sex.[1]
5.4	He then proceeds to prove that woman ought to be weak and passive, because she has less bodily strength than man; and, from hence infers, that she was formed to please and to be subject to him; and that it is her duty to render herself *agreeable* to her master—this being the grand end of her existence[1]. Still, however, to give a little mock dignity to sensual desire, he insists that man should not exert his strength, but depend on the will of the woman, when he seeks for pleasure with her.	He then sets out to prove that woman ought to be weak and passive because she has less bodily strength than man. From this he infers that she was made to please him and to be subject to him, and that it is her duty to make herself *agreeable* to her master—this being the grand purpose of her existence[1]. Still, to lend a little mock dignity to sexual desire, he insists that a man should not use his strength, but depend on the woman's will, when he seeks pleasure with her.

1 Wollstonecraft quotes William Kenrick's English translation of *Emile* (1762), published as *Emilius and Sophia*.

2

5.5 'Hence we deduce a third consequence from the different constitutions of the sexes; which is, that the strongest should be masters in appearance, and be dependent in fact on the weakest; and that not from any frivolous practice of gallantry or vanity of protectorship, but from an invariable law of nature, which, furnishing woman with a greater facility to excite desires than she has given man to satisfy them, makes the latter dependent on the good pleasure of the former, and compels him to endeavour to please in his turn, *in order to obtain her consent that he should be strongest*[2].

On these occasions, the most delightful circumstance a man finds in his victory is, to doubt whether it was the woman's weakness that yielded to his superiour strength, or whether her inclinations spoke in his favour: the females are also generally artful enough to leave this matter in doubt. The understanding of women answers in this respect perfectly to their constitution: so far from being ashamed of their weakness, they glory in it; their tender muscles make no resistance; they affect to be incapable of lifting the smallest burthens, and would blush to be thought robust and strong. To what purpose is all this?

Not merely for the sake of appearing delicate, but through an artful precaution: it is thus they provide an excuse beforehand, and a right to be feeble when they think it expedient[3].'

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5.6 I have quoted this passage, lest my readers should suspect that I warped the author's reasoning to support my own arguments. I have already asserted that in educating women these fundamental principles lead to a system of cunning and lasciviousness.

5.7 Supposing woman to have been formed only to please, and be subject to man, the conclusion is

“Hence we deduce a third consequence from the different constitutions of the sexes: that the stronger should be master in appearance, and in fact dependent on the weaker. This is not from any frivolous custom of gallantry or vanity of protection, but from an invariable law of nature. Nature gives woman a greater capacity to arouse desires than she has given man to satisfy them. She thereby makes him dependent on the woman’s good pleasure, and compels him to try to please in his turn, *in order to obtain her consent that he should be strongest*[2].

On these occasions the most delightful thing a man finds in his victory is to doubt whether it was the woman’s weakness that yielded to his superior strength, or whether her inclinations spoke in his favor. Women are generally cunning enough to leave the matter in doubt. In this respect women’s understanding perfectly matches their constitution. Far from being ashamed of their weakness, they glory in it; their tender muscles offer no resistance; they pretend to be incapable of lifting the smallest burdens, and would blush to be thought robust and strong. What is the purpose of all this?

Not merely to appear delicate, but as a cunning precaution. In this way they provide themselves in advance with an excuse, and a right to be feeble when they find it convenient[3].”

I have quoted this passage so that my readers will not suspect me of twisting the author’s reasoning to support my own arguments. I have already asserted that, in the education of women, these fundamental principles lead to a system of cunning and lasciviousness.

Suppose woman was made only to please man and be subject to him. Then the conclusion is sound:

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[1] I have already inserted the passage, page 88.

[1] I have already quoted the passage, on page 88.

3

[2] What nonsense!

[2] What nonsense!

4

[3] Rousseau's Emilius, Vol. III. p. 168.

[3] Rousseau’s *Emile*, vol. III, p. 168.

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just, she ought to sacrifice every other consideration to render herself agreeable to him: and let this brutal desire of self-preservation be the grand spring of all her actions, when it is proved to be the iron bed of fate, to fit which her character should be stretched or contracted, regardless of all moral or physical distinctions.

But, if, as I think, may be demonstrated, the purposes, of even this life, viewing the whole, are subverted by practical rules built upon this ignoble base, I may be allowed to doubt whether woman was created for man: and, though the cry of irreligion, or even atheism, be raised against me, I will simply declare, that were an angel from heaven to tell me that Moses's beautiful, poetical cosmogony, and the account of the fall of man, were literally true, I could not believe what my reason told me was derogatory to the character of the Supreme Being: and, having no fear of the devil before mine eyes, I venture to call this a suggestion of reason, instead of resting my weakness on the broad shoulders of the first seducer of my frail sex.

5.8 'It being once demonstrated,' continues Rousseau, 'that man and woman are not, nor ought to be, constituted alike in temperament and character, it follows of course that they should not be educated in the same manner. In pursuing the directions of nature, they ought indeed to act in concert, but they should not be engaged in the same employments: the end of their pursuits should be the same, but the means they should take to accomplish them, and of consequence their tastes and inclinations, should be different[4].'

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5.9 . . . . . .

5.10 'Whether I consider the peculiar destination of the sex, observe their inclinations, or remark their duties, all things equally concur to point out the peculiar method of education best adapted to them. Woman and man were made for each other, but their mutual dependence is not the same. The men depend on the women only on account of their desires; the women on the men both on

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she ought to sacrifice every other consideration to making herself agreeable to him. Once that is proved to be the iron bed of fate, let this brutish desire of self-preservation be the grand spring of all her actions. Her character must be stretched or cut short to fit that bed, regardless of all moral or physical distinctions.

But I think it can be demonstrated that the purposes even of this life, taken as a whole, are undermined by practical rules built on this ignoble foundation. If so, I may be allowed to doubt whether woman was created for man. The cry of irreligion, or even atheism, may be raised against me, but I will simply declare this. If an angel from heaven told me that Moses's beautiful, poetic account of creation, and the account of the fall of man, were literally true, I could not believe what my reason told me was demeaning to the character of the Supreme Being. And having no fear of the devil before my eyes, I venture to call this a prompting of reason, instead of resting my weakness on the broad shoulders of the first seducer of my frail sex.

"It being once demonstrated," Rousseau continues, "that man and woman are not, and ought not to be, constituted alike in temperament and character, it follows naturally that they should not be educated in the same way. In following the directions of nature they ought indeed to act in concert, but they should not be engaged in the same occupations. The end of their pursuits should be the same, but the means they take to reach it, and consequently their tastes and inclinations, should be different[4]."

. . . . . .

"Whether I consider the particular destiny of the sex, observe their inclinations, or note their duties, everything equally points to the particular method of education best suited to them. Woman and man were made for each other, but their mutual dependence is not the same. Men depend on women only because of their desires; women de-

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[4] Rousseau's Emilius, Vol. III. p. 176.

[4] Rousseau's *Emile*, vol. III, p. 176.

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	account of their desires and their necessities: we could subsist better without them than they without us[5].'	pend on men both because of their desires and because of their needs. We could get along better without them than they could without us[5]."
6		
5.11	. . . . .	. . . . .
5.12	'For this reason, the education of the women should be always relative to the men. To please, to be useful to us, to make us love and esteem them, to educate us when young, and take care of us when grown up, to advise, to console us, to render our lives easy and agreeable: these are the duties of women at all times, and what they should be taught in their infancy. So long as we fail to recur to this principle, we run wide of the mark, and all the precepts which are given them contribute neither to their happiness nor our own[6].'	"For this reason, the education of women should always be relative to men. To please us, to be useful to us, to make us love and esteem them, to educate us when young and take care of us when grown, to advise and console us, to make our lives easy and agreeable—these are the duties of women at all times, and what they should be taught from childhood. As long as we fail to return to this principle, we miss the mark, and all the precepts given to them contribute neither to their happiness nor to ours[6]."
7		
5.13	. . . . .	. . . . .
5.14	'Girls are from their earliest infancy fond of dress. Not content with being pretty, they are desirous of being thought so; we see, by all their little airs, that this thought engages their attention; and they are hardly capable of understanding what is said to them, before they are to be governed by talking to them of what people will think of their behaviour. The same motive, however, indiscreetly made use of with boys, has not the same effect: provided they are let to pursue their amusements at pleasure, they care very little what people think of them. Time and pains are necessary to subject boys to this motive.	"Girls are fond of dress from their earliest infancy. Not content with being pretty, they want to be thought so; we can see from all their little airs that this thought occupies them. They are hardly able to understand what is said to them before they can be governed by being told what people will think of their behavior. The same motive, however, when used unwisely with boys, does not have the same effect. Provided boys are allowed to pursue their amusements as they please, they care very little what people think of them. Time and effort are needed to make boys subject to this motive.
5.15	'Whencesoever girls derive this first lesson, it is a very good one. As the body is born, in a manner before the soul, our first concern should be to cultivate the former; this order is common to both sexes, but the object of that cultivation is different. In the one sex it is the developement of corporeal powers; in the other, that of personal charms: not that either the quality of strength or beauty ought to be confined exclusively to one sex; but only that the order of the cultivation of both is in that respect reversed. Women certainly	"Wherever girls get this first lesson, it is a very good one. Since the body is born, in a sense, before the soul, our first concern should be to cultivate the body. This order is common to both sexes, but the object of the cultivation is different: in one sex it is the development of bodily powers; in the other, that of personal charms. Not that either strength or beauty ought to be confined exclusively to one sex; only that the order in which they are cultivated is reversed. Women certainly need

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[5] Rousseau's Emilius, Vol. III. p. 179. | [5] Rousseau's *Emile*, vol. III, p. 179.

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[6] Rousseau's Emilius, Vol. III. p. 181. | [6] Rousseau's *Emile*, vol. III, p. 181.

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	require as much strength as to enable them to move and act gracefully, and men as much address as to qualify them to act with ease.'	enough strength to move and act gracefully, and men enough skill to act with ease."
5.16	. . . . .	. . . . .
5.17	'Children of both sexes have a great many amusements in common; and so they ought; have they not also many such when they are grown up? Each sex has also its peculiar taste to distinguish in this particular. Boys love sports of noise and activity; to beat the drum, to whip the top, and to drag about their little carts: girls, on the other hand, are fonder of things of show and ornament; such as mirrours, trinkets, and dolls: the doll is the peculiar amusement of the females; from whence we see their taste plainly adapted to their destination. The physical part of the art of pleasing lies in dress; and this is all which children are capacitated to cultivate of that art.'	"Children of both sexes have a great many amusements in common, and so they should; do they not also have many such when they are grown up? Each sex also has its own particular taste in this respect. Boys love noisy, active games—beating the drum, whipping the top, and dragging their little carts about. Girls, on the other hand, are fonder of things of show and ornament, such as mirrors, trinkets, and dolls. The doll is the special amusement of girls, and from this we see that their taste is plainly adapted to their destiny. The physical part of the art of pleasing lies in dress, and this is all of that art that children are capable of cultivating."
5.18	. . . . .	. . . . .
5.19	'Here then we see a primary propensity firmly established, which you need only pursue and regulate. The little creature, will doubtless be very desirous to know how to dress up her doll, to make its sleeve-knots, its flounces, its head-dress, &c. she is obliged to have so much recourse to the people about her, for their assistance in these articles, that it would be much more agreeable to her to owe them all to her own industry. Hence we have a good reason for the first lessons that are usually taught these young females: in which we do not appear to be setting them a task, but obliging them, by instructing them in what is immediately useful to themselves. And, in fact, almost all of them learn with reluctance to read and write; but very readily apply themselves to the use of their needles. They imagine themselves already grown up, and think with pleasure that such qualifications will enable them to decorate themselves.'	"Here, then, we see a primary inclination firmly established, which you need only follow and regulate. The little creature will no doubt be very eager to know how to dress her doll, to make its sleeve-knots, its flounces, its headdress, etc. She has to turn so often to the people around her for help with these things that it would be much more agreeable to her to owe them all to her own industry. Here we have a good reason for the first lessons usually taught to these young girls. In them we do not seem to be setting the girls a task, but doing them a favor, by teaching them what is immediately useful to themselves. And in fact almost all of them learn to read and write reluctantly, but apply themselves very readily to their needles. They imagine themselves already grown up, and think with pleasure that such skills will enable them to adorn themselves."
5.20	This is certainly only an education of the body; but Rousseau is not the only man who has indirectly said that merely the person of a *young* woman, without any mind, unless animal spirits come under that description, is very pleasing. To render it weak, and what some may call beautiful, the understanding is neglected, and girls forced to sit still, play with dolls and listen to foolish	This is certainly only an education of the body. But Rousseau is not the only man who has indirectly said that the mere person of a *young* woman, without any mind—unless high spirits count as mind—is very pleasing. To make that person weak, and what some may call beautiful, the understanding is neglected, and girls are forced to sit still, play with dolls, and listen to foolish conver-

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	conversations;—the effect of habit is insisted upon as an undoubted indication of nature.	sations—and then the effect of habit is insisted on as an unquestionable sign of nature.
	I know it was Rousseau's opinion that the first years of youth should be employed to form the body, though in educating Emilius he deviates from this plan; yet, the difference between strengthening the body, on which strength of mind in a great measure depends, and only giving it an easy motion, is very wide.	I know it was Rousseau's opinion that the first years of youth should be spent forming the body, though in educating Emile he departs from this plan. Yet strength of mind largely depends on strength of body. And the difference between strengthening the body and merely giving it easy movement is very great.
5.21	Rousseau's observations, it is proper to remark, were made in a country where the art of pleasing was refined only to extract the grossness of vice. He did not go back to nature, or his ruling appetite disturbed the operations of reason, else he would not have drawn these crude inferences.	It should be noted that Rousseau made his observations in a country where the art of pleasing had been refined only to draw off the grossness of vice. He did not go back to nature, or else his ruling appetite disturbed the workings of his reason. Otherwise he would not have drawn these crude inferences.
5.22	In France boys and girls, particularly the latter, are only educated to please, to manage their persons, and regulate their exterior behaviour; and their minds are corrupted, at a very early age, by the worldly and pious cautions they receive to guard them against immodesty. I speak of past times. The very confessions which mere children were obliged to make, and the questions asked by the holy men, I assert these facts on good authority, were sufficient to impress a sexual character; and the education of society was a school of coquetry and art. At the age of ten or eleven; nay, often much sooner, girls began to coquet, and talked, unreproved, of establishing themselves in the world by marriage.	In France boys and girls, especially girls, are educated only to please, to manage their persons, and to regulate their outward behavior. Their minds are corrupted at a very early age by the worldly and pious warnings they receive to guard them against immodesty. I am speaking of past times. Mere children were obliged to make confessions, and the holy men asked them questions; I assert these facts on good authority. These confessions and questions were enough to stamp a sexual character on them, and the education of society was a school of coquetry and artifice. At ten or eleven, and often much earlier, girls began to flirt, and talked, without reproof, of establishing themselves in the world through marriage.
5.23	In short, they were made women, almost from their very birth, and compliments were listened to instead of instruction. These, weakening the mind, Nature was supposed to have acted like a step-mother, when she formed this after-thought of creation.	In short, they were made women almost from birth, and listened to compliments instead of instruction. Since these weakened the mind, Nature was supposed to have acted like a stepmother when she formed this afterthought of creation.
5.24	Not allowing them understanding, however, it was but consistent to subject them to authority independent of reason; and to prepare them for this subjection, he gives the following advice:	Since he does not allow them understanding, however, it was only consistent for him to subject them to an authority independent of reason. To prepare them for this subjection, he gives the following advice:
5.25	'Girls ought to be active and diligent; nor is that all; they should also be early subjected to restraint. This misfortune, if it really be one, is inseparable from their sex; nor do they ever	“Girls ought to be active and diligent; and that is not all: they should also be subjected to restraint early. This misfortune, if it really is one, is inseparable from their sex, and they never throw it off ex-

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throw it off but to suffer more cruel evils. They must be subject, all their lives, to the most constant and severe restraint, which is that of decorum: it is, therefore necessary to accustom them early to such confinement, that it may not afterwards cost them too dear; and to the suppression of their caprices, that they may the more readily submit to the will of others. If, indeed, they are fond of being always at work, they should be sometimes compelled to lay it aside.

Dissipation, levity, and inconstancy, are faults that readily spring up from their first propensities, when corrupted or perverted by too much indulgence. To prevent this abuse, we should learn them, above all things, to lay a due restraint on themselves. The life of a modest woman is reduced, by our absurd institutions, to a perpetual conflict with herself: not but it is just that this sex should partake of the sufferings which arise from those evils it hath caused us.'

5.26 And why is the life of a modest woman a perpetual conflict? I should answer, that this very system of education makes it so. Modesty, temperance, and self-denial, are the sober offspring of reason; but when sensibility is nurtured at the expense of the understanding, such weak beings must be restrained by arbitrary means, and be subjected to continual conflicts; but give their activity of mind a wider range, and nobler passions and motives will govern their appetites and sentiments.

5.27 'The common attachment and regard of a mother, nay, mere habit, will make her beloved by her children, if she does nothing to incur their hate. Even the constraint she lays them under, if well directed, will increase their affection, instead of lessening it; because a state of dependence being natural to the sex, they perceive themselves formed for obedience.'

5.28 This is begging the question; for servitude not only debases the individual, but its effects seem to be transmitted to posterity. Considering the length of time that women have been dependent, is it surprising that some of them hug their chains, and fawn like the spaniel? 'These dogs,' observes a naturalist, 'at first kept their ears erect;

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cept to suffer crueler evils. All their lives they must be subject to the most constant and severe restraint—that of decorum. It is therefore necessary to accustom them early to such confinement, so that it will not cost them too dearly later. They must also be accustomed early to the suppression of their whims, so that they will more readily submit to the will of others. If, indeed, they like to be always at work, they should sometimes be compelled to put it aside.

Dissipation, frivolity, and inconstancy are faults that readily spring from their first inclinations when these are corrupted or perverted by too much indulgence. To prevent this abuse, we should teach them, above all, to place due restraint on themselves. By our absurd institutions, the life of a modest woman is reduced to a perpetual conflict with herself—though it is only just that this sex should share in the sufferings arising from the evils it has caused us."

And why is the life of a modest woman a perpetual conflict? I would answer that this very system of education makes it so. Modesty, temperance, and self-denial are the sober offspring of reason. But when sensibility is nurtured at the expense of the understanding, such weak beings must be restrained by arbitrary means and subjected to continual conflicts. Give their minds a wider range of activity, and nobler passions and motives will govern their appetites and feelings.

"The ordinary attachment and regard of a mother, and even mere habit, will make her loved by her children if she does nothing to earn their hatred. Even the restraint she places on them, if it is well directed, will increase their affection instead of lessening it. A state of dependence is natural to their sex, so girls perceive that they are made for obedience."

This is begging the question. Servitude not only degrades the individual; its effects seem to be passed down to later generations. Considering how long women have been dependent, is it surprising that some of them hug their chains and fawn like spaniels? "These dogs," a naturalist observes, "at first kept their ears erect; but custom

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	but custom has superseded nature, and a token of fear is become a beauty.'	has overridden nature, and a sign of fear has become a beauty."
5.29	'For the same reason,' adds Rousseau, 'women have, or ought to have, but little liberty; they are apt to indulge themselves excessively in what is allowed them. Addicted in every thing to extremes, they are even more transported at their diversions than boys.'	"For the same reason," Rousseau adds, "women have, or ought to have, very little liberty; they tend to indulge themselves excessively in whatever is allowed them. They are given to extremes in everything, and they are carried away by their amusements even more than boys are."
5.30	The answer to this is very simple. Slaves and mobs have always indulged themselves in the same excesses, when once they broke loose from authority.—The bent bow recoils with violence, when the hand is suddenly relaxed that forcibly held it; and sensibility, the play-thing of outward circumstances, must be subjected to authority, or moderated by reason.	The answer to this is very simple. Slaves and mobs have always indulged in the same excesses once they broke loose from authority.—A bent bow springs back violently when the hand that held it by force suddenly lets go. And sensibility, the plaything of outward circumstances, must either be subjected to authority or moderated by reason.
5.31	'There results,' he continues, 'from this habitual restraint a tractableness which the women have occasion for during their whole lives, as they constantly remain either under subjection to the men, or to the opinions of mankind; and are never permitted to set themselves above those opinions. The first and most important qualification in a woman is good-nature or sweetness of temper: formed to obey a being so imperfect as man, often full of vices, and always full of faults, she ought to learn betimes even to suffer injustice, and to bear the insults of a husband without complaint; it is not for his sake, but her own, that she should be of a mild disposition. The perverseness and ill-nature of the women only serve to aggravate their own misfortunes, and the misconduct of their husbands; they might plainly perceive that such are not the arms by which they gain the superiority.'	"From this habitual restraint," he continues, "there results a docility that women need throughout their lives. They always remain in subjection either to men or to the opinions of the world, and they are never permitted to set themselves above those opinions. The first and most important quality in a woman is good nature, or sweetness of temper. She is made to obey a being as imperfect as man, who is often full of vices and always full of faults, and so she ought to learn early even to suffer injustice and to bear her husband's insults without complaint. It is not for his sake but for her own that she should have a mild disposition. The perversity and ill nature of women only make their own misfortunes, and their husbands' misconduct, worse. They ought to see plainly that these are not the weapons by which they gain the upper hand."
5.32	Formed to live with such an imperfect being as man, they ought to learn from the exercise of their faculties the necessity of forbearance; but all the sacred rights of humanity are violated by insisting on blind obedience; or, the most sacred rights belong *only* to man.	Women are made to live with so imperfect a being as man, and so they ought to learn the necessity of forbearance by exercising their own faculties. But insisting on blind obedience violates all the sacred rights of humanity. Either that, or the most sacred rights belong *only* to man.
5.33	The being who patiently endures injustice, and silently bears insults, will soon become unjust, or unable to discern right from wrong. Besides, I deny the fact, this is not the true way to form or meliorate the temper; for, as a sex, men have	A being who patiently endures injustice and silently bears insults will soon become unjust, or unable to tell right from wrong. Besides, I deny the fact: this is not the true way to form or improve the temper. As a sex, men have better tem-

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	better tempers than women, because they are occupied by pursuits that interest the head as well as the heart; and the steadiness of the head gives a healthy temperature to the heart. People of sensibility have seldom good tempers. The formation of the temper is the cool work of reason, when, as life advances, she mixes with happy art, jarring elements.	pers than women, because they are occupied with pursuits that engage the head as well as the heart, and the steadiness of the head gives a healthy temperature to the heart. People of sensibility seldom have good tempers. Forming the temper is the cool work of reason, when, as life goes on, she blends clashing elements with happy art.
	I never knew a weak or ignorant person who had a good temper, though that constitutional good humour, and that docility, which fear stamps on the behaviour, often obtains the name. I say behaviour, for genuine meekness never reached the heart or mind, unless as the effect of reflection; and that simple restraint produces a number of peccant humours in domestic life, many sensible men will allow, who find some of these gentle irritable creatures, very troublesome companions.	I have never known a weak or ignorant person with a good temper, though the name is often given to a constitutional good humor, and to the docility that fear stamps on behavior. I say behavior, because genuine meekness never reached the heart or mind except as the result of reflection. Mere restraint produces a host of ill humors in domestic life, as many sensible men will admit. They find some of these gentle, irritable creatures very troublesome companions.
5.34	'Each sex,' he further argues, 'should preserve its peculiar tone and manner; a meek husband may have a wife impertinent; but mildness of disposition on the woman's side will always bring a man back to reason, at least if he be not absolutely a brute, and will sooner or later triumph over him.' True, the mildness of reason; but abject fear always inspires contempt; and tears are only eloquent when they flow down fair cheeks.	“Each sex,” he argues further, “should keep its own particular tone and manner. A meek husband may have an impertinent wife. But mildness of disposition on the woman’s side will always bring a man back to reason, at least if he is not an absolute brute, and it will sooner or later triumph over him.” True: the mildness of reason will. But abject fear always inspires contempt, and tears are eloquent only when they run down pretty cheeks.
5.35	Of what materials can that heart be composed, which can melt when insulted, and instead of revolting at injustice, kiss the rod? Is it unfair to infer that her virtue is built on narrow views and selfishness, who can caress a man, with true feminine softness, the very moment when he treats her tyrannically? Nature never dictated such insincerity;—and though prudence of this sort be termed a virtue, morality becomes vague when any part is supposed to rest on falsehood. These are mere expedients, and expedients are only useful for the moment.	What can a heart be made of if it melts when insulted, and kisses the rod instead of rebelling against injustice? Suppose a woman can caress a man, with true feminine softness, at the very moment he is treating her tyrannically. Is it unfair to infer that her virtue is built on narrow views and selfishness? Nature never dictated such insincerity. Prudence of this sort may be called a virtue, but morality becomes vague once any part of it is supposed to rest on falsehood. These are mere expedients, and expedients are useful only for the moment.
5.36	Let the husband beware of trusting too implicitly to this servile obedience; for if his wife can with winning sweetness caress him when angry, and when she ought to be angry, unless contempt had stifled a natural effervescence, she may do the same after parting with a lover. These are all preparations for adultery; or, should the fear of	Let the husband beware of trusting too completely to this servile obedience. His wife may caress him with winning sweetness when he is angry, and at a time when she ought to be angry herself, unless contempt had smothered a natural outburst. If she can do that, she may do the same after parting from a lover. These are all preparations for adul-

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	the world, or of hell, restrain her desire of pleasing other men, when she can no longer please her husband, what substitute can be found by a being who was only formed, by nature and art, to please man? what can make her amends for this privation, or where is she to seek for a fresh employment?	tery. Or suppose fear of the world, or of hell, restrains her desire to please other men once she can no longer please her husband. What substitute can then be found by a being who was formed, by nature and art, only to please man? What can make up to her for this loss, or where is she to look for a new occupation?
	where find sufficient strength of mind to determine to begin the search, when her habits are fixed, and vanity has long ruled her chaotic mind?	Where is she to find enough strength of mind to resolve to begin the search, when her habits are fixed and vanity has long ruled her chaotic mind?
5.37	But this partial moralist recommends cunning systematically and plausibly.	But this biased moralist recommends cunning, and he does it systematically and persuasively.
5.38	'Daughters should be always submissive; their mothers, however, should not be inexorable. To make a young person tractable, she ought not to be made unhappy; to make her modest she ought not to be rendered stupid. On the contrary, I should not be displeased at her being permitted to use some art, not to elude punishment in case of disobedience, but to exempt herself from the necessity of obeying. It is not necessary to make her dependence burdensome, but only to let her feel it.	“Daughters should always be submissive; their mothers, however, should not be inflexible. To make a young girl tractable, she should not be made unhappy; to make her modest, she should not be made stupid. On the contrary, I would not be displeased to see her allowed to use some art. It should not serve to escape punishment when she disobeys, but to excuse herself from having to obey. It is not necessary to make her dependence burdensome, only to let her feel it.
	Subtilty is a talent natural to the sex; and, as I am persuaded, all our natural inclinations are right and good in themselves, I am of opinion this should be cultivated as well as the others: it is requisite for us only to prevent its abuse.'	Subtlety is a talent natural to the sex. I am convinced that all our natural inclinations are right and good in themselves, and so I believe this one should be cultivated like the others. We need only prevent its abuse.”
5.39	'Whatever is, is right,' he then proceeds triumphantly to infer. Granted;—yet, perhaps, no aphorism ever contained a more paradoxical assertion. It is a solemn truth with respect to God. He, reverentially I speak, sees the whole at once, and saw its just proportions in the womb of time; but man, who can only inspect disjointed parts, finds many things wrong; and it is a part of the system, and therefore right, that he should endeavour to alter what appears to him to be so, even while he bows to the Wisdom of his Creator, and respects the darkness he labours to disperse.	“Whatever is, is right,” he then goes on triumphantly to conclude. Granted;—yet perhaps no maxim ever contained a more paradoxical claim. It is a solemn truth with respect to God. He, and I say it with reverence, sees the whole at once, and saw its just proportions in the womb of time. But man can inspect only disjointed parts, and so he finds many things wrong. It is part of the system, and therefore right, that he should try to change what seems wrong to him, even while he bows to the Wisdom of his Creator and respects the darkness he labors to dispel.
5.40	The inference that follows is just supposing the principle to be sound. 'The superiority of address, peculiar to the female sex, is a very equitable indemnification for their inferiority in point of strength: without this, woman would not be the companion of man; but his slave: it is by her	The inference that follows is valid, supposing the principle to be sound. “The superior skill peculiar to the female sex is a very fair compensation for their inferiority in strength. Without it, woman would not be man’s companion but his slave. It is by her superior art and ingenuity that she pre-

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superiour art and ingenuity that she preserves her equality, and governs him while she affects to obey. Woman has every thing against her, as well our faults, as her own timidity and weakness; she has nothing in her favour, but her subtilty and her beauty.

Is it not very reasonable, therefore, she should cultivate both?' Greatness of mind can never dwell with cunning, or address, for I shall not differ about words, when their direct signification is insincerity and falsehood; but content myself with observing, that if any class of mankind are to be educated by rules not strictly deducible from truth, virtue is an affair of convention. How could Rousseau dare to assert, after giving this advice, that in the grand end of existence the object of both sexes should be the same, when he well knew that the mind, formed by its pursuits, is expanded by great views swallowing up little ones, or that it becomes itself little?

5.41 Men have superiour strength of body; but were it not for mistaken notions of beauty, women would acquire sufficient to enable them to earn their own subsistence, the true definition of independence; and to bear those bodily inconveniences and exertions that are requisite to strengthen the mind.

5.42 Let us then, by being allowed to take the same exercise as boys, not only during infancy, but youth, arrive at perfection of body, that we may know how far the natural superiority of man extends. For what reason or virtue can be expected from a creature when the seed-time of life is neglected? None—did not the winds of heaven casually scatter many useful seeds in the fallow ground.

5.43 'Beauty cannot be acquired by dress, and coquetry is an art not so early and speedily attained. While girls are yet young, however, they are in a capacity to study agreeable gesture, a pleasing modulation of voice, an easy carriage and behaviour; as well as to take the advantage of gracefully adapting their looks and attitudes to time, place, and occasion. Their application, therefore, should not be solely confined to the arts of industry and the needle, when they come to display other talents, whose utility is already apparent.'

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serves her equality, and governs him while she pretends to obey. Woman has everything against her, our faults as well as her own timidity and weakness. She has nothing in her favor but her subtlety and her beauty.

Is it not very reasonable, then, that she should cultivate both?" Greatness of mind can never live alongside cunning, or "address." I will not quarrel about words when their plain meaning is insincerity and falsehood. I will only observe that if any class of human beings is to be educated by rules not strictly derived from truth, then virtue is a matter of convention. After giving this advice, how could Rousseau dare to assert that in the grand purpose of existence the aim of both sexes should be the same? He knew very well that the mind is shaped by its pursuits. Either it expands as great views swallow up little ones, or it becomes little itself.

Men have greater bodily strength. But if it were not for mistaken notions of beauty, women would acquire enough strength to earn their own living, which is the true definition of independence. They would also be able to bear the physical hardships and exertions needed to strengthen the mind.

Let us, then, be allowed to take the same exercise as boys, not only in infancy but in youth, and so arrive at bodily perfection. Then we may know how far man's natural superiority really extends. For what reason or virtue can be expected from a creature whose seed-time of life has been neglected? None—if the winds of heaven did not happen to scatter many useful seeds on the fallow ground.

"Beauty cannot be acquired by dress, and coquetry is an art not so early or quickly learned. While girls are still young, however, they are able to study graceful gestures, a pleasing modulation of the voice, and an easy bearing and manner. They can also learn to gain the advantage of gracefully adapting their looks and postures to time, place, and occasion. So when they come to display other talents whose usefulness is already obvious, their efforts should not be confined solely to the arts of industry and the needle."

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5.44	'For my part, I would have a young Englishwoman cultivate her agreeable talents, in order to please her future husband, with as much care and assiduity as a young Circassian cultivates her's, to fit her for the haram of an eastern bashaw.'	"For my part, I would have a young Englishwoman cultivate her agreeable talents to please her future husband with as much care and diligence as a young Circassian cultivates hers to fit her for the harem of an Eastern pasha."[8]
5.45	To render women completely insignificant, he adds—'The tongues of women are very voluble; they speak earlier, more readily, and more agreeably, than the men; they are accused also of speaking much more: but so it ought to be, and I should be very ready to convert this reproach into a compliment; their lips and eyes have the same activity, and for the same reason. A man speaks of what he knows, a woman of what pleases her; the one requires knowledge, the other taste; the principal object of a man's discourse should be what is useful, that of a woman's what is agreeable. There ought to be nothing in common between their different conversation but truth.'	To make women completely insignificant, he adds: "Women's tongues are very fluent. They speak earlier, more readily, and more agreeably than men; they are also accused of speaking much more. But so it ought to be, and I would gladly turn this reproach into a compliment. Their lips and eyes have the same liveliness, and for the same reason. A man speaks of what he knows, a woman of what pleases her; the one requires knowledge, the other taste. The main object of a man's conversation should be what is useful; that of a woman's, what is agreeable. Their different kinds of conversation should have nothing in common but truth."
5.46	'We ought not, therefore, to restrain the prattle of girls, in the same manner as we should that of boys, with that severe question; *To what purpose are you talking?* but by another, which is no less difficult to answer, *How will your discourse be received?* In infancy, while they are as yet incapable to discern good from evil, they ought to observe it, as a law, never to say any thing disagreeable to those whom they are speaking to: what will render the practice of this rule also the more difficult, is, that it must ever be subordinate to the former, of never speaking falsely or telling an untruth.' To govern the tongue in this manner must require great address indeed; and it is too much practised both by men and women.—Out of the abundance of the heart how few speak! So few, that I, who love simplicity, would gladly give up politeness for a quarter of the virtue that has been sacrificed to an equivocal quality which at best should only be the polish of virtue.	"We ought not, therefore, to check the chatter of girls as we would that of boys, with the stern question *What is the point of your talking?* We should check it with another question that is no less hard to answer: *How will what you say be received?* In childhood, while they are still unable to tell good from evil, they should observe it as a law never to say anything disagreeable to the people they are talking to. This rule will be even harder to practice because it must always be subordinate to the first one: never to speak falsely or tell an untruth." To govern the tongue in this way must indeed require great skill, and both men and women practice it too much.—How few speak out of the abundance of the heart! So few that I, who love simplicity, would gladly give up politeness in exchange for a quarter of the virtue that has been sacrificed to it. Politeness is an ambiguous quality, and at best it should be only the polish of virtue.
5.47	But, to complete the sketch. 'It is easy to be conceived, that if male children are not in a capacity to form any true notions of religion, those ideas must be greatly above the conception of the females: it is for this very reason, I would	But, to complete the sketch: "It is easy to see that if male children are unable to form any true notions of religion, those ideas must be far beyond the grasp of girls. For this very reason I would begin to speak to girls about the subject earlier. If we

8 Women from Circassia, in the northwest Caucasus, were prized in Ottoman and Persian harems; "bashaw" in the original is an old form of "pasha."

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begin to speak to them the earlier on this subject; for if we were to wait till they were in a capacity to discuss methodically such profound questions, we should run a risk of never speaking to them on this subject as long as they lived. Reason in women is a practical reason, capacitating them artfully to discover the means of attaining a known end, but which would never enable them to discover that end itself.

The social relations of the sexes are indeed truly admirable: from their union there results a moral person, of which woman may be termed the eyes, and man the hand, with this dependence on each other, that it is from the man that the woman is to learn what she is to see, and it is of the woman that man is to learn what he ought to do. If woman could recur to the first principles of things as well as man, and man was capacitated to enter into their *minutiæ* as well as woman, always independent of each other, they would live in perpetual discord, and their union could not subsist.

But in the present harmony which naturally subsists between them, their different faculties tend to one common end; it is difficult to say which of them conduces the most to it: each follows the impulse of the other; each is obedient, and both are masters.'

5.48 'As the conduct of a woman is subservient to the public opinion, her faith in matters of religion should, for that very reason, be subject to authority. *Every daughter ought to be of the same religion as her mother, and every wife to be of the same religion as her husband: for, though such religion should be false, that docility which induces the mother and daughter to submit to the order of nature, take away, in the sight of God, the criminality of their error*[7].' As 'they are not in a capacity to judge for themselves, they ought to abide by the decision of their fathers and husbands as confidently as by that of the church.'

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waited until they were able to discuss such profound questions methodically, we would run the risk of never speaking to them about it as long as they lived. Reason in women is a practical reason. It enables them to find skillfully the means of reaching a known end, but it would never enable them to discover that end itself.

The social relations of the sexes are truly admirable. From their union there results a moral person, of which woman may be called the eyes and man the hand. Each depends on the other in this way: the woman is to learn from the man what she is to see, and the man is to learn from the woman what he ought to do. Suppose woman could go back to the first principles of things as well as man, and man could enter into their *minutiae* as well as woman. They would then always be independent of each other, they would live in perpetual discord, and their union could not last.

But in the present harmony that naturally exists between them, their different faculties work toward one common end, and it is hard to say which contributes more to it. Each follows the other's impulse; each obeys, and both are masters."

"A woman's conduct is subject to public opinion, and for that very reason her faith in matters of religion should be subject to authority. *Every daughter ought to be of the same religion as her mother, and every wife of the same religion as her husband. Even if that religion should be false, the docility that leads mother and daughter to submit to the order of nature removes, in the sight of God, the guilt of their error*[7]." Since "they are not able to judge for themselves, they ought to abide by the decision of their fathers and husbands as confidently as by that of the church."

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[7] What is to be the consequence, if the mother's and husband's opinion should *chance* not to agree? An ignorant person cannot be reasoned out of an error—and when *persuaded* to give up one prejudice for another the mind is unsettled. Indeed, the husband may not have any religion to teach her, though in such a situation she will be in great want of a support to her virtue, independent of worldly considerations.

[7] What is to happen if the mother's and the husband's opinions should *chance* not to agree? An ignorant person cannot be reasoned out of an error, and when she is *persuaded* to give up one prejudice for another, the mind is unsettled. Indeed, the husband may have no religion to teach her. Yet in that situation she will badly need a support for her virtue that does not depend on worldly considerations.

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5.49 'As authority ought to regulate the religion of the women, it is not so needful to explain to them the reasons for their belief, as to lay down precisely the tenets they are to believe: for the creed, which presents only obscure ideas to the mind, is the source of fanaticism; and that which presents absurdities, leads to infidelity.'	"Authority ought to regulate women's religion, and so it is less necessary to explain to them the reasons for their belief than to lay down precisely the doctrines they are to believe. A creed that presents only obscure ideas to the mind is the source of fanaticism, and one that presents absurdities leads to unbelief."
5.50 Absolute, uncontroverted authority, it seems, must subsist somewhere: but is not this a direct and exclusive appropriation of reason? The *rights* of humanity have been thus confined to the male line from Adam downwards. Rousseau would carry his male aristocracy still further, for he insinuates, that he should not blame those, who contend for leaving woman in a state of the most profound ignorance, if it were not necessary in order to preserve her chastity and justify the man's choice, in the eyes of the world, to give her a little knowledge of men, and the customs produced by human passions; else she might propagate at home without being rendered less voluptuous and innocent by the exercise of her understanding: excepting, indeed, during the first year of marriage, when she might employ it to dress like Sophia.	Absolute, unchallenged authority, it seems, must exist somewhere. But is not this a direct and exclusive seizure of reason? The *rights* of humanity have thus been confined to the male line from Adam downward. Rousseau would carry his male aristocracy even further. Some people argue for leaving woman in the deepest ignorance, and he hints that he would not blame them, except that she needs a little knowledge of men and of the customs produced by human passions. That knowledge is necessary to preserve her chastity and to justify the man's choice in the eyes of the world. Otherwise she might breed at home without the exercise of her understanding making her any less voluptuous and innocent. The one exception is the first year of marriage, when she might use her understanding to dress like Sophie.
'Her dress is extremely modest in appearance, and yet very coquettish in fact: she does not make a display of her charms, she conceals them; but in concealing them, she knows how to affect your imagination. Every one who sees her, will say, There is a modest and discreet girl; but while you are near her, your eyes and affections wander all over her person, so that you cannot withdraw them; and you would conclude, that every part of her dress, simple as it seems, was only put in its proper order to be taken to pieces by the imagination.' Is this modesty? Is this a preparation for immortality?	"Her dress is extremely modest in appearance and yet very coquettish in fact. She does not display her charms; she conceals them. But in concealing them, she knows how to work on your imagination. Everyone who sees her will say, There is a modest and discreet girl. But while you are near her, your eyes and affections wander all over her person, and you cannot draw them away. You would conclude that every part of her dress, simple as it seems, was put in its proper order only to be taken apart by the imagination." Is this modesty? Is this a preparation for immortality?
Again.—What opinion are we to form of a system of education, when the author says of his heroine, 'that with her, doing things well, is but a *secondary* concern; her principal concern is to do them *neatly*.'	Again: what are we to think of a system of education when the author says of his heroine "that with her, doing things well is only a *secondary* concern; her main concern is to do them *neatly*"?
5.51 Secondary, in fact, are all her virtues and qualities, for, respecting religion, he makes her parents thus address her, accustomed to submission—'Your husband will instruct you in good time.'	Secondary, in fact, are all her virtues and qualities. On the subject of religion, he has her parents address her in these words, since she is accustomed to submission: "Your husband will instruct you in good time."

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5.52	After thus cramping a woman's mind, if, in order to keep it fair, he has not made it quite a blank, he advises her to reflect, that a reflecting man may not yawn in her company, when he is tired of caressing her.—What has she to reflect about who must obey? and would it not be a refinement on cruelty only to open her mind to make the darkness and misery of her fate *visible?* Yet, these are his sensible remarks; how consistent with what I have already been obliged to quote, to give a fair view of the subject, the reader may determine.	He cramps a woman's mind in this way, though perhaps, in order to keep it fair, he has not made it a complete blank. He then advises her to reflect, so that a reflective man will not yawn in her company when he is tired of caressing her.—What has a woman who must obey to reflect about? And would it not be a refinement of cruelty to open her mind only to make the darkness and misery of her fate *visible*? Yet these are his sensible remarks. To give a fair view of the subject, I have had to quote the passages above, and the reader may decide how consistent these remarks are with them.[10]
5.53	'They who pass their whole lives in working for their daily bread, have no ideas beyond their business or their interest, and all their understanding seems to lie in their fingers' ends. This ignorance is neither prejudicial to their integrity nor their morals; it is often of service to them. Sometimes, by means of reflection, we are led to compound with our duty, and we conclude by substituting a jargon of words, in the room of things. Our own conscience is the most enlightened philosopher. There is no need to be acquainted with Tully's offices, to make a man of probity: and perhaps the most virtuous woman in the world, is the least acquainted with the definition of virtue.	"Those who spend their whole lives working for their daily bread have no ideas beyond their business or their interests, and all their understanding seems to lie in their fingertips. This ignorance harms neither their integrity nor their morals; it is often useful to them. Sometimes reflection leads us to strike bargains with our duty, and we end by putting a jargon of words in the place of things. Our own conscience is the most enlightened philosopher. There is no need to know Cicero's Offices to make a man honest; and perhaps the most virtuous woman in the world is the one least acquainted with the definition of virtue.[11]
	But it is no less true, that an improved understanding can only render society agreeable; and it is a melancholy thing for a father of a family, who is fond of home, to be obliged to be always wrapped up in himself, and to have nobody about him to whom he can impart his sentiments.	But it is no less true that only a cultivated understanding can make company agreeable. And it is a sad thing for the father of a family who is fond of home to be forced always to keep to himself, with no one around him to whom he can confide his thoughts."
5.54	'Besides, how should a woman void of reflection be capable of educating her children? How should she discern what is proper for them? How should she incline them to those virtues she is unacquainted with, or to that merit of which she has no idea? She can only sooth or chide them; render them insolent or timid; she will make them formal coxcombs, or ignorant blockheads; but will never make them sensible or amiable.' How indeed should she, when her husband is not always at hand to lend her his reason?—when they both together make but one moral being.	"Besides, how could a woman without reflection be capable of educating her children? How could she tell what is proper for them? How could she incline them to virtues she does not know, or to merit of which she has no idea? She can only soothe or scold them, and make them insolent or timid. She will make them affected fops or ignorant blockheads, but she will never make them sensible or amiable." How indeed could she, when her husband is not always at hand to lend her his reason?

10 "Darkness visible" echoes Milton's description of hell in *Paradise Lost* (1.63).
11 "Tully" is Cicero; his *De Officiis* ("On Duties") was known in English as his *Offices*.

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A blind will, 'eyes without hands,' would go a very little way; and perchance his abstract reason, that should concentrate the scattered beams of her practical reason, may be employed in judging of the flavour of wine, descanting on the sauces most proper for turtle; or, more profoundly intent at a card-table, he may be generalizing his ideas as he bets away his fortune, leaving all the *minutiæ* of education to his help-mate or to chance.

5.55 But, granting that woman ought to be beautiful, innocent and silly, to render her a more alluring and indulgent companion;—what is her understanding sacrificed for? And why is all this preparation necessary only, according to Rousseau's own account, to make her the mistress of her husband, a very short time? For no man ever insisted more on the transient nature of love. Thus speaks the philosopher. 'Sensual pleasures are transient. The habitual state of the affections always lose by their gratification. The imagination, which decks the object of our desires, is lost in fruition. Excepting the Supreme Being, who is self-existent, there is nothing beautiful but what is ideal.'

5.56 But he returns to his unintelligible paradoxes again, when he thus addresses Sophia. 'Emilius, in becoming your husband, is become your master; and claims your obedience. Such is the order of nature. When a man is married, however, to such a wife as Sophia, it is proper he should be directed by her; this is also agreeable to the order of nature: it is, therefore, to give you as much authority over his heart as his sex gives him over your person, that I have made you the arbiter of his pleasures.

It may cost you, perhaps, some disagreeable self-denial; but you will be certain of maintaining your empire over him, if you can preserve it over yourself—what I have already observed, also, shows me, that this difficult attempt does not surpass your courage.

5.57 Would you have your husband constantly at your feet? keep him at some distance from your person. You will long maintain the authority in love, if you know but how to render your favours rare and valuable. It is thus you may employ even

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—when the two of them together make only one moral being?

A blind will, “eyes without hands,” would not get very far. His abstract reason is supposed to concentrate the scattered beams of her practical reason, but perhaps it is busy judging the flavor of wine, or holding forth on the best sauces for turtle. Or, more deeply absorbed at a card table, he may be generalizing his ideas as he bets away his fortune, leaving all the *minutiae* of education to his helpmate or to chance.

But let us grant that woman ought to be beautiful, innocent, and silly, to make her a more alluring and indulgent companion. Then what is her understanding sacrificed for? And why is all this preparation needed, by Rousseau’s own account, only to make her her husband’s mistress for a very short time? No man ever insisted more on the fleeting nature of love. Thus speaks the philosopher: “Sensual pleasures are fleeting. The habitual state of the affections always loses by their gratification. The imagination, which adorns the object of our desires, is lost in its possession. Except for the Supreme Being, who is self-existent, nothing is beautiful but what is ideal.”

But he returns to his unintelligible paradoxes when he addresses Sophie this way: “Emile, in becoming your husband, has become your master, and he claims your obedience. Such is the order of nature. When a man is married to such a wife as Sophie, however, it is proper that he should be guided by her; this too is in keeping with the order of nature. I have made you the arbiter of his pleasures, therefore, to give you as much authority over his heart as his sex gives him over your person.

It may cost you some unpleasant self-denial. But you will be sure of keeping your empire over him if you can keep it over yourself. What I have already observed also shows me that this difficult undertaking is not beyond your courage.

Would you have your husband always at your feet? Keep him at some distance from your person. You will long hold authority in love if you only know how to make your favors rare and precious. In this

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the arts of coquetry in the service of virtue, and those of love in that of reason.'	way you may put even the arts of coquetry in the service of virtue, and those of love in the service of reason."
5.58 I shall close my extracts with a just description of a comfortable couple. 'And yet you must not imagine, that even such management will always suffice. Whatever precaution be taken, enjoyment will, by degrees, take off the edge of passion. But when love hath lasted as long as possible, a pleasing habitude supplies its place, and the attachment of a mutual confidence succeeds to the transports of passion. Children often form a more agreeable and permanent connection between married people than even love itself. When you cease to be the mistress of Emilius, you will continue to be his wife and friend, you will be the mother of his children[8].'	I will close my extracts with a fair description of a comfortable couple. "And yet you must not imagine that even such management will always be enough. Whatever precautions are taken, enjoyment will gradually blunt the edge of passion. But when love has lasted as long as it can, a pleasant habit takes its place, and the attachment of mutual confidence follows the raptures of passion. Children often form a more agreeable and lasting bond between married people than love itself. When you cease to be Emile's mistress, you will still be his wife and friend; you will be the mother of his children[8]."
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5.59 Children, he truly observes, form a much more permanent connection between married people than love. Beauty, he declares, will not be valued, or even seen, after a couple have lived six months together; artificial graces and coquetry will likewise pall on the senses: why then does he say that a girl should be educated for her husband with the same care as for an eastern haram?	Children, he rightly observes, form a far more lasting bond between married people than love does. Beauty, he declares, will not be valued or even noticed after a couple have lived together for six months. Artificial graces and coquetry will likewise pall on the senses. Why, then, does he say that a girl should be educated for her husband with the same care as for an Eastern harem?
5.60 I now appeal from the reveries of fancy and refined licentiousness to the good sense of mankind, whether, if the object of education be to prepare women to become chaste wives and sensible mothers, the methods so plausibly recommended in the foregoing sketch, be the one best calculated to produce those ends? Will it be allowed that the surest way to make a wife chaste, is to teach her to practise the wanton arts of a mistress, termed virtuous coquetry, by the sensualist, who can no longer relish the artless charms of sincerity, or taste the pleasure arising from a tender intimacy, when confidence is unchecked by suspicion, and rendered interesting by sense?	I now appeal from the daydreams of fancy and refined licentiousness to the good sense of humanity. Suppose the purpose of education is to prepare women to become chaste wives and sensible mothers. Are the methods so plausibly recommended in the foregoing sketch the best suited to produce those ends? Will anyone grant that the surest way to make a wife chaste is to teach her to practice the wanton arts of a mistress? The sensualist calls these arts "virtuous coquetry," but he can no longer relish the artless charms of sincerity. Nor can he taste the pleasure that comes from a tender intimacy, when trust is unchecked by suspicion and made interesting by good sense.
5.61 The man who can be contented to live with a pretty, useful companion, without a mind, has lost in voluptuous gratifications a taste for more refined enjoyments; he has never felt the calm	The man who can be content to live with a pretty, useful companion without a mind has lost his taste for more refined enjoyments in voluptuous gratifications. He has never felt the calm satisfac-

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[8] Rousseau's Emilius. | [8] Rousseau's *Emile*.

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satisfaction, that refreshes the parched heart, like the silent dew of heaven,—of being beloved by one who could understand him.—In the society of his wife he is still alone, unless when the man is sunk in the brute. 'The charm of life,' says a grave philosophical reasoner, is 'sympathy; nothing pleases us more than to observe in other men a fellow-feeling with all the emotions of our own breast.'	tion of being loved by someone who could understand him, a satisfaction that refreshes the parched heart like the silent dew of heaven.—In his wife's company he is still alone, except when the man has sunk into the brute. "The charm of life," says a grave philosophical reasoner, is "sympathy; nothing pleases us more than to observe in other men a fellow-feeling with all the emotions of our own breast."[13]
5.62 But, according to the tenour of reasoning, by which women are kept from the tree of knowledge, the important years of youth, the usefulness of age, and the rational hopes of futurity, are all to be sacrificed to render women an object of desire for a *short* time. Besides, how could Rousseau expect them to be virtuous and constant when reason is neither allowed to be the foundation of their virtue, nor truth the object of their inquiries?	Women are kept from the tree of knowledge by a certain line of reasoning. According to that reasoning, the important years of youth, the usefulness of age, and the rational hopes of a life to come are all to be sacrificed to make women an object of desire for a *short* time. Besides, how could Rousseau expect them to be virtuous and constant when reason is not allowed to be the foundation of their virtue, nor truth the object of their inquiries?

ROUSSEAU'S SENSIBILITY

She traces Rousseau's errors to his heated imagination and calls women to strengthen their minds by reflection.

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5.63 But all Rousseau's errors in reasoning arose from sensibility, and sensibility to their charms women are very ready to forgive! When he should have reasoned he became impassioned, and reflection inflamed his imagination instead of enlightening his understanding. Even his virtues also led him farther astray; for, born with a warm constitution and lively fancy, nature carried him toward the other sex with such eager fondness, that he soon became lascivious. Had he given way to these desires, the fire would have extinguished itself in a natural manner; but virtue, and a romantic kind of delicacy, made him practise self-denial; yet, when fear, delicacy, or virtue, restrained him, he debauched his imagination, and reflecting on the sensations to which fancy gave force, he traced them, in the most glowing colours, and sunk them deep into his soul.	But all Rousseau's errors in reasoning arose from sensibility, and sensibility to their charms is something women are very ready to forgive! When he should have reasoned, he became impassioned, and reflection inflamed his imagination instead of enlightening his understanding. Even his virtues led him further astray. He was born with a warm constitution and a lively fancy, and nature carried him toward the other sex with such eager fondness that he soon became lascivious. Had he given way to these desires, the fire would have burned itself out naturally. But virtue, and a romantic kind of delicacy, made him practice self-denial. Yet when fear, delicacy, or virtue restrained him, he debauched his imagination. He dwelt on the sensations to which fancy gave force, traced them in the most glowing colors, and sank them deep into his soul.
5.64 He then sought for solitude, not to sleep with the man of nature; or calmly investigate the causes of things under the shade where Sir Isaac Newton	He then sought solitude. He did not seek it to rest with the man of nature, or to investigate calmly the causes of things in the shade where Sir Isaac

13 The "grave philosophical reasoner" is Adam Smith, loosely quoting *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*.

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indulged contemplation, but merely to indulge his feelings. And so warmly has he painted, what he forcibly felt, that, interesting the heart and inflaming the imagination of his readers; in proportion to the strength of their fancy, they imagine that their understanding is convinced when they only sympathize with a poetic writer, who skilfully exhibits the objects of sense, most voluptuously shadowed or gracefully veiled—And thus making us feel whilst dreaming that we reason, erroneous conclusions are left in the mind.

5.65 Why was Rousseau's life divided between ecstacy and misery? Can any other answer be given than this, that the effervescence of his imagination produced both; but, had his fancy been allowed to cool, it is possible that he might have acquired more strength of mind. Still, if the purpose of life be to educate the intellectual part of man, all with respect to him was right; yet, had not death led to a nobler scene of action, it is probable that he would have enjoyed more equal happiness on earth, and have felt the calm sensations of the man of nature instead of being prepared for another stage of existence by nourishing the passions which agitate the civilized man.

5.66 But peace to his manes! I war not with his ashes, but his opinions. I war only with the sensibility that led him to degrade woman by making her the slave of love.

5.67 ——'Curs'd vassalage,
First idoliz'd till love's hot fire be o'er,
Then slaves to those who courted us before.
Dryden.

5.68 The pernicious tendency of those books, in which the writers insidiously degrade the sex whilst they are prostrate before their personal charms, cannot be too often or too severely exposed.

5.69 Let us, my dear contemporaries, arise above such narrow prejudices! If wisdom is desirable on its own account, if virtue, to deserve the name, must be founded on knowledge; let us endeavour to strengthen our minds by reflection, till our heads become a balance for our hearts; let us not confine all our thoughts to the petty occurrences of the day, nor our knowledge to an acquaintance with our lovers' or husbands' hearts; but let the

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Newton indulged in contemplation. He sought it merely to indulge his feelings. And he painted what he felt so intensely, and with such warmth, that he engages the heart and inflames the imagination of his readers. In proportion to the strength of their fancy, they imagine that their understanding is convinced, when they are only sympathizing with a poetic writer who skillfully displays the objects of sense, most voluptuously shaded or gracefully veiled. And so he makes us feel, while we dream, that we are reasoning, and he leaves mistaken conclusions in the mind.

Why was Rousseau's life divided between ecstasy and misery? What other answer can be given than that the ferment of his imagination produced both? Had his fancy been allowed to cool, he might perhaps have acquired more strength of mind. Still, if the purpose of life is to educate the intellectual part of man, everything in his case was right. Suppose, though, that death had not led him to a nobler scene of action. He would probably have enjoyed a more even happiness on earth, and felt the calm sensations of the man of nature, instead of being prepared for another stage of existence by nourishing the passions that agitate civilized man.

But peace to his shade! I do not make war on his ashes, but on his opinions. I make war only on the sensibility that led him to degrade woman by making her the slave of love.

——"Cursed vassalage,
First idolized till love's hot fire is over,
Then slaves to those who courted us before." *Dryden.*

Some writers insidiously degrade women while they lie prostrate before their personal charms. The harmful tendency of their books cannot be exposed too often or too severely.

Let us, my dear contemporaries, rise above such narrow prejudices! If wisdom is desirable for its own sake, if virtue must be founded on knowledge to deserve the name, then let us try to strengthen our minds by reflection until our heads balance our hearts. Let us not confine all our thoughts to the petty events of the day, nor our knowledge to an acquaintance with the hearts of our lovers or

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	practice of every duty be subordinate to the grand one of improving our minds, and preparing our affections for a more exalted state!	husbands. Let the practice of every duty be subordinate to the grand one of improving our minds and preparing our affections for a more exalted state!
5.70	Beware then, my friends, of suffering the heart to be moved by every trivial incident: the reed is shaken by a breeze, and annually dies, but the oak stands firm, and for ages braves the storm!	Beware, then, my friends, of letting your hearts be moved by every trivial incident. The reed is shaken by a breeze and dies every year, but the oak stands firm and braves the storm for ages!
5.71	Were we, indeed, only created to flutter our hour out and die–why let us then indulge sensibility, and laugh at the severity of reason–Yet, alas! even then we should want strength of body and mind, and life would be lost in feverish pleasures or wearisome languor.	If we were indeed created only to flutter out our hour and die—why, then let us indulge sensibility and laugh at the severity of reason.—Yet alas! even then we would lack strength of body and mind, and life would be lost in feverish pleasures or wearisome listlessness.
5.72	But the system of education, which I earnestly wish to see exploded, seems to presuppose what ought never to be taken for granted, that virtue shields us from the casualties of life; and that fortune, slipping off her bandage, will smile on a well-educated female, and bring in her hand an Emilius or a Telemachus. Whilst, on the contrary, the reward which virtue promises to her votaries is confined, it is clear, to their own bosoms; and often must they contend with the most vexatious worldly cares, and bear with the vices and humours of relations for whom they can never feel a friendship.	I earnestly wish to see this system of education discredited. It seems to presuppose what ought never to be taken for granted: that virtue shields us from the accidents of life, and that Fortune will slip off her blindfold, smile on a well-educated girl, and bring an Emile or a Telemachus in her hand. On the contrary, the reward that virtue promises her devotees is plainly confined to their own hearts. Often they must struggle with the most vexing worldly cares, and put up with the vices and moods of relatives for whom they can never feel friendship.[14]
5.73	There have been many women in the world who, instead of being supported by the reason and virtue of their fathers and brothers, have strengthened their own minds by struggling with their vices and follies; yet have never met with a hero, in the shape of a husband; who, paying the debt that mankind owed them, might chance to bring back their reason to its natural dependent state, and restore the usurped prerogative, of rising above opinion, to man.	There have been many women in the world who were not supported by the reason and virtue of their fathers and brothers. Instead, they strengthened their own minds by struggling against those men's vices and follies. Yet these women have never met a hero in the shape of a husband who might pay them the debt humanity owed them. Such a hero might happen to bring their reason back to its natural dependent state and restore to man the privilege he has usurped, of rising above opinion.

DR. FORDYCE'S SERMONS

Fordyce's sermons to young women are attacked for their affected style and flattery of women's persons.

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5.74	Dr. Fordyce's sermons have long made a part of a young woman's library; nay, girls at school are	Dr. Fordyce's sermons have long been part of a young woman's library; indeed, girls at school are allowed to read them. But I would banish them at

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allowed to read them; but I should instantly dismiss them from my pupil's, if I wished to strengthen her understanding, by leading her to form sound principles on a broad basis; or, were I only anxious to cultivate her taste; though they must be allowed to contain many sensible observations.	once from my pupil's shelves if I wished to strengthen her understanding by leading her to form sound principles on a broad basis. I would banish them even if I only wanted to cultivate her taste, though it must be granted that they contain many sensible observations.[15]
5.75 Dr. Fordyce may have had a very laudable end in view; but these discourses are written in such an affected style, that were it only on that account, and had I nothing to object against his *mellifluous* precepts, I should not allow girls to peruse them, unless I designed to hunt every spark of nature out of their composition, melting every human quality into female weakness and artificial grace. I say artificial, for true grace arises from some kind of independence of mind.	Dr. Fordyce may have had a very praiseworthy aim. But these discourses are written in so affected a style that I would not let girls read them on that account alone, even if I had nothing to object to in his *mellifluous* precepts. I would let them read these sermons only if I meant to hunt every spark of nature out of their makeup, melting every human quality into female weakness and artificial grace. I say artificial, because true grace arises from a certain independence of mind.
5.76 Children, careless of pleasing, and only anxious to amuse themselves, are often very graceful; and the nobility who have mostly lived with inferiours, and always had the command of money, acquire a graceful ease of deportment, which should rather be termed habitual grace of body, than that superiour gracefulness which is truly the expression of the mind. This mental grace, not noticed by vulgar eyes, often flashes across a rough countenance, and irradiating every feature, shows simplicity and independence of mind.–It is then we read characters of immortality in the eye, and see the soul in every gesture, though when at rest, neither the face nor limbs may have much beauty to recommend them; or the behaviour, any thing peculiar to attract universal attention.	Children do not care about pleasing and only want to amuse themselves, and they are often very graceful. And the nobility, who have mostly lived among inferiors and always had money at their command, acquire a graceful ease of bearing. It should rather be called a habitual grace of body than that higher gracefulness which is truly the expression of the mind. This mental grace, unnoticed by vulgar eyes, often flashes across a rough face and lights up every feature, showing simplicity and independence of mind.—It is then that we read signs of immortality in the eye and see the soul in every gesture. At rest, the face and limbs may have little beauty to recommend them, and the behavior nothing unusual to attract general attention.
The mass of mankind, however, look for more *tangible* beauty; yet simplicity is, in general, admired, when people do not consider what they admire; and can there be simplicity without sincerity? But, to have done with remarks that are in some measure desultory, though naturally excited by the subject—	Most people, however, look for more *tangible* beauty. Yet simplicity is generally admired when people do not stop to consider what they are admiring. And can there be simplicity without sincerity? But to be done with remarks that are somewhat rambling, though the subject naturally prompted them—
5.77 In declamatory periods Dr. Fordyce spins out Rousseau's eloquence; and in most sentimental rant, details his opinions respecting the female	In declamatory periods Dr. Fordyce spins out Rousseau's eloquence. In the most sentimental rant he sets out his opinions on the female charac-

14 Telemachus is the hero of Fénelon's *Adventures of Telemachus* (1699); in *Emile,* Sophie falls in love with him from the book and wants a husband like him.

15 James Fordyce (1720–1796), Scottish Presbyterian minister, author of the widely read *Sermons to Young Women* (1766).

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character, and the behaviour which woman ought to assume to render her lovely.

5.78 He shall speak for himself, for thus he makes Nature address man. 'Behold these smiling innocents, whom I have graced with my fairest gifts, and committed to your protection; behold them with love and respect; treat them with tenderness and honour. They are timid and want to be defended. They are frail; O do not take advantage of their weakness! Let their fears and blushes endear them. Let their confidence in you never be abused.—But is it possible, that any of you can be such barbarians, so supremely wicked, as to abuse it? Can you find in your hearts[9] to despoil the gentle, trusting creatures of their treasure, or do any thing to strip them of their native robe of virtue?

Curst be the impious hand that would dare to violate the unblemished form of Chastity! Thou wretch! thou ruffian! forbear; nor venture to provoke heaven's fiercest vengeance.' I know not any comment that can be made seriously on this curious passage, and I could produce many similar ones; and some, so very sentimental, that I have heard rational men use the word indecent, when they mentioned them with disgust.

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5.79 Throughout there is a display of cold artificial feelings, and that parade of sensibility which boys and girls should be taught to despise as the sure mark of a little vain mind. Florid appeals are made to heaven, and to the *beauteous innocents*, the fairest images of heaven here below, whilst sober sense is left far behind.—This is not the language of the heart, nor will it ever reach it, though the ear may be tickled.

5.80 I shall be told, perhaps, that the public have been pleased with these volumes.—True—and Hervey's Meditations are still read, though he equally sinned against sense and taste.

5.81 I particularly object to the lover-like phrases of pumped up passion, which are every where

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ter, and on the behavior woman ought to adopt to make herself lovely.

He shall speak for himself. This is how he has Nature address man: “Behold these smiling innocents, whom I have graced with my fairest gifts and entrusted to your protection; behold them with love and respect; treat them with tenderness and honor. They are timid and need to be defended. They are frail; O do not take advantage of their weakness! Let their fears and blushes endear them to you. Let their confidence in you never be abused.—But is it possible that any of you can be such brutes, so supremely wicked, as to abuse it? Can you find it in your hearts[9] to rob these gentle, trusting creatures of their treasure, or do anything to strip them of their native robe of virtue?

Cursed be the impious hand that would dare to violate the unblemished form of Chastity! You wretch! You ruffian! Forbear, and do not venture to provoke heaven’s fiercest vengeance.” I know of no serious comment that can be made on this curious passage, and I could produce many like it. Some are so very sentimental that I have heard rational men call them indecent when they mentioned them with disgust.

Throughout there is a display of cold, artificial feeling, and that parade of sensibility which boys and girls should be taught to despise as the sure mark of a small, vain mind. Florid appeals are made to heaven, and to the *beauteous innocents*, the fairest images of heaven here below, while sober sense is left far behind.—This is not the language of the heart, nor will it ever reach the heart, though it may tickle the ear.

I will be told, perhaps, that the public has enjoyed these volumes.—True—and Hervey’s *Meditations* are still read, though he sinned just as much against sense and taste.[17]

I particularly object to the lover-like phrases of pumped-up passion scattered everywhere through

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[9] Can you?—Can you? would be the most emphatical comment, were it drawled out in a whining voice.

[9] Can you?—Can you? would be the most emphatic comment, if it were drawled out in a whining voice.

17 James Hervey (1714–1758), Anglican clergyman whose effusive *Meditations Among the Tombs* (1746) was enormously popular.

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interspersed. If women be ever allowed to walk without leading-strings, why must they be cajoled into virtue by artful flattery and sexual compliments?—Speak to them the language of truth and soberness, and away with the lullaby strains of condescending endearment! Let them be taught to respect themselves as rational creatures, and not led to have a passion for their own insipid persons. It moves my gall to hear a preacher descanting on dress and needle-work; and still more, to hear him address the *British fair, the fairest of the fair*, as if they had only feelings.

5.82 Even recommending piety he uses the following argument. 'Never, perhaps, does a fine woman strike more deeply, than when, composed into pious recollection, and possessed with the noblest considerations, she assumes, without knowing it, superiour dignity and new graces; so that the beauties of holiness seem to radiate about her, and the by-standers are almost induced to fancy her already worshipping amongst her kindred angels!' Why are women to be thus bred up with a desire of conquest? the very epithet, used in this sense, gives me a sickly qualm! Does religion and virtue offer no stronger motives, no brighter reward? Must they always be debased by being made to consider the sex of their companions? Must they be taught always to be pleasing?

And when levelling their small artillery at the heart of man, is it necessary to tell them that a little sense is sufficient to render their attention *incredibly soothing?* 'As, a small degree of knowledge entertains in a woman, so from a woman, though for a different reason, a small expression of kindness delights, particularly if she have beauty!' I should have supposed for the same reason.

5.83 Why are girls to be told that they resemble angels; but to sink them below women? Or, that a gentle innocent female is an object that comes nearer to the idea which we have formed of angels than any other. Yet they are told, at the same time, that they are only like angels when they are young and beautiful; consequently, it is their persons, not their virtues, that procure them this homage.

5.84 Idle empty words! What can such delusive flattery lead to, but vanity and folly? The lover, it is true,

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them. If women are ever to be allowed to walk without leading strings, why must they be coaxed into virtue by artful flattery and compliments to their sex?—Speak to them the language of truth and soberness, and away with the lullabies of condescending endearment! Let them be taught to respect themselves as rational creatures, and not led to dote on their own insipid persons. It stirs my bile to hear a preacher holding forth on dress and needlework. It stirs it still more to hear him address the *British fair, the fairest of the fair*, as if they had only feelings.

Even in recommending piety he uses the following argument: “Never, perhaps, does a fine woman strike more deeply than when she is composed into devout recollection and filled with the noblest thoughts. Then, without knowing it, she takes on a higher dignity and new graces, so that the beauties of holiness seem to radiate around her, and the bystanders are almost led to imagine her already worshipping among her kindred angels!” Why are women to be brought up with this desire for conquest? The very word, used in this sense, makes me queasy! Do religion and virtue offer no stronger motives, no brighter reward? Must they always be debased by making women consider the sex of their companions? Must women be taught always to be pleasing?

And when they aim their small artillery at the heart of man, is it necessary to tell them that a little sense is enough to make their attention *incredibly soothing*? “As a small degree of knowledge entertains in a woman, so from a woman, though for a different reason, a small expression of kindness delights, particularly if she has beauty!” I would have supposed it was for the same reason.

Why are girls told that they resemble angels, except to sink them below women? Or that a gentle, innocent female comes nearer than any other object to the idea we have formed of angels? Yet at the same time they are told that they are like angels only when they are young and beautiful. So it is their persons, not their virtues, that win them this homage.

Idle, empty words! What can such deceptive flattery lead to but vanity and folly? The lover, it is

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has a poetic licence to exalt his mistress; his reason is the bubble of his passion, and he does not utter a falsehood when he borrows the language of adoration. His imagination may raise the idol of his heart, unblamed, above humanity; and happy would it be for women, if they were only flattered by the men who loved them; I mean who loved the individual, not the sex; but should a grave preacher interlard his discourses with such fooleries?

5.85 In sermons or novels, however, voluptuousness is always true to its text. Men are allowed by moralists to cultivate, as Nature directs, different qualities, and assume the different characters, that the same passions, modified almost to infinity, give to each individual. A virtuous man may have a choleric or a sanguine constitution, be gay or grave, unreproved; be firm till he is almost overbearing, or, weakly submissive, have no will or opinion of his own; but all women are to be levelled, by meekness and docility, into one character of yielding softness and gentle compliance.

5.86 I will use the preacher's own words. 'Let it be observed, that in your sex manly exercises are never graceful; that in them a tone and figure, as well as an air and deportment, of the masculine kind, are always forbidding; and that men of sensibility desire in every woman soft features, and a flowing voice, a form, not robust, and demeanour delicate and gentle.'

5.87 Is not the following portrait—the portrait of a house slave? 'I am astonished at the folly of many women, who are still reproaching their husbands for leaving them alone, for preferring this or that company to theirs, for treating them with this and the other mark of disregard or indifference; when, to speak the truth, they have themselves in a great measure to blame. Not that I would justify the men in any thing wrong on their part.

But had you behaved to them with more *respectful observance*, and a more *equal tenderness*; *studying their humours, overlooking their mistakes, submitting to their opinions* in matters indifferent, passing by little instances of unevenness, caprice, or passion, giving *soft* answers to hasty words, complaining as seldom as possible, and making it your daily care to relieve their anxieties and

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true, has a poetic license to exalt his beloved. His reason is the dupe of his passion, and he does not tell a lie when he borrows the language of adoration. His imagination may raise the idol of his heart above humanity without blame. It would be a happy thing for women if the only men who flattered them were the men who loved them—I mean who loved the individual, not the sex. But should a grave preacher stuff his sermons with such nonsense?

In sermons and novels alike, however, sensuality always stays true to its text. Moralists allow men to cultivate different qualities, as nature directs, and to take on the different characters that the same passions, varied almost infinitely, give to each individual. A virtuous man may have a hot-tempered or a sanguine constitution, and be light-hearted or serious, without reproach. He may be firm to the point of being almost overbearing, or, weakly submissive, have no will or opinion of his own. But all women are to be leveled, by meekness and docility, into one single character of yielding softness and gentle compliance.

I will use the preacher's own words: "Let it be observed that in your sex manly exercises are never graceful; that in women a masculine tone and figure, as well as a masculine air and bearing, are always off-putting; and that men of sensibility want in every woman soft features and a flowing voice, a figure that is not robust, and a delicate and gentle manner."

Is the following portrait not the portrait of a house slave? "I am astonished at the folly of many women who keep reproaching their husbands for leaving them alone, for preferring this or that company to theirs, for treating them with this or that sign of disregard or indifference—when, to tell the truth, they have largely themselves to blame. Not that I would justify the men in anything wrong on their part.

But had you behaved to them with more *respectful observance* and a more *steady tenderness—studying their moods, overlooking their mistakes, submitting to their opinions* in matters of no importance, letting pass little instances of unevenness, caprice, or temper, giving *soft* answers to hasty words, complaining as seldom as possible, and making it your

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	prevent their wishes, to enliven the hour of dulness, and call up the ideas of felicity:	daily care to relieve their anxieties and anticipate their wishes, to enliven their dull hours, and to call up ideas of happiness:
	had you pursued this conduct, I doubt not but you would have maintained and even increased their esteem, so far as to have secured every degree of influence that could conduce to their virtue, or your mutual satisfaction; and your house might at this day have been the abode of domestic bliss.' Such a woman ought to be an angel—or she is an ass—for I discern not a trace of the human character, neither reason nor passion in this domestic drudge, whose being is absorbed in that of a tyrant's.	had you followed this conduct, I have no doubt that you would have kept and even increased their esteem, enough to secure every degree of influence that could promote their virtue or your mutual satisfaction; and your house might today have been the home of domestic bliss." Such a woman ought to be an angel—or she is an ass—for I see not a trace of human character, neither reason nor passion, in this domestic drudge, whose being is swallowed up in a tyrant's.
5.88	Still Dr. Fordyce must have very little acquaintance with the human heart, if he really supposed that such conduct would bring back wandering love, instead of exciting contempt. No, beauty, gentleness, &c, &c. may gain a heart; but esteem, the only lasting affection, can alone be obtained by virtue supported by reason. It is respect for the understanding that keeps alive tenderness for the person.	Still, Dr. Fordyce must know very little of the human heart if he really thought that such conduct would bring back wandering love instead of arousing contempt. No: beauty, gentleness, etc., etc., may win a heart; but esteem, the only lasting affection, can be won only by virtue supported by reason. It is respect for the understanding that keeps tenderness for the person alive.
5.89	As these volumes are so frequently put into the hands of young people, I have taken more notice of them than, strictly speaking, they deserve; but as they have contributed to vitiate the taste, and enervate the understanding of many of my fellow-creatures, I could not pass them silently over.	Because these volumes are so often put into the hands of young people, I have paid them more attention than, strictly speaking, they deserve. But since they have helped to corrupt the taste and weaken the understanding of many of my fellow creatures, I could not pass over them in silence.

DR. GREGORY'S LEGACY

Gregory's advice to his daughters is faulted for teaching dissimulation and rules of decorum instead of reason.

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5.90	Such paternal solicitude pervades Dr. Gregory's Legacy to his Daughters, that I enter on the task of criticism with affectionate respect; but as this little volume has many attractions to recommend it to the notice of the most respectable part of my sex, I cannot silently pass over arguments that so speciously support opinions which, I think, have had the most baneful effect on the morals and manners of the female world.	Such fatherly concern runs through Dr. Gregory's *Legacy to His Daughters* that I take up the task of criticism with affectionate respect. But since this little book has many attractions that recommend it to the most respectable women, I cannot pass silently over arguments that so plausibly support opinions which, I think, have had the most harmful effect on the morals and manners of the female world.
5.91	His easy familiar style is particularly suited to the tenor of his advice, and the melancholy tenderness which his respect for the memory of a beloved wife, diffuses through the whole work, renders it very interesting; yet there is a degree of	His easy, familiar style suits the drift of his advice particularly well, and the melancholy tenderness that his respect for the memory of a beloved wife spreads through the whole work makes it very affecting. Yet a certain concise elegance, conspicu-

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concise elegance conspicuous in many passages that disturbs this sympathy; and we pop on the author, when we only expected to meet the–father.	ous in many passages, disturbs this sympathy: we stumble on the author when we expected to meet only the—father.
5.92 Besides, having two objects in view, he seldom adhered steadily to either; for wishing to make his daughters amiable, and fearing lest unhappiness should only be the consequence, of instilling sentiments that might draw them out of the track of common life without enabling them to act with consonant independence and dignity, he checks the natural flow of his thoughts, and neither advises one thing nor the other.	Besides, having two aims in view, he seldom held steadily to either. He wished to make his daughters amiable, and he feared that unhappiness might be the only result of instilling sentiments that could draw them out of the track of ordinary life without enabling them to act with a matching independence and dignity. So he checks the natural flow of his thoughts, and advises neither one thing nor the other.
5.93 In the preface he tells them a mournful truth, 'that they will hear, at least once in their lives, the genuine sentiments of a man who has no interest in deceiving them.'	In the preface he tells them a sad truth: “that they will hear, at least once in their lives, the genuine sentiments of a man who has no interest in deceiving them.”
5.94 Hapless woman! what can be expected from thee when the beings on whom thou art said naturally to depend for reason and support, have all an interest in deceiving thee! This is the root of the evil that has shed a corroding mildew on all thy virtues; and blighting in the bud thy opening faculties, has rendered thee the weak thing thou art! It is this separate interest—this insidious state of warfare, that undermines morality, and divides mankind!	Unhappy woman! What can be expected of you, when the beings on whom you are said naturally to depend for reason and support all have an interest in deceiving you! This is the root of the evil that has spread a corroding mildew over all your virtues and, blighting your opening faculties in the bud, has made you the weak thing you are! It is this separate interest—this insidious state of warfare—that undermines morality and divides the human race!
5.95 If love have made some women wretched—how many more has the cold unmeaning intercourse of gallantry rendered vain and useless! yet this heartless attention to the sex is reckoned so manly, so polite, that till society is very differently organized, I fear, this vestige of gothic manners will not be done away by a more reasonable and affectionate mode of conduct. Besides, to strip it of its imaginary dignity, I must observe, that in the most uncivilized European states this lip-service prevails in a very great degree, accompanied with extreme dissoluteness of morals. In Portugal, the country that I particularly allude to, it takes place of the most serious moral obligations; for a man is seldom assassinated when in the company of a woman.	If love has made some women wretched, how many more has the cold, meaningless business of gallantry made vain and useless! Yet this heartless attention to women is thought so manly, so polite, that until society is organized very differently, I fear this remnant of Gothic manners will not give way to a more reasonable and affectionate way of behaving. Besides, to strip it of its imaginary dignity, I must point out that in the least civilized European states this lip service prevails to a very great degree, together with an extreme looseness of morals. In Portugal, the country I have particularly in mind, it takes precedence over the most serious moral obligations: a man is seldom assassinated when he is in a woman’s company.
The savage hand of rapine is unnerved by this chivalrous spirit; and, if the stroke of vengeance cannot be stayed—the lady is entreated to pardon the rudeness and depart in peace, though	The brutal hand of violence is unnerved by this chivalrous spirit; and if the stroke of vengeance cannot be held back, the lady is begged to pardon the rudeness and depart in peace—though

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sprinkled, perhaps, with her husband's or brother's blood.	spattered, perhaps, with her husband's or her brother's blood.
5.96 I shall pass over his strictures on religion, because I mean to discuss that subject in a separate chapter.	I shall pass over his remarks on religion, because I mean to discuss that subject in a separate chapter.
5.97 The remarks relative to behaviour, though many of them very sensible, I entirely disapprove of, because it appears to me to be beginning, as it were, at the wrong end. A cultivated understanding, and an affectionate heart, will never want starched rules of decorum–something more substantial than seemliness will be the result; and, without understanding the behaviour here recommended, would be rank affectation. Decorum, indeed, is the one thing needful!—decorum is to supplant nature, and banish all simplicity and variety of character out of the female world. Yet what good end can all this superficial counsel produce?	His remarks on behavior, though many of them are very sensible, I entirely disapprove of, because they seem to me to begin, so to speak, at the wrong end. A cultivated understanding and an affectionate heart will never need starched rules of decorum—something more substantial than mere seemliness will come of them; and without understanding, the behavior recommended here would be rank affectation. Decorum, indeed, is the one thing needful!—decorum is to take the place of nature, and banish all simplicity and variety of character from the female world. Yet what good can all this superficial advice do?
It is, however, much easier to point out this or that mode of behaviour, than to set the reason to work; but, when the mind has been stored with useful knowledge, and strengthened by being employed, the regulation of the behaviour may safely be left to its guidance.	It is, of course, much easier to prescribe this or that way of behaving than to set the reason to work. But once the mind has been stocked with useful knowledge and strengthened by use, the regulation of behavior can safely be left to its guidance.
5.98 Why, for instance, should the following caution be given when art of every kind must contaminate the mind; and why entangle the grand motives of action, which reason and religion equally combine to enforce, with pitiful worldly shifts and slight of hand tricks to gain the applause of gaping tasteless fools? 'Be even cautious in playing your good sense[10].	Why, for instance, should the following warning be given, when artifice of every kind must taint the mind? And why tangle up the great motives of action, which reason and religion join to enforce, with pitiful worldly dodges and sleight-of-hand tricks to win the applause of gaping, tasteless fools? "Be cautious even in displaying your good sense[10].
It will be thought you assume a superiority over the rest of the company—But if you happen to have any learning, keep it a profound secret, especially from the men, who generally look with a jealous and malignant eye on a woman of great parts, and a cultivated understanding.' If men of real merit, as he afterwards observes, are superiour to this meanness, where is the necessity that the behaviour of the whole sex should be modulated to please fools, or men, who having little claim to respect as individuals, choose to keep close in their phalanx. Men, indeed, who insist on their common superiority, having only this sexual superiority, are certainly very excusable.	It will be thought that you assume a superiority over the rest of the company.—But if you happen to have any learning, keep it a profound secret, especially from the men, who generally look with a jealous and malignant eye on a woman of great talents and a cultivated understanding." If men of real merit, as he observes afterward, are above this meanness, why must the behavior of all women be tuned to please fools—or men who, having little claim to respect as individuals, choose to keep close ranks in their phalanx? Men who insist on their shared superiority, when this superiority of sex is all they have, are of course very excusable.

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5.99 There would be no end to rules for behaviour, if it be proper always to adopt the tone of the company; for thus, for ever varying the key, a *flat* would often pass for a *natural* note.

There would be no end to rules of behavior if it were always proper to adopt the tone of the company; for by forever changing key in this way, a *flat* would often pass for a *natural* note.

5.100 Surely it would have been wiser to have advised women to improve themselves till they rose above the fumes of vanity; and then to let the public opinion come round—for where are rules of accommodation to stop? The narrow path of truth and virtue inclines neither to the right nor left–it is a straight-forward business, and they who are earnestly pursuing their road, may bound over many decorous prejudices, without leaving modesty behind. Make the heart clean, and give the head employment, and I will venture to predict that there will be nothing offensive in the behaviour.

Surely it would have been wiser to advise women to improve themselves until they rose above the fumes of vanity, and then let public opinion come around—for where are rules of accommodation to stop? The narrow path of truth and virtue leans neither to the right nor to the left. It is a straightforward business, and those who are earnestly pursuing their road may leap over many decorous prejudices without leaving modesty behind. Make the heart clean and give the head something to do, and I venture to predict that there will be nothing offensive in the behavior.

5.101 The air of fashion, which many young people are so eager to attain, always strikes me like the studied attitudes of some modern prints, copied with tasteless servility after the antiques;—the soul is left out, and none of the parts are tied together by what may properly be termed character. This varnish of fashion, which seldom sticks very close to sense, may dazzle the weak; but leave nature to itself, and it will seldom disgust the wise. Besides, when a woman has sufficient sense not to pretend to any thing which she does not understand in some degree, there is no need of determining to hide her talents under a bushel. Let things take their natural course, and all will be well.

The fashionable air that many young people are so eager to acquire always strikes me as being like the studied poses in some modern prints, copied with tasteless servility from the antiques: the soul is left out, and none of the parts are tied together by what can properly be called character. This varnish of fashion, which seldom sticks very closely to good sense, may dazzle the weak; but nature left to itself will seldom disgust the wise. Besides, when a woman has enough sense not to pretend to anything she does not understand to some degree, there is no need for her to resolve to hide her talents under a bushel. Let things take their natural course, and all will be well.

5.102 It is this system of dissimulation, throughout the volume, that I despise. Women are always to *seem* to be this and that—yet virtue might apostrophize them, in the words of Hamlet—Seems! I know not seems!—Have that within that passeth show!—

It is this system of pretense, running through the whole book, that I despise. Women are always to *seem* to be this and that—yet virtue might address them in Hamlet's words: "Seems! I know not seems!—Have that within that passeth show!"—[19]

5.103 Still the same tone occurs; for in another place, after recommending, without sufficiently discriminating delicacy, he adds, 'The men will complain of your reserve. They will assure you that a franker behaviour would make you more

The same tone recurs. In another place, after recommending delicacy without drawing sufficient distinctions, he adds: "The men will complain of your reserve. They will assure you that a franker

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[10] Let women once acquire good sense—and if it deserve the name, it will teach them; or, of what use will it be? how to employ it.

[10] Let women once acquire good sense—and if it deserves the name, it will teach them (or what use would it be?) how to use it.

19 Loosely quoting *Hamlet* 1.2: "Seems, madam? Nay, it is; I know not 'seems.' … But I have that within which passeth show."

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amiable. But, trust me, they are not sincere when they tell you so.—I acknowledge, that on some occasions it might render you more agreeable as companions, but it would make you less amiable as women: an important distinction, which many of your sex are not aware of.'

5.104 This desire of being always women, is the very consciousness that degrades the sex. Excepting with a lover, I must repeat with emphasis, a former observation,—it would be well if they were only agreeable or rational companions.—But in this respect his advice is even inconsistent with a passage which I mean to quote with the most marked approbation.

5.105 'The sentiment that a woman may allow all innocent freedoms, provided her virtue is secure, is both grossly indelicate and dangerous, and has proved fatal to many of your sex.' With this opinion I perfectly coincide. A man, or a woman, of any feeling, must always wish to convince a beloved object that it is the caresses of the individual, not the sex, that is received and returned with pleasure; and that the heart, rather than the senses, is moved. Without this natural delicacy, love becomes a selfish personal gratification that soon degrades the character.

5.106 I carry this sentiment still further. Affection, when love is out of the question, authorises many personal endearments, that naturally flowing from an innocent heart, give life to the behaviour; but the personal intercourse of appetite, gallantry, or vanity, is despicable. When a man squeezes the hand of a pretty woman, handing her to a carriage, whom he has never seen before, she will consider such an impertinent freedom in the light of an insult, if she have any true delicacy, instead of being flattered by this unmeaning homage to beauty. These are the privileges of friendship, or the momentary homage which the heart pays to virtue, when it flashes suddenly on the notice—mere animal spirits have no claim to the kindnesses of affection.

5.107 Wishing to feed the affections with what is now the food of vanity, I would fain persuade my sex to act from simpler principles. Let them merit love, and they will obtain it, though they may never be told that—'The power of a fine woman

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manner would make you more amiable. But trust me, they are not sincere when they tell you so.—I admit that on some occasions it might make you more agreeable as companions, but it would make you less amiable as women: an important distinction, which many of your sex are not aware of."

This desire to be women at all times is the very consciousness that degrades their sex. Except with a lover—and I must repeat an earlier observation with emphasis—it would be good if they were simply agreeable or rational companions. But on this point his advice is even inconsistent with a passage that I mean to quote with the most marked approval.

"The idea that a woman may allow all innocent liberties, provided her virtue is secure, is both grossly indelicate and dangerous, and has proved fatal to many of your sex." With this opinion I agree completely. A man or a woman of any feeling must always want to convince a beloved person that it is the caresses of the individual, not of the sex, that are received and returned with pleasure, and that the heart, rather than the senses, is moved. Without this natural delicacy, love becomes a selfish physical gratification that soon degrades the character.

I carry this idea still further. Affection, where love is not in question, authorizes many physical endearments which, flowing naturally from an innocent heart, give life to behavior; but physical familiarity that springs from appetite, gallantry, or vanity is despicable. When a man squeezes the hand of a pretty woman he has never seen before while handing her into a carriage, she will regard such an impertinent liberty as an insult, if she has any true delicacy, instead of being flattered by this meaningless homage to beauty. These are the privileges of friendship, or of the momentary homage the heart pays to virtue when it suddenly flashes into view—mere animal high spirits have no claim to the tokens of affection.

Wishing to feed the affections with what now feeds vanity, I would gladly persuade women to act on simpler principles. Let them deserve love, and they will obtain it, even if they are never told that "the power of a fine woman over the hearts of

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	over the hearts of men, of men of the finest parts, is even beyond what she conceives.'	men, of men of the finest talents, is even beyond what she imagines."
5.108	I have already noticed the narrow cautions with respect to duplicity, female softness, delicacy of constitution; for these are the changes which he rings round without ceasing—in a more decorous manner, it is true, than Rousseau; but it all comes home to the same point, and whoever is at the trouble to analyze these sentiments, will find the first principles not quite so delicate as the superstructure.	I have already noted the petty warnings about duplicity, female softness, and delicacy of constitution; for these are the changes he rings over and over without end—more decorously than Rousseau, it is true, but it all comes back to the same point. Anyone who takes the trouble to analyze these sentiments will find the foundations not quite so delicate as the building on top of them.
5.109	The subject of amusements is treated in too cursory a manner; but with the same spirit.	The subject of amusements is treated too briefly, but in the same spirit.
5.110	When I treat of friendship, love, and marriage, it will be found that we materially differ in opinion; I shall not then forestall what I have to observe on these important subjects; but confine my remarks to the general tenor of them, to that cautious family prudence, to those confined views of partial unenlightened affection, which exclude pleasure and improvement, by vainly wishing to ward off sorrow and error—and by thus guarding the heart and mind, destroy also all their energy. It is far better to be often deceived than never to trust; to be disappointed in love than never to love; to lose a husband's fondness than forfeit his esteem.	When I come to treat friendship, love, and marriage, it will be seen that we differ substantially in opinion. I shall not anticipate here what I have to say on these important subjects, but will confine my remarks to the general drift of his views—to that cautious family prudence, to those narrow views of partial, unenlightened affection, which shut out pleasure and improvement by vainly trying to ward off sorrow and error, and which, by guarding heart and mind in this way, destroy all their energy as well. It is far better to be often deceived than never to trust; to be disappointed in love than never to love; to lose a husband's fondness than to forfeit his esteem.
5.111	Happy would it be for the world, and for individuals, of course, if all this unavailing solicitude to attain worldly happiness, on a confined plan, were turned into an anxious desire to improve the understanding.—'Wisdom is the principal thing: *therefore* get wisdom; and with all thy gettings get understanding.'—'How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity, and hate knowledge?' saith Wisdom to the daughters of men!	How happy it would be for the world—and so, of course, for individuals—if all this fruitless anxiety to achieve worldly happiness on a narrow plan were turned into an eager desire to improve the understanding!—"Wisdom is the principal thing; *therefore* get wisdom; and with all your getting get understanding."—"How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity and hate knowledge?" says Wisdom to the daughters of men![20]

WOMEN WRITERS ON WOMEN

Piozzi, de Staël and Genlis are criticized, Chapone respected, and Catharine Macaulay praised as the ablest woman of her country.

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5.112	I do not mean to allude to all the writers who have written on the subject of female manners—it	I do not intend to refer to every writer who has written on female manners—that would in fact

20 Proverbs 4:7 and 1:22.

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would, in fact, be only beating over the old ground, for they have in general, written in the same strain; but attacking the boasted prerogative of man—the prerogative that may emphatically be called the iron sceptre of tyranny, the original sin of tyrants, I declare against all power built on prejudices, however hoary.

5.113 If the submission demanded be founded on justice—there is no appealing to a higher power—for God is Justice itself. Let us then, as children of the same parent, if not bastardized by being the younger born, reason together, and learn to submit to the authority of reason—when her voice is distinctly heard. But, if it be proved, that this throne of prerogative only rests on a chaotic mass of prejudices, that have no inherent principle of order to keep them together, or on an elephant, tortoise, or even the mighty shoulders of a son of the earth, they may escape, who dare to brave the consequence, without any breach of duty, without sinning against the order of things.

5.114 Whilst reason raises man above the brutal herd, and death is big with promises, they alone are subject to blind authority who have no reliance on their own strength. 'They are free—who will be free[11]!'—

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5.115 The being who can govern itself has nothing to fear in life; but if any thing is dearer than its own respect, the price must be paid to the last farthing. Virtue, like every thing valuable, must be loved for herself alone; or she will not take up her abode with us. She will not impart that peace, 'which passeth understanding,' when she is merely made the stilts of reputation; and respected, with pharisaical exactness, because 'honesty is the best policy.'

5.116 That the plan of life which enables us to carry some knowledge and virtue into another world, is

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only be going over old ground, since they have generally written in the same vein. But in attacking the boasted prerogative of man—the prerogative that may emphatically be called the iron scepter of tyranny, the original sin of tyrants—I declare myself against all power built on prejudices, however ancient.

If the submission demanded is founded on justice, there is no appeal to a higher power—for God is Justice itself. Let us, then, as children of the same parent—unless we are made illegitimate by being the younger born—reason together, and learn to submit to the authority of reason when her voice is clearly heard. But if it is proved that this throne of prerogative rests only on a chaotic mass of prejudices with no inner principle of order to hold them together—or on an elephant, a tortoise, or even the mighty shoulders of a son of the earth—then those who dare to brave the consequences may break free without any breach of duty, without sinning against the order of things.[21]

While reason raises humanity above the brutish herd, and death is pregnant with promises, the only people subject to blind authority are those who have no reliance on their own strength. “They are free—who will be free[11]!”—

The being who can govern itself has nothing to fear in life; but if anything is dearer to it than its own self-respect, the price must be paid to the last penny. Virtue, like everything valuable, must be loved for herself alone, or she will not make her home with us. She will not give that peace “which passeth understanding” when she is used merely as stilts for reputation, and respected with Pharisaic exactness because “honesty is the best policy.”

It cannot be denied that the plan of life that enables us to carry some knowledge and virtue into

21 Alluding to the cosmology, familiar in Europe from travelers’ accounts of India, in which the world rests on an elephant standing on a tortoise, and to the earth-born giant Atlas, who holds up the heavens.

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[11] 'He is the free man, whom the *truth* make free!' *Cowper.*

[11] “He is the freeman whom the *truth* makes free!” *Cowper.*[22]

22 William Cowper, *The Task* (1785), Book 5.

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the one best calculated to ensure content in this, cannot be denied; yet few people act according to this principle, though it be universally allowed that it admit not of dispute. Present pleasure, or present power, carry before it these sober convictions; and it is for the day, not for life, that man bargains with happiness. How few!—how very few! have sufficient foresight, or resolution, to endure a small evil at the moment, to avoid a greater hereafter.

5.117 Woman in particular, whose virtue [12] is built on mutual prejudices, seldom attains to this greatness of mind; so that, becoming the slave of her own feelings, she is easily subjugated by those of others. Thus degraded, her reason, her misty reason! is employed rather to burnish than to snap her chains.

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5.118 Indignantly have I heard women argue in the same track as men, and adopt the sentiments that brutalize them, with all the pertinacity of ignorance.

5.119 I must illustrate my assertion by a few examples. Mrs. Piozzi, who often repeated by rote, what she did not understand, comes forward with Johnsonian periods.

5.120 'Seek not for happiness in singularity; and dread a refinement of wisdom as a deviation into folly.' Thus she dogmatically addresses a new married man; and to elucidate this pompous exordium, she adds, 'I said that the person of your lady would not grow more pleasing to you, but pray let her never suspect that it grows less so: that a woman will pardon an affront to her understanding much sooner than one to her person, is well known; nor will any of us contradict the assertion. All our attainments, all our arts, are employed to gain and keep the heart of man; and what mortification can exceed the disappointment, if the end be not obtained?

There is no reproof however pointed, no punishment however severe, that a woman of

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another world is also the one best suited to secure contentment in this one. Yet few people act on this principle, though everyone admits it is beyond dispute. Present pleasure or present power sweeps these sober convictions aside; man bargains with happiness for the day, not for life. How few!—how very few!—have enough foresight or resolution to endure a small evil now in order to avoid a greater one later.

Woman in particular, whose virtue[12] is built on mutual prejudices, seldom attains this greatness of mind; so that, becoming the slave of her own feelings, she is easily subjugated by those of others. Thus degraded, her reason—her misty reason!—is used to polish her chains rather than to snap them.

I have listened with indignation as women argued along the same lines as men, and adopted the sentiments that brutalize them, with all the stubbornness of ignorance.

I must illustrate my claim with a few examples. Mrs. Piozzi, who often repeated by rote what she did not understand, steps forward with Johnsonian periods.[25]

“Do not seek happiness in singularity; and dread a refinement of wisdom as a straying into folly.” Thus she dogmatically addresses a newly married man; and to explain this pompous opening she adds: “I said that your lady’s person would not grow more pleasing to you; but pray let her never suspect that it grows less so. It is well known that a woman will forgive an insult to her understanding much sooner than one to her person; nor will any of us contradict the assertion. All our attainments, all our arts, are employed to gain and keep the heart of man; and what mortification can exceed the disappointment if the end is not achieved?

There is no reproof, however pointed, no punishment, however severe, that a woman of spirit will

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[12] I mean to use a word that comprehends more than chastity the sexual virtue.

[12] I mean to use a word that covers more than chastity, the sexual virtue.

25 Hester Lynch Piozzi (1741–1821), formerly Mrs. Thrale, writer and close friend of Samuel Johnson, whose grand balanced sentences Wollstonecraft accuses her of imitating.

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spirit will not prefer to neglect; and if she can endure it without complaint, it only proves that she means to make herself amends by the attention of others for the slights of her husband!'

5.121 These are truly masculine sentiments.—'All our *arts* are employed to gain and keep the heart of man:'—and what is the inference?—if her person, and was there ever a person, though formed with Medicisan symmetry, that was not slighted? be neglected, she will make herself amends by endeavouring to please other men. Noble morality! But thus is the understanding of the whole sex affronted, and their virtue deprived of the common basis of virtue.

A woman must know, that her person cannot be as pleasing to her husband as it was to her lover, and if she be offended with him for being a human creature, she may as well whine about the loss of his heart as about any other foolish thing.—And this very want of discernment or unreasonable anger, proves that he could not change his fondness for her person into affection for her virtues or respect for her understanding.

5.122 Whilst women avow, and act up to such opinions, their understandings, at least, deserve the contempt and obloquy that men, *who never* insult their persons, have pointedly levelled at the female mind. And it is the sentiments of these polite men, who do not wish to be encumbered with mind, that vain women thoughtlessly adopt. Yet they should know, that insulted reason alone can spread that *sacred* reserve about the person, which renders human affections, for human affections have always some base alloy, as permanent as is consistent with the grand end of existence—the attainment of virtue.

5.123 The Baroness de Stael speaks the same language as the lady just cited, with more enthusiasm. Her eulogium on Rousseau was accidentally put into my hands, and her sentiments, the sentiments of too many of my sex, may serve as the text for a few comments. 'Though Rousseau,' she observes, 'has endeavoured to prevent women from interfering in public affairs, and acting a brilliant part in the theatre of politics; yet in speaking of them, how much has he done it to their satisfaction! If he wished to deprive them of some

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not prefer to being neglected; and if she can endure neglect without complaint, it only proves that she means to make up for her husband's slights with the attentions of others!"

These are truly masculine sentiments.—"All our *arts* are employed to gain and keep the heart of man"—and what is the conclusion? If her person is neglected—and was there ever a person, even one formed with the symmetry of the Medici Venus, that was not neglected?—she will make up for it by trying to please other men. Noble morality! But in this way the understanding of the whole sex is insulted, and their virtue robbed of the common basis of virtue.

A woman must know that her person cannot be as pleasing to her husband as it was to her lover; and if she is offended with him for being a human creature, she might as well whine about the loss of his heart as about any other foolish thing.—And this very lack of discernment, or unreasonable anger, proves that he could not turn his fondness for her person into affection for her virtues or respect for her understanding.

As long as women profess such opinions and act on them, their understandings, at least, deserve the contempt and abuse that men—*who never* insult their persons—have pointedly aimed at the female mind. And it is the sentiments of these polite men, who do not wish to be burdened with mind, that vain women thoughtlessly adopt. Yet they should know that insulted reason alone can spread around the person that *sacred* reserve which makes human affections—for human affections always contain some base alloy—as lasting as is consistent with the great end of existence: the attainment of virtue.

The Baroness de Staël speaks the same language as the lady just quoted, with more enthusiasm. Her eulogy of Rousseau happened to come into my hands, and her sentiments—the sentiments of too many women—may serve as a text for a few comments. "Though Rousseau," she observes, "has tried to keep women from meddling in public affairs and playing a brilliant part on the stage of politics, yet in speaking of them, how much he has done so to their satisfaction! If he wished to deprive them of some rights foreign to their sex, how

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rights foreign to their sex, how has he for ever restored to them all those to which it has a claim?

And in attempting to diminish their influence over the deliberations of men, how sacredly has he established the empire they have over their happiness! In aiding them to descend from an usurped throne, he has firmly seated them upon that to which they were destined by nature; and though he be full of indignation against them when they endeavour to resemble men, yet when they come before him with all the *charms, weaknesses, virtues* and *errors*, of their sex, his respect for their *persons* amounts almost to adoration.' True!—For never was there a sensualist who paid more fervent adoration at the shrine of beauty.

So devout, indeed, was his respect for the person, that excepting the virtue of chastity, for obvious reasons, he only wished to see it embellished by charms, weaknesses, and errors. He was afraid lest the austerity of reason should disturb the soft playfulness of love. The master wished to have a meretricious slave to fondle, entirely dependent on his reason and bounty; he did not want a companion, whom he should be compelled to esteem, or a friend to whom he could confide the care of his children's education, should death deprive them of their father, before he had fulfilled the sacred task.

He denies woman reason, shuts her out from knowledge, and turns her aside from truth; yet his pardon is granted, because 'he admits the passion of love.' It would require some ingenuity to shew why women were to be under such an obligation to him for thus admitting love; when it is clear that he admits it only for the relaxation of men, and to perpetuate the species; but he talked with passion, and that powerful spell worked on the sensibility of a young encomiast. 'What signifies it,' pursues this rhapsodist, 'to women, that his reason disputes with them the empire, when his heart is devotedly theirs.' It is not empire,—but equality, that they should contend for.

Yet, if they only wished to lengthen out their sway, they should not entirely trust to their persons, for though beauty may gain a heart, it cannot keep it, even while the beauty is in full

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he has restored to them forever all those to which it has a claim![26]

And in trying to diminish their influence over the deliberations of men, how sacredly he has established the empire they hold over their happiness! In helping them to step down from a usurped throne, he has seated them firmly on the one for which nature destined them; and though he is full of indignation against them when they try to resemble men, yet when they come before him with all the *charms, weaknesses, virtues* and *errors* of their sex, his respect for their *persons* amounts almost to adoration." True!—for there was never a sensualist who worshiped more fervently at the shrine of beauty.

So devout, indeed, was his respect for the person that, apart from the virtue of chastity—for obvious reasons—he wished to see it adorned only with charms, weaknesses, and errors. He was afraid that the austerity of reason might disturb the soft playfulness of love. The master wanted a courtesan-like slave to fondle, entirely dependent on his reason and his bounty. He did not want a companion whom he would be compelled to esteem, or a friend to whom he could entrust the education of his children should death take their father before he had fulfilled that sacred task.

He denies woman reason, shuts her out from knowledge, and turns her away from truth; yet he is forgiven, because "he admits the passion of love." It would take some ingenuity to show why women should be so obliged to him for admitting love in this way, when it is clear that he admits it only for men's relaxation and to perpetuate the species. But he spoke with passion, and that powerful spell worked on the sensibility of a young admirer. "What does it matter to women," this rhapsodist continues, "that his reason disputes the empire with them, when his heart is devotedly theirs?" It is not empire but equality that they should contend for.

Yet even if they wished only to prolong their sway, they should not rely entirely on their persons; for though beauty may win a heart, it cannot keep it,

26 Germaine de Staël (1766–1817), whose *Letters on the Works and Character of J.-J. Rousseau* appeared in 1788.

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bloom, unless the mind lend, at least, some graces.	even while the beauty is in full bloom, unless the mind lends it at least some graces.
5.124 When women are once sufficiently enlightened to discover their real interest, on a grand scale, they will, I am persuaded, be very ready to resign all the prerogatives of love, that are not mutual, speaking of them as lasting prerogatives, for the calm satisfaction of friendship, and the tender confidence of habitual esteem. Before marriage they will not assume any insolent airs, nor afterwards abjectly submit; but endeavouring to act like reasonable creatures, in both situations, they will not be tumbled from a throne to a stool.	Once women are enlightened enough to discover their real interest on a grand scale, they will, I am convinced, be very ready to give up all the prerogatives of love that are not mutual—speaking of them as lasting prerogatives—in exchange for the calm satisfaction of friendship and the tender confidence of habitual esteem. Before marriage they will not put on insolent airs, nor will they submit abjectly afterward; by trying to act like reasonable creatures in both situations, they will not be tumbled from a throne onto a stool.
5.125 Madame Genlis has written several entertaining books for children; and her Letters on Education afford many useful hints, that sensible parents will certainly avail themselves of; but her views are narrow, and her prejudices as unreasonable as strong.	Madame de Genlis has written several entertaining books for children, and her *Letters on Education* offer many useful hints that sensible parents will certainly take advantage of; but her views are narrow, and her prejudices as unreasonable as they are strong.[27]
5.126 I shall pass over her vehement argument in favour of the eternity of future punishments, because I blush to think that a human being should ever argue vehemently in such a cause, and only make a few remarks on her absurd manner of making the parental authority supplant reason. For every where does she inculcate not only *blind* submission to parents; but to the opinion of the world[13].	I shall pass over her vehement argument for the eternity of future punishment, because I blush to think that any human being should argue vehemently for such a cause. I will make only a few remarks on her absurd way of letting parental authority take the place of reason. For everywhere she teaches *blind* submission not only to parents, but also to the opinion of the world[13].
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5.127 She tells a story of a young man engaged by his father's express desire to a girl of fortune. Before the marriage could take place, she is deprived of her fortune, and thrown friendless on the world. The father practises the most infamous arts to separate his son from her, and when the son detects his villany, and, following the dictates of honour, marries the girl, nothing but misery	She tells the story of a young man engaged, at his father's express wish, to a girl with a fortune. Before the marriage can take place, the girl loses her fortune and is thrown friendless on the world. The father uses the most infamous tricks to separate his son from her; and when the son uncovers his villainy and, following the dictates of honor, marries the girl, nothing but misery follows—because,

27 Stéphanie-Félicité de Genlis (1746–1830), French educator and novelist; her *Adèle et Théodore, ou Lettres sur l'éducation* appeared in 1782.

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[13] A person is not to act in this or that way, though convinced they are right in so doing, because some equivocal circumstances may lead the world to *suspect* that they acted from different motives.—This is sacrificing the substance for a shadow. Let people but watch their own hearts, and act rightly, as far as they can judge, and they may patiently wait till the opinion of the world comes round. It is best to be directed by a simple motive—for justice has too often been sacrificed to propriety;—another word for convenience.

[13] A person is not to act in this or that way, though convinced that doing so is right, because some ambiguous circumstances might lead the world to *suspect* that they acted from other motives.—This is sacrificing the substance for a shadow. Let people simply watch their own hearts and act rightly, as far as they can judge, and they can wait patiently until the opinion of the world comes around. It is best to be guided by a simple motive—for justice has too often been sacrificed to propriety, which is another word for convenience.

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	ensues; because forsooth he married *without* his father's consent. On what ground can religion or morality rest when justice is thus set at defiance?	if you please, he married *without* his father's consent. On what ground can religion or morality stand when justice is defied like this?
	In the same style she represents an accomplished young woman, as ready to marry any body that her *mamma* pleased to recommend; and, as actually marrying the young man of her own choice, without feeling any emotions of passions, because that a well educated girl had not time to be in love. Is it possible to have much respect for a system of education that thus insults reason and nature?	In the same vein she presents an accomplished young woman as ready to marry anyone her *mamma* chose to recommend; and as actually marrying the young man of her own choice without feeling any stirrings of passion, because a well-educated girl had no time to be in love. Is it possible to have much respect for a system of education that insults reason and nature like this?
5.128	Many similar opinions occur in her writings, mixed with sentiments that do honour to her head and heart. Yet so much superstition is mixed with her religion, and so much worldly wisdom with her morality, that I should not let a young person read her works, unless I could afterwards converse on the subjects, and point out the contradictions.	Many similar opinions appear in her writings, mixed with sentiments that do credit to her head and heart. Yet so much superstition is mixed into her religion, and so much worldly wisdom into her morality, that I would not let a young person read her works unless I could talk over the subjects afterward and point out the contradictions.
5.129	Mrs. Chapone's Letters are written with such good sense, and unaffected humility, and contain so many useful observations, that I only mention them to pay the worthy writer this tribute of respect. I cannot, it is true, always coincide in opinion with her; but I always respect her.	Mrs. Chapone's *Letters* are written with such good sense and unaffected humility, and contain so many useful observations, that I mention them only to pay the worthy author this tribute of respect. It is true that I cannot always agree with her; but I always respect her.[29]
5.130	The very word respect brings Mrs. Macaulay to my remembrance. The woman of the greatest abilities, undoubtedly, that this country has ever produced.—And yet this woman has been suffered to die without sufficient respect being paid to her memory.	The very word respect brings Mrs. Macaulay to mind—undoubtedly the woman of the greatest abilities this country has ever produced. And yet this woman has been allowed to die without sufficient respect being paid to her memory.[30]
5.131	Posterity, however, will be more just; and remember that Catharine Macaulay was an example of intellectual acquirements supposed to be incompatible with the weakness of her sex. In her style of writing, indeed, no sex appears, for it is like the sense it conveys, strong and clear.	Posterity, however, will be more just, and will remember that Catharine Macaulay was an example of intellectual attainments supposed to be incompatible with the weakness of her sex. In her style of writing, indeed, no sex appears; for, like the sense it conveys, it is strong and clear.
5.132	I will not call her's a masculine understanding, because I admit not of such an arrogant assumption of reason; but I contend that it was a sound one, and that her judgment, the matured fruit of profound thinking, was a proof that a woman can acquire judgment, in the full extent of	I will not call hers a masculine understanding, because I do not accept such an arrogant claim that reason belongs to men; but I maintain that it was a sound one, and that her judgment, the ripe fruit of profound thinking, was proof that a woman can acquire judgment in the full sense of the word.

29 Hester Chapone (1727–1801), author of *Letters on the Improvement of the Mind* (1773).
30 Catharine Macaulay died in June 1791; her *Letters on Education* had appeared in 1790.

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	the word. Possessing more penetration than sagacity, more understanding than fancy, she writes with sober energy and argumentative closeness; yet sympathy and benevolence give an interest to her sentiments, and that vital heat to arguments, which forces the reader to weigh them[14].	With more penetration than shrewdness, more understanding than imagination, she writes with sober energy and close argument; yet sympathy and benevolence lend interest to her sentiments, and give her arguments that vital heat which forces the reader to weigh them[14].
31		
5.133	When I first thought of writing these strictures I anticipated Mrs. Macaulay's approbation, with a little of that sanguine ardour, which it has been the business of my life to depress; but soon heard with the sickly qualm of disappointed hope; and the still seriousness of regret—that she was no more!	When I first thought of writing these criticisms, I looked forward to Mrs. Macaulay's approval with a little of that eager hopefulness which it has been the business of my life to suppress; but I soon heard—with the sick qualm of disappointed hope, and the still seriousness of regret—that she was no more!

LORD CHESTERFIELD AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD

Teaching the young an early, suspicious knowledge of the world is argued to narrow the heart and stunt virtue.

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5.134	Taking a view of the different works which have been written on education, Lord Chesterfield's Letters must not be silently passed over. Not that I mean to analyze his unmanly, immoral system, or even to cull any of the useful, shrewd remarks which occur in his frivolous correspondence—No, I only mean to make a few reflections on the avowed tendency of them—the art of acquiring an early knowledge of the world. An art, I will venture to assert, that preys secretly, like the worm in the bud, on the expanding powers, and turns to poison the generous juices which should mount with vigour in the youthful frame, inspiring warm affections and great resolves[15].	In surveying the various works that have been written on education, Lord Chesterfield's *Letters* must not be passed over in silence. Not that I intend to analyze his unmanly, immoral system, or even to pick out any of the useful, shrewd remarks that turn up in his frivolous correspondence. No, I mean only to offer a few reflections on their avowed aim—the art of acquiring an early knowledge of the world. It is an art, I venture to assert, that secretly preys, like the worm in the bud, on the developing powers, and turns to poison the generous sap that should rise vigorously in the youthful frame, inspiring warm affections and great resolutions[15].
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5.135	For every thing, saith the wise man, there is a season;—and who would look for the fruits of autumn during the genial months of spring? But	For everything, says the wise man, there is a season—and who would look for the fruits of autumn in the mild months of spring? But this is mere

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[14] Coinciding in opinion with Mrs. Macaulay relative to many branches of education, I refer to her valuable work, instead of quoting her sentiments to support my own.

[14] Since I agree with Mrs. Macaulay on many branches of education, I refer the reader to her valuable work instead of quoting her opinions in support of my own.

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[15] That children ought to be constantly guarded against the vices and follies of the world, appears, to me, a very mistaken opinion; for in the course of my experience, and my eyes have looked abroad, I never knew a youth educated in this manner, who had early imbibed these chilling suspicions, and repeated by rote the hesitating *if* of age, that did not prove a selfish character.

[15] The opinion that children ought to be constantly guarded against the vices and follies of the world seems to me very mistaken. In the course of my experience—and my eyes have looked about me—I never knew a young person educated in this way, who had early absorbed these chilling suspicions and repeated by rote the hesitant *if* of old age, who did not turn out a selfish character.

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this is mere declamation, and I mean to reason with those worldly-wise instructors, who, instead of cultivating the judgment instil prejudices, and render hard the heart that gradual experience would only have cooled. An early acquaintance with human infirmities; or, what is termed knowledge of the world, is the surest way, in my opinion, to contract the heart and damp the natural youthful ardour which produces not only great talents, but great virtues.

For the vain attempt to bring forth the fruit of experience, before the sapling has thrown out its leaves, only exhausts its strength, and prevents its assuming a natural form, just as the form and strength of subsiding metals are injured when the attraction of cohesion is disturbed.

5.136 Tell me, ye who have studied the human mind, is it not a strange way to fix principles by showing young people that they are seldom stable? And how can they be fortified by habits when they are proved to be fallacious by example? Why is the ardour of youth thus to be damped, and the luxuriancy of fancy cut to the quick? This dry caution may, it is true, guard a character from worldly mischances; but will infallibly preclude excellence in either virtue or knowledge[16].

The stumbling-block thrown across every path by suspicion, will prevent any vigorous exertions of genius or benevolence, and life will be stripped of its most alluring charm long before its calm evening, when man should retire to contemplation for comfort and support.

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5.137 A young man who has been bred up with domestic friends, and led to store his mind with as much speculative knowledge as can be acquired by reading and the natural reflections which youthful ebullitions of animal spirits and instinctive feelings inspire, will enter the world with warm and erroneous expectations. But this appears to be the course of nature; and in morals, as well as in works of taste, we should be observant of her sacred indications, and not

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rhetoric, and I mean to reason with those worldly-wise instructors who, instead of cultivating the judgment, instill prejudices, and harden the heart that gradual experience would only have cooled. An early acquaintance with human weaknesses—what is called knowledge of the world—is, in my opinion, the surest way to narrow the heart and dampen the natural ardor of youth, which produces not only great talents but great virtues.

For the vain attempt to bring forth the fruit of experience before the sapling has put out its leaves only exhausts its strength and keeps it from taking its natural form—just as the form and strength of settling metals are damaged when the attraction of cohesion is disturbed.

Tell me, you who have studied the human mind: is it not a strange way to fix principles, to show young people that principles are seldom stable? And how can principles be strengthened by habits when example proves them false? Why should the ardor of youth be damped like this, and the luxuriance of imagination cut to the quick? This dry caution may, it is true, protect a character from worldly mishaps; but it will infallibly rule out excellence in either virtue or knowledge[16].

The stumbling block that suspicion throws across every path will prevent any vigorous exertion of genius or benevolence, and life will be stripped of its most alluring charm long before its calm evening, when a person should withdraw into contemplation for comfort and support.

A young man who has been brought up among friends at home, and encouraged to stock his mind with as much speculative knowledge as can be gained from reading and from the natural reflections inspired by youthful bursts of high spirits and instinctive feelings, will enter the world with warm and mistaken expectations. But this seems to be the course of nature; and in morals, as in works of taste, we should heed her sacred indica-

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[16] I have already observed that an early knowledge of the world, obtained in a natural way, by mixing in the world, has the same effect: instancing officers and women.

[16] I have already observed that an early knowledge of the world, gained in a natural way by mixing in it, has the same effect—citing army officers and women as examples.

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presume to lead when we ought obsequiously to follow.	tions, and not presume to lead where we ought humbly to follow.
5.138 In the world few people act from principle; present feelings, and early habits, are the grand springs: but how would the former be deadened, and the latter rendered iron corroding fetters, if the world were shewn to young people just as it is; when no knowledge of mankind or their own hearts, slowly obtained by experience, rendered them forbearing? Their fellow creatures would not then be viewed as frail beings; like themselves condemned to struggle with human infirmities, and sometimes displaying the light, and sometimes the dark side of their character; extorting alternate feelings of love and disgust; but guarded against as beasts of prey, till every enlarged social feeling, in a word,—humanity, was eradicated.	In the world, few people act on principle; present feelings and early habits are the great mainsprings. But how deadened would the former become, and how would the latter turn into iron, corroding fetters, if the world were shown to young people just as it is, before any knowledge of humanity or of their own hearts, slowly gained by experience, had made them forbearing? Their fellow creatures would then be seen not as frail beings like themselves, condemned to struggle with human weaknesses, sometimes showing the light and sometimes the dark side of their character, and drawing out by turns feelings of love and disgust—but as beasts of prey to be guarded against, until every broad social feeling, in a word, humanity itself, was rooted out.
5.139 In life, on the contrary, as we gradually discover the imperfections of our nature, we discover virtues, and various circumstances attach us to our fellow creatures, when we mix with them, and view the same objects, that are never thought of in acquiring a hasty unnatural knowledge of the world. We see a folly swell into a vice, by almost imperceptible degrees, and pity while we blame; but, if the hideous monster burst suddenly on our sight, fear and disgust rendering us more severe than man ought to be, might lead us with blind zeal to usurp the character of omnipotence, and denounce damnation on our fellow mortals, forgetting that we cannot read the heart, and that we have seeds of the same vices lurking in our own.	In real life, on the contrary, as we gradually discover the imperfections of our nature, we also discover virtues; and when we mix with our fellow creatures and look at the same things they do, various circumstances attach us to them that are never thought of when a hasty, unnatural knowledge of the world is acquired. We see a folly swell into a vice by almost imperceptible degrees, and we pity even as we blame. But if the hideous monster burst suddenly on our sight, fear and disgust, making us more severe than a human being ought to be, might lead us with blind zeal to usurp the role of the Almighty and pronounce damnation on our fellow mortals—forgetting that we cannot read the heart, and that seeds of the same vices lie hidden in our own.
5.140 I have already remarked that we expect more from instruction, than mere instruction can produce: for, instead of preparing young people to encounter the evils of life with dignity, and to acquire wisdom and virtue by the exercise of their own faculties, precepts are heaped upon precepts, and blind obedience required, when conviction should be brought home to reason.	I have already remarked that we expect more from instruction than mere instruction can produce. Instead of preparing young people to meet the evils of life with dignity, and to gain wisdom and virtue by exercising their own faculties, we heap precept on precept and demand blind obedience, when conviction should be brought home to reason.
5.141 Suppose, for instance, that a young person in the first ardour of friendship deifies the beloved object—what harm can arise from this mistaken enthusiastic attachment? Perhaps it is necessary	Suppose, for instance, that a young person in the first ardor of friendship idolizes the beloved friend—what harm can come of this mistaken, enthusiastic attachment? Perhaps virtue must first

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for virtue first to appear in a human form to impress youthful hearts; the ideal model, which a more matured and exalted mind looks up to, and shapes for itself, would elude their sight. He who loves not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God? asked the wisest of men.

5.142 It is natural for youth to adorn the first object of its affection with every good quality, and the emulation produced by ignorance, or, to speak with more propriety, by inexperience, brings forward the mind capable of forming such an affection, and when, in the lapse of time, perfection is found not to be within the reach of mortals, virtue, abstractedly, is thought beautiful, and wisdom sublime. Admiration then gives place to friendship, properly so called, because it is cemented by esteem; and the being walks alone only dependent on heaven for that emulous panting after perfection which ever glows in a noble mind.

But this knowledge a man must gain by the exertion of his own faculties; and this is surely the blessed fruit of disappointed hope! for He who delighteth to diffuse happiness and shew mercy to the weak creatures, who are learning to know him, never implanted a good propensity to be a tormenting ignis fatuus.

5.143 Our trees are now allowed to spread with wild luxuriance, nor do we expect by force to combine the majestic marks of time with useful graces; but wait patiently till they have struck deep their root, and braved many a storm.—Is the mind then, which, in proportion to its dignity, advances more slowly towards perfection, to be treated with less respect? To argue from analogy, every thing around us is in a progressive state; and when an unwelcome knowledge of life produces almost a satiety of life, and we discover by the natural course of things that all that is done under the sun is vanity, we are drawing near the awful close of the drama.

The days of activity and hope are over, and the opportunities which the first stage of existence has afforded of advancing in the scale of intelligence, must soon be summed up.—A knowledge at this period of the futility of life, or

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appear in human form to make an impression on young hearts; the ideal model that a more mature and elevated mind looks up to, and shapes for itself, would escape their sight. He who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God? asked the wisest of men.[34]

It is natural for the young to adorn the first object of their affection with every good quality; and the emulation produced by ignorance—or, to put it more properly, by inexperience—brings forward the mind capable of such an affection. When, in the course of time, perfection is found to be beyond the reach of mortals, virtue in the abstract comes to seem beautiful, and wisdom sublime. Admiration then gives way to friendship properly so called, because it is cemented by esteem; and the person walks alone, dependent only on heaven for that eager longing for perfection which always glows in a noble mind.

But this knowledge a person must gain by exercising his own faculties; and this is surely the blessed fruit of disappointed hope! For He who delights to spread happiness and to show mercy to the weak creatures who are learning to know him never planted a good inclination in us to be a tormenting will-o'-the-wisp.

We now let our trees spread with wild luxuriance, and we do not expect to combine by force the majestic marks of time with useful graces; we wait patiently until they have struck their roots deep and braved many a storm.—Is the mind, then, which advances toward perfection more slowly in proportion to its dignity, to be treated with less respect? To argue from analogy: everything around us is in a state of progress; and when an unwelcome knowledge of life produces almost a weariness of life, and we discover by the natural course of things that all that is done under the sun is vanity, we are drawing near the solemn close of the drama.

The days of activity and hope are over, and the opportunities that the first stage of existence has offered for advancing in the scale of intelligence must soon be added up.—Knowledge of the futility of life at this stage, or earlier if it is gained by ex-

34 The saying is from 1 John 4:20; "the wisest of men" is the title usually given to Solomon.

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earlier, if obtained by experience, is very useful, because it is natural; but when a frail being is shewn the follies and vices of man, that he may be taught prudently to guard against the common casualties of life by sacrificing his heart—surely it is not speaking harshly to call it the wisdom of this world, contrasted with the nobler fruit of piety and experience.

5.144 I will venture a paradox, and deliver my opinion without reserve; if men were only born to form a circle of life and death, it would be wise to take every step that foresight could suggest to render life happy. Moderation in every pursuit would then be supreme wisdom; and the prudent voluptuary might enjoy a degree of content, though he neither cultivated his understanding nor kept his heart pure. Prudence, supposing we were mortal, would be true wisdom, or, to be more explicit, would procure the greatest portion of happiness, considering the whole of life, but knowledge beyond the conveniences of life would be a curse.

5.145 Why should we injure our health by close study? The exalted pleasure which intellectual pursuits afford would scarcely be equivalent to the hours of languor that follow; especially, if it be necessary to take into the reckoning the doubts and disappointments that cloud our researches. Vanity and vexation close every inquiry: for the cause which we particularly wished to discover flies like the horizon before us as we advance. The ignorant, on the contrary, resemble children, and suppose, that if they could walk straight forward they should at last arrive where the earth and clouds meet.

Yet, disappointed as we are in our researches, the mind gains strength by the exercise, sufficient, perhaps, to comprehend the answers which, in another step of existence, it may receive to the anxious questions it asked, when the understanding with feeble wing was fluttering round the visible effects to dive into the hidden cause.

5.146 The passions also, the winds of life, would be useless, if not injurious, did the substance which composes our thinking being, after we have thought in vain, only become the support of vegetable life, and invigorate a cabbage, or blush

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perience, is very useful, because it is natural. But when a frail being is shown the follies and vices of mankind so that he may be taught to guard prudently against the ordinary accidents of life by sacrificing his heart—surely it is not harsh to call this the wisdom of this world, as opposed to the nobler fruit of piety and experience.

I will venture a paradox and give my opinion without reserve: if human beings were born only to complete a circle of life and death, it would be wise to take every step that foresight could suggest to make life happy. Moderation in every pursuit would then be the highest wisdom; and the prudent pleasure-seeker might enjoy a degree of contentment, though he neither cultivated his understanding nor kept his heart pure. Prudence, supposing we were mortal, would be true wisdom —or, to be more explicit, would secure the greatest share of happiness over the whole of life. But knowledge beyond the conveniences of life would be a curse.

Why should we damage our health by close study? The exalted pleasure that intellectual pursuits give would hardly make up for the hours of exhaustion that follow, especially if we must also count the doubts and disappointments that cloud our research. Every inquiry ends in vanity and vexation, for the cause we most wanted to discover retreats before us like the horizon as we advance. The ignorant, by contrast, are like children: they suppose that if they could only walk straight ahead, they would at last arrive where the earth and the clouds meet.

Yet, disappointed as we are in our research, the mind gains strength from the exercise. Perhaps it gains enough to understand the answers it may receive, in another stage of existence, to the anxious questions it asked when the understanding, on feeble wings, was fluttering around the visible effects and trying to dive into the hidden cause.

The passions too, the winds of life, would be useless, if not harmful, if the substance that makes up our thinking being merely became, after we have thought in vain, the support of plant life, nourishing a cabbage or blushing in a rose. The appetites

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in a rose. The appetites would answer every earthly purpose, and produce more moderate and permanent happiness. But the powers of the soul that are of little use here, and, probably, disturb our animal enjoyments, even while conscious dignity makes us glory in possessing them, prove that life is merely an education, a state of infancy, to which the only hopes worth cherishing should not be sacrificed.

I mean, therefore, to infer, that we ought to have a precise idea of what we wish to attain by education, for the immortality of the soul is contradicted by the actions of many people who firmly profess the belief.

5.147 If you mean to secure ease and prosperity on earth as the first consideration, and leave futurity to provide for itself; you act prudently in giving your child an early insight into the weaknesses of his nature. You may not, it is true, make an Inkle of him; but do not imagine that he will stick to more than the letter of the law, who has very early imbibed a mean opinion of human nature; nor will he think it necessary to rise much above the common standard. He may avoid gross vices, because honesty is the best policy; but he will never aim at attaining great virtues. The example of writers and artists will illustrate this remark.

5.148 I must therefore venture to doubt whether what has been thought an axiom in morals may not have been a dogmatical assertion made by men who have coolly seen mankind through the medium of books, and say, in direct contradiction to them, that the regulation of the passions is not, always, wisdom. On the contrary, it should seem, that one reason why men have superiour judgment, and more fortitude than women, is undoubtedly this, that they give a freer scope to the grand passions, and by more frequently going astray enlarge their minds.

If then by the exercise of their own[17]reason they fix on some stable principle, they have probably to thank the force of their passions, nourished by *false* views of life, and permitted to overleap the boundary that secures content. But if, in the dawn of life, we could soberly survey the scenes before us in perspective, and see every thing in its true

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would serve every earthly purpose and produce a more moderate and lasting happiness. But consider the powers of the soul. They are of little use here, and probably disturb our animal enjoyments, even while a sense of our dignity makes us glory in having them. They prove that life is merely an education, a state of infancy, and that the only hopes worth cherishing should not be sacrificed to it.

What I mean to conclude, then, is that we ought to have a precise idea of what we want to achieve by education. The immortality of the soul is contradicted by the actions of many people who firmly profess to believe in it.

Suppose your first concern is to secure ease and prosperity on earth, leaving the future to take care of itself. Then you act prudently in giving your child an early insight into the weaknesses of his nature. You may not, it is true, make an Inkle of him. But do not imagine that someone who has absorbed a low opinion of human nature very early will keep to more than the letter of the law, or think it necessary to rise much above the common standard. He may avoid gross vices, because honesty is the best policy; but he will never aim at great virtues. The example of writers and artists will illustrate this remark.[35]

I must therefore venture to doubt whether what has been taken as an axiom in morals may not be a dogmatic assertion made by men who have coolly viewed humanity through books. In direct contradiction to them, I say that regulating the passions is not always wisdom. On the contrary, one reason why men have superior judgment and more fortitude than women seems undoubtedly to be this: they give freer scope to the grand passions, and by going astray more often they enlarge their minds.

If, then, by the exercise of their own[17] reason they settle on some stable principle, they probably have the force of their passions to thank. Those passions were nourished by *false* views of life and allowed to leap over the boundary that keeps us content. But suppose that at the dawn of life we

35 Inkle is the English trader in Richard Steele's tale of "Inkle and Yarico" (*Spectator* No. 11, 1711), who sells into slavery the Native American woman who had saved his life.

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colours, how could the passions gain sufficient strength to unfold the faculties?	could soberly survey the scenes ahead of us in perspective and see everything in its true colors. How could the passions then gain enough strength to unfold the faculties?

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THE WORLD SEEN FROM A HEIGHT

Surveying life without illusions, she argues that the passions, though deceptive, are needed to unfold the mind.

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5.149 Let me now as from an eminence survey the world stripped of all its false delusive charms. The clear atmosphere enables me to see each object in its true point of view, while my heart is still. I am calm as the prospect in a morning when the mists, slowly dispersing, silently unveil the beauties of nature, refreshed by rest.	Let me now survey the world as if from a height, stripped of all its false, deceptive charms. The clear air lets me see each object in its true light, while my heart is still. I am as calm as the landscape in the morning, when the mists slowly disperse and silently unveil the beauties of nature, refreshed by rest.
5.150 In what light will the world now appear?—I rub my eyes and think, perchance, that I am just awaking from a lively dream.	In what light will the world now appear?—I rub my eyes and think that perhaps I am just waking from a vivid dream.
5.151 I see the sons and daughters of men pursuing shadows, and anxiously wasting their powers to feed passions which have no adequate object—if the very excess of these blind impulses, pampered by that lying, yet constantly trusted guide, the imagination, did not, by preparing them for some other state, render short-sighted mortals wiser without their own concurrence; or, what comes to the same thing, when they were pursuing some imaginary present good.	I see the sons and daughters of men chasing shadows and anxiously wasting their powers to feed passions that have no adequate object. So it would be, at least, if the very excess of these blind impulses did not make short-sighted mortals wiser without their consent, by preparing them for some other state. These impulses are pampered by the imagination, a lying guide that we nonetheless constantly trust. Or, what comes to the same thing, the excess makes them wiser while they are pursuing some imaginary present good.
5.152 After viewing objects in this light, it would not be very fanciful to imagine that this world was a stage on which a pantomime is daily performed for the amusement of superiour beings. How would they be diverted to see the ambitious man consuming himself by running after a phantom, and, 'pursuing the bubble fame in the cannon's mouth' that was to blow him to nothing: for when	After viewing things in this light, it would not be very far-fetched to imagine this world as a stage on which a pantomime is performed daily for the amusement of higher beings. How entertained they would be to see the ambitious man wearing himself out running after a phantom, "pursuing the bubble fame in the cannon's mouth," when that cannon was to blow him to nothing! For once

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[17] 'I find that all is but lip-wisdom which wants experience,' says Sidney.

[17] "I find that all is only lip-wisdom that lacks experience," says Sidney.[36]

36 Sir Philip Sidney (1554–1586), poet and courtier; the line is from his prose romance the *Arcadia*.

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consciousness is lost, it matters not whether we mount in a whirlwind or descend in rain.

And should they compassionately invigorate his sight and shew him the thorny path which led to eminence, that like a quicksand sinks as he ascends, disappointing his hopes when almost within his grasp, would he not leave to others the honour of amusing them, and labour to secure the present moment, though from the constitution of his nature he would not find it very easy to catch the flying stream? Such slaves are we to hope and fear!

5.153 But, vain as the ambitious man's pursuits would be, he is often striving for something more substantial than fame—that indeed would be the veriest meteor, the wildest fire that could lure a man to ruin.—What! renounce the most trifling gratification to be applauded when he should be no more! Wherefore this struggle, whether man is mortal or immortal, if that noble passion did not really raise the being above his fellows?—

5.154 And love! What diverting scenes would it produce —Pantaloon's tricks must yield to more egregious folly. To see a mortal adorn an object with imaginary charms, and then fall down and worship the idol which he had himself set up—how ridiculous! But what serious consequences ensue to rob man of that portion of happiness, which the Deity by calling him into existence has (or, on what can his attributes rest?) indubitably promised: would not all the purposes of life have been much better fulfilled if he had only felt what has been termed physical love?

And, would not the sight of the object, not seen through the medium of the imagination, soon reduce the passion to an appetite, if reflection, the noble distinction of man, did not give it force, and make it an instrument to raise him above this earthy dross, by teaching him to love the centre of all perfection; whose wisdom appears clearer and clearer in the works of nature, in proportion as reason is illuminated and exalted by contemplation, and by acquiring that love of order which the struggles of passion produce?

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consciousness is lost, it does not matter whether we rise in a whirlwind or come down in rain.[38]

Suppose they compassionately sharpened his sight and showed him the thorny path to eminence. That path sinks like quicksand as he climbs and disappoints his hopes when they are almost within his grasp. Would he not then leave to others the honor of amusing them, and work to secure the present moment instead? Yet the constitution of his nature would make it hard for him to catch the flying stream. Such slaves are we to hope and fear!

But, vain as the ambitious man's pursuits would be, he is often striving for something more substantial than fame. Fame alone would indeed be the merest meteor, the wildest will-o'-the-wisp that could lure a man to ruin.—What! Give up the slightest gratification in order to be applauded when he is no more! Why this struggle, whether man is mortal or immortal, if that noble passion did not really raise him above his fellows?—

And love! What entertaining scenes it would produce. Pantaloon's tricks would have to give way to even greater folly. To see a mortal adorn an object with imaginary charms, and then fall down and worship the idol he himself had set up—how ridiculous! But what serious consequences follow, robbing man of the share of happiness that the Deity, by calling him into existence, has undoubtedly promised him (or else on what can God's attributes rest?). Would not all the purposes of life have been much better served if he had felt only what has been called physical love?[39]

And would not the sight of the object, seen without the medium of the imagination, soon reduce the passion to an appetite? It would, if reflection, the noble distinction of man, did not give it force and make it an instrument for raising him above this earthly dross, by teaching him to love the center of all perfection—whose wisdom appears clearer and clearer in the works of nature as reason is enlightened and exalted by contemplation, and by acquiring that love of order which the struggles of passion produce.

38 Adapted from Jaques's "seven ages of man" speech in Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (2.7): "Seeking the bubble reputation / Even in the cannon's mouth."

39 Pantaloon: the foolish, doddering old man of the Italian commedia dell'arte and of English harlequin pantomimes.

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5.155 The habit of reflection, and the knowledge attained by fostering any passion, might be shewn to be equally useful, though the object be proved equally fallacious; for they would all appear in the same light, if they were not magnified by the governing passion implanted in us by the Author of all good, to call forth and strengthen the faculties of each individual, and enable it to attain all the experience that an infant can obtain, who does certain things, it cannot tell why.	The habit of reflection, and the knowledge gained by fostering any passion, could be shown to be equally useful, even if the object of the passion proved equally illusory. All such objects would look alike if they were not magnified by the ruling passion that the Author of all good has implanted in us. He implanted it to call forth and strengthen the faculties of each individual, and to let it gain all the experience that an infant can gain when it does certain things without being able to say why.
5.156 I descend from my height, and mixing with my fellow-creatures, feel myself hurried along the common stream; ambition, love, hope and fear, exert their wonted power, though we be convinced by reason that their present and most attractive promises are only lying dreams; but had the cold hand of circumspection damped each generous feeling before it had left any permanent character, or fixed some habit, what could be expected, but selfish prudence and reason just rising above instinct? Who that has read Dean Swift's disgusting description of the Yahoos, and insipid one of Houyhnhnm with a philosophical eye, can avoid seeing the futility of degrading the passions, or making man rest in contentment?	I come down from my height and, mixing with my fellow creatures, feel myself swept along by the common stream. Ambition, love, hope and fear exert their usual power, though reason convinces us that their present and most attractive promises are only lying dreams. But suppose the cold hand of caution had damped each generous feeling before it had left any lasting mark on the character or fixed some habit. What could we then expect but selfish prudence, and reason barely rising above instinct? Anyone who has read Dean Swift's disgusting description of the Yahoos, and his insipid one of the Houyhnhnms, with a philosophical eye must see the futility of degrading the passions, or of making man rest in contentment.[40]
5.157 The youth should *act*; for had he the experience of a grey head he would be fitter for death than life, though his virtues, rather residing in his head than his heart, could produce nothing great, and his understanding, prepared for this world, would not, by its noble flights, prove that it had a title to a better.	The young should *act*. If a youth had the experience of a gray head, he would be fitter for death than for life. His virtues would reside in his head rather than his heart and could produce nothing great. His understanding, prepared for this world, would not prove by any noble flights that it had a claim to a better one.
5.158 Besides, it is not possible to give a young person a just view of life; he must have struggled with his own passions before he can estimate the force of the temptation which betrayed his brother into vice. Those who are entering life, and those who are departing, see the world from such very different points of view, that they can seldom think alike, unless the unfledged reason of the former never attempted a solitary flight.	Besides, it is impossible to give a young person a true view of life. He must have struggled with his own passions before he can judge the force of the temptation that betrayed his brother into vice. Those who are entering life and those who are leaving it see the world from such different points of view that they can seldom think alike—unless the unfledged reason of the young never attempted a solitary flight.
5.159 When we hear of some daring crime, it comes full on us in the deepest shade of turpitude, and raises	When we hear of some daring crime, it strikes us in the deepest shade of wickedness and rouses our indignation. But the eye that watched the dark-

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	indignation; but the eye that gradually saw the darkness thicken, must observe it with more compassionate forbearance. The world cannot be seen by an unmoved spectator, we must mix in the throng, and feel as men feel before we can judge of their feelings. If we mean, in short, to live in the world to grow wiser and better, and not merely to enjoy the good things of life, we must attain a knowledge of others at the same time that we become acquainted with ourselves—knowledge acquired any other way only hardens the heart and perplexes the understanding.	ness gradually thicken must view it with more compassionate forbearance. The world cannot be seen by an unmoved spectator. We must mix in the crowd and feel as men feel before we can judge their feelings. In short, suppose we mean to live in the world in order to grow wiser and better, and not merely to enjoy the good things of life. Then we must come to know others at the same time as we come to know ourselves. Knowledge acquired any other way only hardens the heart and confuses the understanding.
5.160	I may be told, that the knowledge thus acquired, is sometimes purchased at too dear a rate. I can only answer that I very much doubt whether any knowledge can be attained without labour and sorrow; and those who wish to spare their children both, should not complain, if they are neither wise nor virtuous. They only aimed at making them prudent; and prudence, early in life, is but the cautious craft of ignorant self-love.	I may be told that knowledge acquired in this way is sometimes bought at too high a price. I can only answer that I very much doubt whether any knowledge can be gained without labor and sorrow. Those who want to spare their children both should not complain if the children turn out neither wise nor virtuous. They aimed only at making them prudent; and prudence, early in life, is nothing but the cautious cunning of ignorant self-love.
5.161	I have observed that young people, to whose education particular attention has been paid, have, in general, been very superficial and conceited, and far from pleasing in any respect, because they had neither the unsuspecting warmth of youth, nor the cool depth of age. I cannot help imputing this unnatural appearance principally to that hasty premature instruction, which leads them presumptuously to repeat all the crude notions they have taken upon trust, so that the careful education which they received, makes them all their lives the slaves of prejudices.	I have noticed that young people whose education received special attention have generally been very superficial and conceited, and far from pleasing in any respect, because they had neither the unsuspecting warmth of youth nor the cool depth of age. I cannot help blaming this unnatural appearance mainly on hasty, premature instruction. It leads them to repeat presumptuously all the crude notions they have taken on trust, so that the careful education they received makes them slaves of prejudice all their lives.
5.162	Mental as well as bodily exertion is, at first, irksome; so much so, that the many would fain let others both work and think for them. An observation which I have often made will illustrate my meaning. When in a circle of strangers, or acquaintances, a person of moderate abilities asserts an opinion with heat, I will venture to affirm, for I have traced this fact home, very often, that it is a prejudice. These echoes have a high respect for the understanding of some relation or friend, and without fully	Mental exertion, like bodily exertion, is irksome at first, so much so that most people would gladly let others both work and think for them. An observation I have often made will illustrate what I mean. Among strangers or acquaintances, a person of moderate abilities will sometimes assert an opinion heatedly. I will venture to say that such an opinion is very often a prejudice, for I have traced this to its source many times. These echoes have a high regard for the understanding of some relative or friend. Without fully grasping the opinions they

40 In Book 4 of Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), the Yahoos are brutish humanlike creatures and the Houyhnhnms coolly rational horses.

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comprehending the opinions, which they are so eager to retail, they maintain them with a degree of obstinacy, that would surprise even the person who concocted them.

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are so eager to retail, they defend them with a stubbornness that would surprise even the person who cooked them up.

AGAINST RESPECTING PREJUDICES

Opinions held only because they are old are prejudices, and education cannot give what only experience teaches.

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5.163 I know that a kind of fashion now prevails of respecting prejudices; and when any one dares to face them, though actuated by humanity and armed by reason, he is superciliously asked whether his ancestors were fools. No, I should reply; opinions, at first, of every description, were all, probably, considered, and therefore were founded on some reason; yet not unfrequently, of course, it was rather a local expedient than a fundamental principle, that would be reasonable at all times. But, moss-covered opinions assume the disproportioned form of prejudices, when they are indolently adopted only because age has given them a venerable aspect, though the reason on which they were built ceases to be a reason, or cannot be traced.

Why are we to love prejudices, merely because they are prejudices[18]? A prejudice is a fond obstinate persuasion for which we can give no reason; for the moment a reason can be given for an opinion, it ceases to be a prejudice, though it may be an error in judgment: and are we then advised to cherish opinions only to set reason at defiance? This mode of arguing, if arguing it may be called, reminds me of what is vulgarly termed a woman's reason. For women sometimes declare that they love, or believe, certain things, *because* they love, or believe them.

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I know that a fashion for respecting prejudices now prevails. When anyone dares to confront them, though moved by humanity and armed with reason, he is haughtily asked whether his ancestors were fools. No, I would reply. Opinions of every kind were probably all thought through at first, and were therefore founded on some reason. Naturally, though, that reason was often a local expedient rather than a fundamental principle that would be reasonable at all times. But moss-covered opinions take on the misshapen form of prejudices when they are lazily adopted only because age has given them a venerable look, even though the reason on which they were built has ceased to be a reason, or can no longer be traced.

Why should we love prejudices merely because they are prejudices[18]? A prejudice is a fond, obstinate conviction for which we can give no reason. The moment a reason can be given for an opinion, it stops being a prejudice, though it may be an error of judgment. Are we, then, being advised to cherish opinions only in order to defy reason? This way of arguing, if it can be called arguing, reminds me of what is commonly called a woman's reason. For women sometimes declare that they love, or believe, certain things *because* they love, or believe, them.

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5.164 It is impossible to converse with people to any purpose, who, in this style, only use affirmatives and negatives. Before you can bring them to a

It is impossible to have a useful conversation with people who, in this style, answer only yes or no. Before you can bring them to a fair starting point,

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[18] Vide Mr. Burke.

[18] See Mr. Burke.[41]

41 In *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) Burke praised prejudice and urged cherishing prejudices "because they are prejudices."

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point, to start fairly from, you must go back to the simple principles that were antecedent to the prejudices broached by power; and it is ten to one but you are stopped by the philosophical assertion, that certain principles are as practically false as they are abstractly true[19].

Nay, it may be inferred, that reason has whispered some doubts, for it generally happens that people assert their opinions with the greatest heat when they begin to waver; striving to drive out their own doubts by convincing their opponent, they grow angry when those gnawing doubts are thrown back to prey on themselves.

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5.165 The fact is, that men expect from education, what education cannot give. A sagacious parent or tutor may strengthen the body and sharpen the instruments by which the child is to gather knowledge; but the honey must be the reward of the individual's own industry. It is almost as absurd to attempt to make a youth wise by the experience of another, as to expect the body to grow strong by the exercise which is only talked of, or seen[20].

Many of those children whose conduct has been most narrowly watched, become the weakest men, because their instructors only instil certain notions into their minds, that have no other foundation than their authority; and if they are loved or respected, the mind is cramped in its exertions and wavering in its advances. The business of education in this case, is only to conduct the shooting tendrils to a proper pole; yet after laying precept upon precept, without allowing a child to acquire judgment itself, parents expect them to act in the same manner by this borrowed fallacious light, as if they had illuminated it themselves; and be, when they enter life, what their parents are at the close.

They do not consider that the tree, and even the human body does not strengthen its fibres till it has reached its full growth.

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5.166 There appears to be something analogous in the mind. The senses and the imagination give a form

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you must go back to the simple principles that came before the prejudices put about by power. And it is ten to one that you will be stopped by the philosophical assertion that certain principles are as false in practice as they are true in the abstract[19].

Indeed, one may infer that reason has whispered some doubts to them. It generally happens that people assert their opinions most heatedly when they begin to waver. They try to drive out their own doubts by convincing their opponent, and they grow angry when those gnawing doubts are thrown back to prey on them.

The fact is that people expect from education what education cannot give. A shrewd parent or tutor may strengthen the body and sharpen the tools with which the child is to gather knowledge; but the honey must be the reward of the individual's own industry. It is almost as absurd to try to make a youth wise through someone else's experience as to expect the body to grow strong through exercise that is only talked about, or watched[20].

Many of the children whose conduct has been most closely watched become the weakest adults. Their instructors merely instill certain notions into their minds that have no foundation except the instructors' own authority. If the instructors are loved or respected, the child's mind is cramped in its efforts and hesitant in its advances. The business of education in this case is only to guide the shooting tendrils to a suitable pole. Yet parents pile precept upon precept without letting a child acquire judgment for itself. Then they expect their children to act by this borrowed, deceptive light exactly as if they had kindled it themselves, and to be, when they enter life, what their parents are at its close.

They do not consider that a tree, and even the human body, does not strengthen its fibers until it has reached its full growth.

There seems to be something similar in the mind. The senses and the imagination give form to the character during childhood and youth. As life advances, the understanding gives firmness to the

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to the character, during childhood and youth; and the understanding, as life advances, gives firmness to the first fair purposes of sensibility—till virtue, arising rather from the clear conviction of reason than the impulse of the heart, morality is made to rest on a rock against which the storms of passion vainly beat.

5.167 I hope I shall not be misunderstood when I say, that religion will not have this condensing energy, unless it be founded on reason. If it be merely the refuge of weakness or wild fanaticism, and not a governing principle of conduct, drawn from self-knowledge, and a rational opinion respecting the attributes of God, what can it be expected to produce? The religion which consists in warming the affections, and exalting the imagination, is only the poetical part, and may afford the individual pleasure without rendering it a more moral being.

It may be a substitute for worldly pursuits; yet narrow, instead of enlarging the heart: but virtue must be loved as in itself sublime and excellent, and not for the advantages it procures or the evils it averts, if any great degree of excellence be expected. Men will not become moral when they only build airy castles in a future world to compensate for the disappointments which they meet with in this; if they turn their thoughts from relative duties to religious reveries.

5.168 Most prospects in life are marred by the shuffling worldly wisdom of men, who, forgetting that they cannot serve God and mammon, endeavour to blend contradictory things.—If you wish to make your son rich, pursue one course—if you are only anxious to make him virtuous, you must take another; but do not imagine that you can bound from one road to the other without losing your way[21].

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first fair intentions of sensibility. At last virtue arises from the clear conviction of reason rather than from the impulse of the heart, and morality is made to rest on a rock against which the storms of passion beat in vain.

I hope I shall not be misunderstood when I say that religion will not have this consolidating power unless it is founded on reason. Suppose it is merely the refuge of weakness or of wild fanaticism, and not a governing principle of conduct drawn from self-knowledge and a rational view of God's attributes. What can we then expect it to produce? The religion that consists in warming the affections and exalting the imagination is only the poetic part of religion. It may give the individual pleasure without making it a more moral being.

Such religion may be a substitute for worldly pursuits, and yet narrow the heart instead of enlarging it. But if any great degree of excellence is expected, virtue must be loved as sublime and excellent in itself, and not for the advantages it brings or the evils it prevents. People will not become moral when they merely build castles in the air in a future world to make up for the disappointments they meet with in this one, turning their thoughts away from the duties they owe to others toward religious daydreams.

Most prospects in life are spoiled by the shifty worldly wisdom of people who forget that they cannot serve God and mammon, and try to blend contradictory things.—If you want to make your son rich, follow one course. If your only concern is to make him virtuous, you must take another. But do not imagine that you can leap from one road to the other without losing your way[21].

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[20] 'One sees nothing when one is content to contemplate only; it is necessary to act oneself to be able to see how others act.' *Rousseau.*

[20] "One sees nothing when one is content only to contemplate; one must act oneself to be able to see how others act." *Rousseau.*

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[19] 'Convince a man against his will, / He's of the same opinion still.'

[19] "Convince a man against his will, / He's of the same opinion still."

45 The essay is Barbauld's "Against Inconsistency in Our Expectations" (1773).

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[21] See an excellent essay on this subject by Mrs. Barbauld, in *Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose.*

[21] See an excellent essay on this subject by Mrs. Barbauld, in *Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose.* [45]

Chapter VI: The Effect Which an Early Association of Ideas Has upon the Character

Habits of thought formed in girlhood fix women's minds on appearance and feeling.

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6.1	Educated in the enervating style recommended by the writers on whom I have been animadverting; and not having a chance, from their subordinate state in society, to recover their lost ground, is it surprising that women every where appear a defect in nature? Is it surprising, when we consider what a determinate effect an early association of ideas has on the character, that they neglect their understandings, and turn all their attention to their persons?	Women are educated in the enervating style recommended by the writers I have been criticizing. Because of their subordinate position in society, they have no chance to recover their lost ground. Is it surprising, then, that women everywhere seem a defect in nature? Considering how decisive an effect the early association of ideas has on character, is it surprising that they neglect their understandings and turn all their attention to their looks?
6.2	The great advantages which naturally result from storing the mind with knowledge, are obvious from the following considerations. The association of our ideas is either habitual or instantaneous; and the latter mode seems rather to depend on the original temperature of the mind than on the will. When the ideas, and matters of fact, are once taken in, they lie by for use, till some fortuitous circumstance makes the information dart into the mind with illustrative force, that has been received at very different periods of our lives. Like the lightning's flash are many recollections; one idea assimilating and explaining another, with astonishing rapidity.	The great advantages that naturally come from storing the mind with knowledge are obvious from the following considerations. The association of our ideas is either habitual or instantaneous, and the second kind seems to depend on the original temper of the mind rather than on the will. Once ideas and facts have been taken in, they lie ready for use. Then some chance circumstance makes information received at very different periods of our lives dart into the mind with illuminating force. Many recollections are like a flash of lightning, one idea assimilating and explaining another with astonishing speed.
	I do not now allude to that quick perception of truth, which is so intuitive that it baffles research, and makes us at a loss to determine whether it is reminiscence or ratiocination, lost sight of in its celerity, that opens the dark cloud. Over those instantaneous associations we have little power; for when the mind is once enlarged by excursive flights, or profound reflection, the raw materials will, in some degree, arrange themselves. The understanding, it is true, may keep us from going out of drawing when we group our thoughts, or transcribe from the imagination the warm sketches of fancy; but the animal spirits, the individual character, give the colouring.	I am not referring now to that quick perception of truth which is so intuitive that it defies investigation. It moves so fast that we lose sight of it, and cannot tell whether memory or reasoning opened the dark cloud. Over those instantaneous associations we have little power. Once the mind has been enlarged by wide-ranging flights or deep reflection, the raw materials will to some degree arrange themselves. The understanding, it is true, may keep us from drawing out of proportion when we group our thoughts, or when we copy down the warm sketches of fancy from the imagination. But the animal spirits, the individual character, supply the coloring.

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	Over this subtile electric fluid[1], how little power do we possess, and over it how little power can reason obtain! These fine intractable spirits appear to be the essence of genius, and beaming in its eagle eye, produce in the most eminent degree the happy energy of associating thoughts that surprise, delight, and instruct. These are the glowing minds that concentrate pictures for their fellow-creatures; forcing them to view with interest the objects reflected from the impassioned imagination, which they passed over in nature.	Over this subtle electric fluid[1], how little power we have, and how little power reason can gain over it! These fine, intractable spirits seem to be the essence of genius. Shining in its eagle eye, they produce in the highest degree the happy energy of associating thoughts in ways that surprise, delight and instruct. These are the glowing minds that concentrate pictures for their fellow creatures. They make them look with interest at objects they had passed over in nature, once those objects are reflected from the impassioned imagination.
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6.3	I must be allowed to explain myself. The generality of people cannot see or feel poetically, they want fancy, and therefore fly from solitude in search of sensible objects; but when an author lends them his eyes they can see as he saw, and be amused by images they could not select, though lying before them.	Let me explain myself. Most people cannot see or feel poetically. They lack fancy, and therefore flee solitude in search of objects for the senses. But when an author lends them his eyes, they can see as he saw, and be entertained by images they could not pick out for themselves, though those images were lying right before them.
6.4	Education thus only supplies the man of genius with knowledge to give variety and contrast to his associations; but there is an habitual association of ideas, that grows 'with our growth,' which has a great effect on the moral character of mankind; and by which a turn is given to the mind that commonly remains throughout life. So ductile is the understanding, and yet so stubborn, that the associations which depend on adventitious circumstances, during the period that the body takes to arrive at maturity, can seldom be disentangled by reason. One idea calls up another, its old associate, and memory, faithful to the first impressions, particularly when the intellectual powers are not employed to cool our sensations, retraces them with mechanical exactness.	Education, then, only supplies the man of genius with knowledge to give variety and contrast to his associations. But there is also a habitual association of ideas that grows “with our growth.” It has a great effect on the moral character of humanity and usually gives the mind a bent that lasts throughout life. The understanding is so pliable, and yet so stubborn, that associations formed by chance circumstances while the body is growing to maturity can seldom be untangled by reason. One idea calls up another, its old associate. Memory is faithful to first impressions and retraces them with mechanical exactness, particularly when the intellectual powers are not used to cool our sensations.
6.5	This habitual slavery, to first impressions, has a more baneful effect on the female than the male character, because business and other dry employments of the understanding, tend to	This habitual slavery to first impressions has a more harmful effect on the female character than on the male. Business and other dry employments of the understanding tend to deaden the feelings

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[1] I have sometimes, when inclined to laugh at materialists, asked whether, as the most powerful effects in nature, are apparently produced by fluids, the magnetic, &c. the passions might not be fine volatile fluids that embraced humanity, keeping the more refractory elementary parts together—or whether they were simply a liquid fire that pervaded the more sluggish materials, giving them life and heat?

[1] When I have felt like laughing at materialists, I have sometimes asked the following question. The most powerful effects in nature seem to be produced by fluids, such as the magnetic fluid. Might the passions, then, be fine volatile fluids that embraced humanity and held its more stubborn elementary parts together? Or were they simply a liquid fire that pervaded the more sluggish materials, giving them life and heat?

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deaden the feelings and break associations that do violence to reason. But females, who are made women of when they are mere children, and brought back to childhood when they ought to leave the go-cart for ever, have not sufficient strength of mind to efface the superinductions of art that have smothered nature.

6.6 Every thing that they see or hear serves to fix impressions, call forth emotions, and associate ideas, that give a sexual character to the mind. False notions of beauty and delicacy stop the growth of their limbs and produce a sickly soreness, rather than delicacy of organs; and thus weakened by being employed in unfolding instead of examining the first associations, forced on them by every surrounding object, how can they attain the vigour necessary to enable them to throw off their factitious character?—where find strength to recur to reason and rise superiour to a system of oppression, that blasts the fair promises of spring?

This cruel association of ideas, which every thing conspires to twist into all their habits of thinking, or, to speak with more precision, of feeling, receives new force when they begin to act a little for themselves; for they then perceive that it is only through their address to excite emotions in men, that pleasure and power are to be obtained. Besides, all the books professedly written for their instruction, which make the first impression on their minds, all inculcate the same opinions. Educated then in worse than Egyptian bondage, it is unreasonable, as well as cruel, to upbraid them with faults that can scarcely be avoided, unless a degree of native vigour be supposed, that falls to the lot of very few amongst mankind.

6.7 For instance, the severest sarcasms have been levelled against the sex, and they have been ridiculed for repeating 'a set of phrases learnt by rote,' when nothing could be more natural, considering the education they receive, and that their 'highest praise is to obey, unargued'— the will of man. If they are not allowed to have reason sufficient to govern their own conduct—why, all they learn—must be learned by rote!

And when all their ingenuity is called forth to adjust their dress, 'a passion for a scarlet coat,' is

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and break associations that do violence to reason. Girls, however, are made into women when they are mere children, and brought back to childhood when they ought to have left the baby-walker behind forever. They do not have enough strength of mind to erase the layers of artifice that have smothered nature.

Everything they see or hear serves to fix impressions, call forth emotions and associate ideas that give the mind a character determined by sex. False notions of beauty and delicacy stop the growth of their limbs and produce a sickly tenderness rather than delicacy of organs. They are weakened further by being occupied in unfolding, rather than examining, the first associations forced on them by every surrounding object. How, then, can they gain the vigor they need to throw off their artificial character?—where are they to find the strength to fall back on reason and rise above a system of oppression that blights the fair promise of spring?

Everything conspires to twist this cruel association of ideas into all their habits of thinking, or, to be more precise, of feeling. It gains new force when they begin to act a little for themselves, for they then see that pleasure and power are to be had only through their skill in exciting emotions in men. Besides, all the books professedly written for their instruction, which make the first impression on their minds, teach the same opinions. Since they are educated in worse than Egyptian bondage, it is unreasonable, as well as cruel, to reproach them with faults they can hardly avoid. Only a degree of native vigor that falls to the lot of very few human beings would let them escape these faults.

For instance, the harshest sarcasms have been aimed at women, and they have been ridiculed for repeating “a set of phrases learned by rote.” Yet nothing could be more natural, considering the education they receive, and considering that their “highest praise is to obey, unargued”—the will of man. If they are not allowed enough reason to govern their own conduct—why, then everything they learn must be learned by rote![2]

And since all their ingenuity is called on to arrange their dress, “a passion for a scarlet coat” is

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	so natural, that it never surprised me and, allowing Pope's summary of their character to be just, 'that every woman is at heart a rake,' why should they be bitterly censured for seeking a congenial mind, and preferring a rake to a man of sense?	so natural that it has never surprised me. Grant that Pope's summary of their character is just, "that every woman is at heart a rake." Why, then, should they be bitterly censured for seeking a kindred mind, and preferring a rake to a man of sense?
6.8	Rakes know how to work on their sensibility, whilst the modest merit of reasonable men has, of course, less effect on their feelings, and they cannot reach the heart by the way of the understanding, because they have few sentiments in common.	Rakes know how to work on their sensibility. The modest merit of reasonable men naturally has less effect on their feelings. Such men cannot reach women's hearts by way of the understanding, because they have few sentiments in common with them.
6.9	It seems a little absurd to expect women to be more reasonable than men in their *likings*, and still to deny them the uncontrouled use of reason. When do men *fall-in-love* with sense? When do they, with their superiour powers and advantages, turn from the person to the mind? And how can they then expect women, who are only taught to observe behaviour, and acquire manners rather than morals, to despise what they have been all their lives labouring to attain?	It seems a little absurd to expect women to be more reasonable than men in their *likings*, and yet to deny them the unrestricted use of reason. When do men *fall in love* with good sense? When do they, with their superior powers and advantages, turn from looks to mind? How, then, can they expect women to despise what they have spent their whole lives laboring to attain? Women are taught only to watch behavior, and to acquire manners rather than morals.
	Where are they suddenly to find judgment enough to weigh patiently the sense of an awkward virtuous man, when his manners, of which they are made critical judges, are rebuffing, and his conversation cold and dull, because it does not consist of pretty repartees, or well turned compliments? In order to admire or esteem any thing for a continuance, we must, at least, have our curiosity excited by knowing, in some degree, what we admire; for we are unable to estimate the value of qualities and virtues above our comprehension.	Think of an awkward, virtuous man whose manners are off-putting and whose conversation is cold and dull, because it does not consist of pretty repartee or well-turned compliments. Women have been made into critical judges of manners. Where are they suddenly to find enough judgment to weigh his good sense patiently? To admire or esteem anything for any length of time, we must at least have our curiosity aroused by knowing, to some degree, what it is we admire. We cannot estimate the value of qualities and virtues beyond our understanding.
	Such a respect, when it is felt, may be very sublime; and the confused consciousness of humility may render the dependent creature an interesting object, in some points of view; but human love must have grosser ingredients; and the person very naturally will come in for its share—and, an ample share it mostly has!	Such respect, when it is felt, may be very sublime, and the confused consciousness of humility may make the dependent creature an interesting object from some points of view. But human love must have coarser ingredients. The body will very naturally come in for its share, and a generous share it usually gets!
6.10	Love is, in a great degree, an arbitrary passion, and will reign, like some other stalking mischiefs, by its own authority, without deigning to reason; and it may also be easily distinguished from	Love is, to a great degree, an arbitrary passion. Like some other stalking mischiefs, it will reign by its own authority, without deigning to reason. It can also easily be distinguished from esteem, the

2 The second phrase echoes Eve's words to Adam in *Paradise Lost* (4.635–38): "unargued I obey."

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esteem, the foundation of friendship, because it is often excited by evanescent beauties and graces, though to give an energy to the sentiment, something more solid must deepen their impression and set the imagination to work, to make the most fair—the first good.

6.11 Common passions are excited by common qualities.—Men look for beauty and the simper of good-humoured docility: women are captivated by easy manners; a gentleman-like man seldom fails to please them, and their thirsty ears eagerly drink the insinuating nothings of politeness, whilst they turn from the unintelligible sounds of the charmer—reason, charm he never so wisely. With respect to superficial accomplishments, the rake certainly has the advantage; and of these females can form an opinion, for it is their own ground. Rendered gay and giddy by the whole tenor of their lives, the very aspect of wisdom, or the severe graces of virtue, must have a lugubrious appearance to them; and produce a kind of restraint from which they and love, sportive child, naturally revolt.

Without taste, excepting of the lighter kind, for taste is the offspring of judgment, how can they discover that true beauty and grace must arise from the play of the mind? and how can they be expected to relish in a lover what they do not, or very imperfectly, possess themselves? The sympathy that unites hearts, and invites to confidence, in them is so very faint, that it cannot take fire, and thus mount to passion. No, I repeat it, the love cherished by such minds, must have grosser fuel.

6.12 The inference is obvious; till women are led to exercise their understandings, they should not be satirized for their attachment to rakes; nor even for being rakes at heart, when it appears to be the inevitable consequence of their education. They who live to please—must find their enjoyments, their happiness, in pleasure! It is a trite, yet true remark, that we never do any thing well, unless we love it for its own sake.

6.13 Supposing, however, for a moment, that women were, in some future revolution of time, to become, what I sincerely wish them to be, even love would acquire more serious dignity, and be purified in its own fires; and virtue giving true delicacy to their affections, they would turn with

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foundation of friendship, because it is often excited by fleeting beauties and graces. Still, to give the sentiment energy, something more solid must deepen their impression and set the imagination to work, to make the fairest—the first good.

Common passions are excited by common qualities.—Men look for beauty and the simper of good-humored docility. Women are captivated by easy manners. A gentlemanly man seldom fails to please them, and their thirsty ears eagerly drink in the insinuating nothings of politeness. Meanwhile they turn away from the unintelligible sounds of the charmer—reason—charm he never so wisely. In superficial accomplishments the rake certainly has the advantage, and these are things women can judge, for it is their own ground. The whole course of their lives has made them gay and giddy, so the very look of wisdom, or the severe graces of virtue, must seem gloomy to them. These produce a kind of restraint against which they, and love, that playful child, naturally rebel.

Without taste, except of the lighter kind (for taste is the offspring of judgment), how can they discover that true beauty and grace must arise from the play of the mind? And how can they be expected to relish in a lover what they themselves do not possess, or possess only very imperfectly? The sympathy that unites hearts and invites confidence is so very faint in them that it cannot catch fire and so rise to passion. No, I repeat it: the love cherished by such minds must have coarser fuel.

The conclusion is obvious. Until women are led to exercise their understandings, they should not be satirized for their attachment to rakes, or even for being rakes at heart, when this seems to be the inevitable consequence of their education. Those who live to please must find their enjoyment, their happiness, in pleasure! It is a trite but true remark that we never do anything well unless we love it for its own sake.

Suppose, however, for a moment, that in some future revolution of time women were to become what I sincerely wish them to be. Even love would then acquire a more serious dignity and be purified in its own fires. With virtue giving true delic-

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disgust from a rake. Reasoning then, as well as feeling, the only province of woman, at present, they might easily guard against exteriour graces, and quickly learn to despise the sensibility that had been excited and hackneyed in the ways of women, whose trade was vice; and allurements, wanton airs.

They would recollect that the flame, one must use appropriated expressions, which they wished to light up, had been exhausted by lust, and that the sated appetite losing all relish for pure and simple pleasures, could only be roused by licentious arts or variety. What satisfaction could a woman of delicacy promise herself in a union with such a man, when the very artlessness of her affection might appear insipid? Thus does Dryden describe the situation,

6.14 ———'Where love is duty, on the female side, / On theirs mere sensual gust, and sought with surly pride.'

6.15 But one grand truth women have yet to learn, though much it imports them to act accordingly. In the choice of a husband, they should not be led astray by the qualities of a lover—for a lover the husband, even supposing him to be wise and virtuous, cannot long remain.

6.16 Were women more rationally educated, could they take a more comprehensive view of things, they would be contented to love but once in their lives; and after marriage calmly let passion subside into friendship—into that tender intimacy, which is the best refuge from care; yet is built on such pure, still affections, that idle jealousies would not be allowed to disturb the discharge of the sober duties of life, nor to engross the thoughts that ought to be otherwise employed. This is a state in which many men live; but few, very few women. And the difference may easily be accounted for, without recurring to a sexual character.

Men, for whom we are told women were made, have too much occupied the thoughts of women; and this association has so entangled love with all

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acy to their affections, they would turn away in disgust from a rake. They would then be reasoning as well as feeling, though feeling is at present woman's only province. They could easily guard against outward graces. They would quickly learn to despise the sensibility of a man whose feelings had been excited and worn out among women whose trade was vice, and whose allurements were wanton airs.

They would remember that the flame they wished to kindle (one must use the proper expressions) had been exhausted by lust. They would know that the jaded appetite had lost all relish for pure and simple pleasures and could be roused only by licentious arts or by variety. What satisfaction could a woman of delicacy expect from a union with such a man, when the very artlessness of her affection might seem insipid to him? This is how Dryden describes the situation:

———"Where love is duty, on the female side, / On theirs mere sensual gust, and sought with surly pride."[3]

But there is one great truth that women have yet to learn, though it matters a great deal to them to act on it. In choosing a husband, they should not be led astray by the qualities of a lover. A husband cannot remain a lover for long, even supposing him to be wise and virtuous.

If women were more rationally educated, and could take a more comprehensive view of things, they would be content to love only once in their lives. After marriage they would calmly let passion subside into friendship, into that tender intimacy which is the best refuge from care. Such intimacy is built on such pure, quiet affections that idle jealousies would not be allowed to disturb the performance of the sober duties of life, or to take over thoughts that ought to be otherwise employed. Many men live in this state, but few women, very few. And the difference is easily explained without appealing to a character supposedly peculiar to each sex.

Men, for whom, we are told, women were made, have occupied women's thoughts too much. To harp a little on an old string, women have been

3 John Dryden, *The Hind and the Panther* (1687), Part 3; "gust" means appetite or relish.

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their motives of action; and, to harp a little on an old string, having been solely employed either to prepare themselves to excite love, or actually putting their lessons in practice, they cannot live without love.

But, when a sense of duty, or fear of shame, obliges them to restrain this pampered desire of pleasing beyond certain lengths, too far for delicacy, it is true, though far from criminality, they obstinately determine to love, I speak of the passion, their husbands to the end of the chapter —and then acting the part which they foolishly exacted from their lovers, they become abject woers, and fond slaves.

6.17 Men of wit and fancy are often rakes; and fancy is the food of love. Such men will inspire passion. Half the sex, in its present infantile state, would pine for a Lovelace; a man so witty, so graceful, and so valiant: and can they *deserve* blame for acting according to principles so constantly inculcated? They want a lover, and protector; and, behold him kneeling before them—bravery prostrate to beauty! The virtues of a husband are thus thrown by love into the back ground, and gay hopes, or lively emotions, banish reflection till the day of reckoning comes; and come it surely will, to turn the sprightly lover into a surly suspicious tyrant, who contemptuously insults the very weakness he fostered.

Or, supposing the rake reformed, he cannot quickly get rid of old habits. When a man of abilities is first carried away by his passions, it is necessary that sentiment and taste varnish the enormities of vice, and give a zest to brutal indulgences; but when the gloss of novelty is worn off, and pleasure palls upon the sense, lasciviousness becomes barefaced, and enjoyment only the desperate effort of weakness flying from reflection as from a legion of devils. Oh! virtue thou art not an empty name! All that life can give—thou givest!

6.18 If much comfort cannot be expected from the friendship of a reformed rake of superiour abilities, what is the consequence when he lacketh sense, as well as principles? Verily misery, in its most hideous shape. When the habits of weak people are consolidated by time, a reformation is barely possible; and actually

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employed solely in preparing themselves to excite love, or in actually putting their lessons into practice. This association has so entangled love with all their motives for action that they cannot live without love.

But a sense of duty, or fear of shame, may oblige them to keep this pampered desire to please within certain limits. These limits are too wide for delicacy, it is true, though far short of the criminal. When this happens, they obstinately resolve to love their husbands, and I mean with passion, to the very end of the chapter. Then, acting the part they foolishly demanded of their lovers, they become abject wooers and doting slaves.

Men of wit and fancy are often rakes, and fancy is the food of love. Such men will inspire passion. Half of womankind, in its present childish state, would pine for a Lovelace, a man so witty, so graceful and so brave. Can they *deserve* blame for acting on principles so constantly drummed into them? They want a lover and a protector, and behold him kneeling before them—bravery prostrate before beauty! A husband's virtues are thus pushed into the background by love, and gay hopes or lively emotions banish reflection until the day of reckoning comes. And come it surely will, to turn the sprightly lover into a surly, suspicious tyrant, who contemptuously insults the very weakness he encouraged.

Or suppose the rake is reformed. Even then, he cannot quickly get rid of old habits. When a man of ability is first carried away by his passions, sentiment and taste are needed to varnish the enormities of vice and give zest to brutal indulgences. But when the gloss of novelty has worn off and pleasure palls on the senses, lewdness becomes barefaced. Enjoyment is then only the desperate effort of weakness fleeing from reflection as if from a legion of devils. Oh, virtue, you are not an empty name! All that life can give—you give!

If little comfort can be expected from the friendship of a reformed rake of superior abilities, what follows when he lacks sense as well as principles? Truly, misery in its most hideous shape. When the habits of weak people have been consolidated by time, reform is barely possible. It actually makes wretched those who do not have enough mind to

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	makes the beings miserable who have not sufficient mind to be amused by innocent pleasure; like the tradesman who retires from the hurry of business, nature presents to them only a universal blank; and the restless thoughts prey on the damped spirits[2]. Their reformation, as well as his retirement, actually makes them wretched because it deprives them of all employment, by quenching the hopes and fears that set in motion their sluggish minds.	be amused by innocent pleasure. They are like the tradesman who retires from the bustle of business: nature presents them only a universal blank, and their restless thoughts prey on their dampened spirits[2]. Their reform, like his retirement, actually makes them wretched. It deprives them of all occupation by extinguishing the hopes and fears that set their sluggish minds in motion.
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6.19	If such is the force of habit; if such is the bondage of folly, how carefully ought we to guard the mind from storing up vicious associations; and equally careful should we be to cultivate the understanding, to save the poor wight from the weak dependent state of even harmless ignorance. For it is the right use of reason alone which makes us independent of every thing—excepting the unclouded Reason—'whose service is perfect freedom.'	If such is the force of habit, and such the bondage of folly, how carefully we ought to guard the mind against storing up vicious associations! And we should be equally careful to cultivate the understanding, to save the poor creature from the weak, dependent state of even harmless ignorance. For it is the right use of reason alone that makes us independent of everything—except the unclouded Reason "whose service is perfect freedom."[5]

4

[2] I have frequently seen this exemplified in women, whose beauty could no longer be repaired. They have retired from the noisy scenes of dissipation; but, unless they became methodists, the solitude of the select society of their family connexions or acquaintance, has presented only a fearful void; consequently, nervous complaints, and all the vapourish train of idleness, rendered them quite as useless, and far more unhappy, than when they joined the giddy throng.

[2] I have frequently seen this illustrated in women whose beauty could no longer be repaired. They have retired from the noisy scenes of dissipation. But unless they became Methodists, the solitude of the select company of their relatives or acquaintances has offered only a fearful void. Consequently, nervous complaints and the whole train of "vapors" that idleness brings have made them quite as useless, and far more unhappy, than when they joined the giddy crowd.

5 The phrase is from the Collect for Peace in the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*, addressed to God, "whose service is perfect freedom."

Chapter VII: Modesty. Comprehensively Considered, and Not as a Sexual Virtue

True modesty is purity of mind and sober self-respect, a virtue for both sexes.

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7.1	Modesty! Sacred offspring of sensibility and reason!—true delicacy of mind!—may I unblamed presume to investigate thy nature, and trace to its covert the mild charm, that mellowing each harsh feature of a character, renders what would otherwise only inspire cold admiration—lovely!—Thou that smoothest the wrinkles of wisdom, and softenest the tone of the sublimest virtues till they all melt into humanity;—thou that spreadest the ethereal cloud that surrounding love heightens every beauty, it half shades, breathing those coy sweets that steal into the heart, and charm the senses—modulate for me the language of persuasive reason, till I rouse my sex from the flowery bed, on which they supinely sleep life away!	Modesty! Sacred offspring of sensibility and reason!—true delicacy of mind!—may I without blame presume to investigate your nature, and trace to its hiding place the gentle charm that mellows each harsh feature of a character and makes what would otherwise inspire only cold admiration—lovely!—You who smooth the wrinkles of wisdom, and soften the tone of the sublimest virtues until they all melt into humanity;—you who spread the ethereal cloud that surrounds love and heightens every beauty it half shades, breathing those shy sweetnesses that steal into the heart and charm the senses—tune for me the language of persuasive reason, until I rouse my sex from the flowery bed on which they lazily sleep their lives away!
7.2	In speaking of the association of our ideas, I have noticed two distinct modes; and in defining modesty, it appears to me equally proper to discriminate that purity of mind, which is the effect of chastity, from a simplicity of character that leads us to form a just opinion of ourselves, equally distant from vanity or presumption, though by no means incompatible with a lofty consciousness of our own dignity. Modesty, in the latter signification of the term, is, that soberness of mind which teaches a man not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, and should be distinguished from humility, because humility is a kind of self-abasement.	In speaking of the association of our ideas, I pointed out two distinct kinds. In defining modesty, it seems to me equally right to distinguish two things. The first is that purity of mind which is the effect of chastity. The second is a simplicity of character that leads us to form a just opinion of ourselves, equally far from vanity and from presumption, though by no means incompatible with a lofty consciousness of our own dignity. Modesty, in this second sense of the term, is that soberness of mind which teaches a man not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think. It should be distinguished from humility, because humility is a kind of self-abasement.
7.3	A modest man often conceives a great plan, and tenaciously adheres to it, conscious of his own strength, till success gives it a sanction that determines its character. Milton was not arrogant when he suffered a suggestion of judgment to escape him that proved a prophesy; nor was General Washington when he accepted of the command of the American forces. The latter has always been characterized as a modest man; but	A modest man often conceives a great plan and clings to it tenaciously, conscious of his own strength, until success gives it a sanction that settles its character. Milton was not arrogant when he let slip a judgment that proved a prophecy. Nor was General Washington when he accepted command of the American forces. Washington has always been described as a modest man; but had he

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had he been merely humble, he would probably have shrunk back irresolute, afraid of trusting to himself the direction of an enterprise, on which so much depended.	been merely humble, he would probably have shrunk back irresolute, afraid of trusting himself with the direction of an enterprise on which so much depended.[1]
7.4 A modest man is steady, an humble man timid, and a vain one presumptuous:—this is the judgment, which the observation of many characters, has led me to form. Jesus Christ was modest, Moses was humble, and Peter vain.	A modest man is steady, a humble man timid, and a vain one presumptuous:—this is the judgment that observing many characters has led me to form. Jesus Christ was modest, Moses was humble, and Peter was vain.
7.5 Thus, discriminating modesty from humility in one case, I do not mean to confound it with bashfulness in the other. Bashfulness, in fact, is so distinct from modesty, that the most bashful lass, or raw country lout, often becomes the most impudent; for their bashfulness being merely the instinctive timidity of ignorance, custom soon changes it into assurance[1].	So while I distinguish modesty from humility on one side, I do not mean to confuse it with bashfulness on the other. Bashfulness, in fact, is so different from modesty that the most bashful girl, or raw country lout, often becomes the most brazen. Their bashfulness is merely the instinctive timidity of ignorance, and habit soon changes it into self-assurance[1].
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7.6 The shameless behaviour of the prostitutes, who infest the streets of London, raising alternate emotions of pity and disgust, may serve to illustrate this remark. They trample on virgin bashfulness with a sort of bravado, and glorying in their shame, become more audaciously lewd than men, however depraved, to whom this sexual quality has not been gratuitously granted, ever appear to be. But these poor ignorant	The shameless behavior of the prostitutes who crowd the streets of London, stirring pity and disgust by turns, may serve to illustrate this remark. They trample on maidenly bashfulness with a kind of bravado and, glorying in their shame, become more brazenly lewd than any man ever appears to be, however depraved—men, who have not had this supposedly sexual quality gratuit-

1 Milton had predicted, in *The Reason of Church Government* (1642), that he might leave something "so written to aftertimes, as they should not willingly let it die." George Washington accepted command of the Continental Army in 1775.

3

[1] 'Such is the country-maiden's fright, When first a red-coat is in sight; Behind the door she hides her face; Next time at distance eyes the lace: She now can all his terrors stand, Nor from his squeeze withdraws her hand. She plays familiar in his arms, And ev'ry soldier hath his charms; From tent to tent she spreads her flame; *Gay.* For custom conquers fear and shame.'	[1] "Such is the country maiden's fright, When first a redcoat is in sight; Behind the door she hides her face; Next time at distance eyes the lace: She now can all his terrors stand, Nor from his squeeze withdraws her hand. She plays familiar in his arms, And every soldier has his charms; From tent to tent she spreads her flame; *Gay.* For custom conquers fear and shame."[2]

2 John Gay (1685–1732), from his *Fables*.

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wretches never had any modesty to lose, when they consigned themselves to infamy; for modesty is a virtue not a quality.

No, they were only bashful, shame-faced innocents; and losing their innocence, their shame-facedness was rudely brushed off; a virtue would have left some vestiges in the mind, had it been sacrificed to passion, to make us respect the grand ruin.

7.7 Purity of mind, or that genuine delicacy, which is the only virtuous support of chastity, is near akin to that refinement of humanity, which never resides in any but cultivated minds. It is something nobler than innocence; it is the delicacy of reflection, and not the coyness of ignorance!

7.8 The reserve of reason, which, like habitual cleanliness, is seldom seen in any great degree, unless the soul is active, may easily be distinguished from rustic shyness or wanton skittishness; and, so far from being incompatible with knowledge, it is its fairest fruit. What a gross idea of modesty had the writer of the following remark! 'The lady who asked the question whether women may be instructed in the modern system of botany, consistently with female delicacy?—was accused of ridiculous prudery: nevertheless, if she had proposed the question to me, I should certainly have answered—They cannot.' Thus is the fair book of knowledge to be shut with an everlasting seal!

On reading similar passages I have reverentially lifted up my eyes and heart to Him who liveth for ever and ever, and said, O my Father, hast Thou by the very constitution of her nature forbid Thy child to seek Thee in the fair forms of truth? And, can her soul be sullied by the knowledge that awfully calls her to Thee?

7.9 I have then philosophically pursued these reflections till I inferred that those women who have most improved their reason must have the most modesty—though a dignified sedateness of deportment may have succeeded the playful, bewitching bashfulness of youth[2].

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ously assigned to them. But these poor ignorant wretches never had any modesty to lose when they gave themselves over to infamy; for modesty is a virtue, not a quality.

No, they were only bashful, shamefaced innocents; and when they lost their innocence, their shamefacedness was roughly rubbed off. A virtue, had it been sacrificed to passion, would have left some traces in the mind, making us respect the grand ruin.

Purity of mind—that genuine delicacy which is the only virtuous support of chastity—is closely related to that refinement of humanity which is never found except in cultivated minds. It is something nobler than innocence: it is the delicacy of reflection, not the coyness of ignorance!

The reserve that comes from reason—which, like habitual cleanliness, is seldom seen to any great degree unless the soul is active—is easily distinguished from rustic shyness or wanton skittishness. Far from being incompatible with knowledge, it is knowledge's finest fruit. What a crude idea of modesty the writer of the following remark had! "The lady who asked whether women may be instructed in the modern system of botany consistently with female delicacy was accused of ridiculous prudery; nevertheless, if she had put the question to me, I would certainly have answered—They cannot." So the beautiful book of knowledge is to be shut with an everlasting seal![4]

Reading passages like this, I have reverently lifted up my eyes and heart to Him who lives for ever and ever and said: O my Father, have You, by the very constitution of her nature, forbidden Your child to seek You in the beautiful forms of truth? And can her soul be sullied by the knowledge that so solemnly calls her to You?

I then pursued these reflections philosophically until I concluded that the women who have most improved their reason must have the most modesty—though a dignified composure of bearing may have replaced the playful, bewitching bashfulness of youth[2].

4 The "modern system of botany" is Linnaeus's, which classified plants by their sexual organs.

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7.10 And thus have I argued. To render chastity the virtue from which unsophisticated modesty will naturally flow, the attention should be called away from employments which only exercise the sensibility; and the heart made to beat time to humanity, rather than to throb with love. The woman who has dedicated a considerable portion of her time to pursuits purely intellectual, and whose affections have been exercised by humane plans of usefulness, must have more purity of mind, as a natural consequence, than the ignorant beings whose time and thoughts have been occupied by gay pleasures or schemes to conquer hearts[3]. The regulation of the behaviour is not modesty, though those who study rules of decorum are, in general, termed modest women.

Make the heart clean, let it expand and feel for all that is human, instead of being narrowed by selfish passions; and let the mind frequently contemplate subjects that exercise the understanding, without heating the imagination, and artless modesty will give the finishing touches to the picture.

And this is how I have argued. To make chastity the virtue from which unaffected modesty will naturally flow, attention should be drawn away from occupations that exercise only the sensibility, and the heart should be made to beat in time with humanity rather than to throb with love. The woman who has devoted a good part of her time to purely intellectual pursuits, and whose affections have been exercised by humane and useful projects, must, as a natural consequence, have more purity of mind than the ignorant beings whose time and thoughts have been taken up with frivolous pleasures or schemes for conquering hearts[3]. Regulating one's behavior is not modesty, though those who study the rules of decorum are generally called modest women.

Make the heart clean; let it expand and feel for all that is human instead of being narrowed by selfish passions; and let the mind often contemplate subjects that exercise the understanding without heating the imagination—and artless modesty will put the finishing touches on the picture.

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7.11 She who can discern the dawn of immortality, in the streaks that shoot athwart the misty night of ignorance, promising a clearer day, will respect, as a sacred temple, the body that enshrines such an improvable soul. True love, likewise, spreads this kind of mysterious sanctity round the beloved object, making the lover most modest when in her presence[4]. So reserved is affection

She who can discern the dawn of immortality in the streaks of light that shoot across the misty night of ignorance, promising a clearer day, will respect as a sacred temple the body that houses such an improvable soul. True love, too, spreads this kind of mysterious sanctity around the beloved, making the lover most modest in her presence[4]. Affection is so reserved that, in giving or

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[2] Modesty, is the graceful calm virtue of maturity; bashfulness, the charm of vivacious youth.

[2] Modesty is the graceful, calm virtue of maturity; bashfulness, the charm of lively youth.

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[3] I have conversed, as man with man, with medical men, on anatomical subjects; and compared the proportions of the human body with artists—yet such modesty did I meet with, that I was never reminded by word or look of my sex, of the absurd rules which make modesty a pharisaical cloak of weakness.

[3] I have talked, as man to man, with medical men on anatomical subjects, and compared the proportions of the human body with artists—yet I met with such modesty that never once, by word or look, was I reminded of my sex, or of the absurd rules that make modesty a sanctimonious cloak for weakness.

7

And I am persuaded that in the pursuit of knowledge women would never be insulted by sensible men, and rarely by men of any description, if they did not by mock modesty remind them that they were women: actuated by the same spirit as the Portuguese ladies, who would think their charms insulted, if, when left alone with a man, he did not, at least, attempt to be very familiar with their persons. Men are not always men in the company of women, nor would women always remember that they are women, if they were allowed to acquire more understanding.

And I am convinced that in the pursuit of knowledge women would never be insulted by sensible men, and rarely by men of any kind, if they did not remind them by false modesty that they were women—acting in the same spirit as the Portuguese ladies who would think their charms insulted if a man, left alone with them, did not at least try to take liberties with their persons. Men are not always men in the company of women; nor would women always remember that they are women, if they were allowed to acquire more understanding.

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that, receiving or returning personal endearments, it wishes, not only to shun the human eye, as a kind of profanation; but to diffuse an encircling cloudy obscurity to shut out even the saucy sparkling sunbeams.

Yet, that affection does not deserve the epithet of chaste, which does not receive a sublime gloom of tender melancholy, that allows the mind for a moment to stand still and enjoy the present satisfaction, when a consciousness of the Divine presence is felt—for this must ever be the food of joy!

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7.12 As I have always been fond of tracing to its source in nature any prevailing custom, I have frequently thought that it was a sentiment of affection for whatever had touched the person of an absent or lost friend, which gave birth to that respect for relicks, so much abused by selfish priests. Devotion, or love, may be allowed to hallow the garments as well as the person; for the lover must want fancy who has not a sort of sacred respect for the glove or slipper of his mistress. He could not confound them with vulgar things of the same kind.

This fine sentiment, perhaps, would not bear to be analyzed by the experimental philosopher—but of such stuff is human rapture made up!—A shadowy phantom glides before us, obscuring every other object; yet when the soft cloud is grasped, the form melts into common air, leaving a solitary void, or sweet perfume, stolen from the violet, that memory long holds dear. But I have tripped unawares on fairy ground, feeling the balmy gale of spring stealing on me, though November frowns.

7.13 As a sex, women are more chaste than men, and as modesty is the effect of chastity, they may deserve to have this virtue ascribed to them in rather an appropriated sense; yet, I must be allowed to add an hesitating if:—for I doubt whether chastity will produce modesty, though it may propriety of conduct, when it is merely a respect for the opinion of the world[5], and when coquetry and the lovelorn tales of novelists

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returning physical endearments, it wishes not only to avoid the human eye as a kind of profanation, but to spread an enveloping, cloudy obscurity that shuts out even the saucy, sparkling sunbeams.

Yet an affection does not deserve to be called chaste unless it takes on a sublime gloom of tender melancholy—a gloom that lets the mind stand still for a moment and enjoy the present satisfaction, when a consciousness of the Divine presence is felt. For this must always be the food of joy!

Since I have always liked to trace any prevailing custom back to its source in nature, I have often thought that it was a feeling of affection for whatever had touched the body of an absent or lost friend that gave birth to the veneration of relics, so much abused by selfish priests. Devotion or love may be allowed to hallow the clothes as well as the person; for a lover must lack imagination who does not have a sort of sacred respect for the glove or slipper of his beloved. He could not confuse them with ordinary things of the same kind.

This fine sentiment would perhaps not survive analysis by the experimental scientist—but such is the stuff human rapture is made of! A shadowy phantom glides before us, blotting out every other object; yet when we grasp the soft cloud, the form melts into ordinary air, leaving a lonely void, or a sweet perfume stolen from the violet, which memory holds dear for a long time. But I have stumbled unawares onto fairy ground, feeling the balmy breeze of spring steal over me, though November frowns.

As a sex, women are more chaste than men; and since modesty is the effect of chastity, they may deserve to have this virtue attributed to them in a rather special sense. Yet I must be allowed to add a hesitant "if": for I doubt whether chastity will produce modesty (though it may produce proper conduct) when it is merely a respect for the world's opinion[5], and when coquetry and the lovelorn tales of novelists occupy the thoughts. Indeed, ex-

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[4] Male or female; for the world contains many modest men.

[4] Male or female; for the world contains many modest men.

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employ the thoughts. Nay, from experience, and reason, I should be led to expect to meet with more modesty amongst men than women, simply because men exercise their understandings more than women.

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7.14 But, with respect to propriety of behaviour, excepting one class of females, women have evidently the advantage. What can be more disgusting than that impudent dross of gallantry, thought so manly, which makes many men stare insultingly at every female they meet? Is this respect for the sex? This loose behaviour shews such habitual depravity, such weakness of mind, that it is vain to expect much public or private virtue, till both men and women grow more modest—till men, curbing a sensual fondness for the sex, or an affectation of manly assurance, more properly speaking, impudence, treat each other with respect—unless appetite or passion gives the tone, peculiar to it, to their behaviour.

I mean even personal respect—the modest respect of humanity, and fellow-feeling—not the libidinous mockery of gallantry, nor the insolent condescension of protectorship.

7.15 To carry the observation still further, modesty must heartily disclaim, and refuse to dwell with that debauchery of mind, which leads a man coolly to bring forward, without a blush, indecent allusions, or obscene witticisms, in the presence of a fellow creature; women are now out of the question, for then it is brutality. Respect for man, as man, is the foundation of every noble sentiment. How much more modest is the libertine who obeys the call of appetite or fancy, than the lewd joker who sets the table in a roar!

7.16 This is one of the many instances in which the sexual distinction respecting modesty has proved fatal to virtue and happiness. It is, however, carried still further, and woman, weak woman! made by her education the slave of sensibility, is required, on the most trying occasions, to resist that sensibility. ‘Can any thing,’ says Knox, ‘be

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perience and reason would lead me to expect more modesty among men than among women, simply because men exercise their understanding more than women do.

But in propriety of behavior, apart from one class of women, women clearly have the advantage. What can be more disgusting than that impudent, debased gallantry, thought so manly, which makes many men stare insultingly at every woman they meet? Is this respect for women? Such loose behavior shows such habitual depravity, such weakness of mind, that it is useless to expect much public or private virtue until both men and women become more modest—until men, curbing a sensual fondness for women, or an affectation of manly self-assurance (more accurately, impudence), treat one another with respect, unless appetite or passion gives its own peculiar tone to their behavior.

I mean even personal respect—the modest respect of humanity and fellow feeling—not the lecherous mockery of gallantry, nor the insolent condescension of the protector.

To take the observation further still: modesty must wholeheartedly disown, and refuse to live alongside, that debauchery of mind which leads a man coolly to come out, without a blush, with indecent allusions or obscene witticisms in the presence of a fellow creature. Women are now out of the question, for in their presence it is brutality. Respect for man as man is the foundation of every noble sentiment. How much more modest is the libertine who obeys the call of appetite or fancy than the lewd joker who has the whole table roaring!

This is one of the many instances in which the distinction made between the sexes regarding modesty has proved fatal to virtue and happiness. It is carried further still, however: woman, weak woman! made by her education the slave of sensibility, is required on the most trying occasions to res-

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[5] The immodest behavior of many married women, who are nevertheless faithful to their husbands' beds, will illustrate this remark.

[5] The immodest behavior of many married women who are nevertheless faithful to their husbands’ beds will illustrate this remark.

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more absurd than keeping women in a state of ignorance, and yet so vehemently to insist on their resisting temptation?'—Thus when virtue or honour make it proper to check a passion, the burden is thrown on the weaker shoulders, contrary to reason and true modesty, which, at least, should render the self-denial mutual, to say nothing of the generosity of bravery, supposed to be a manly virtue.

7.17 In the same strain runs Rousseau's and Dr. Gregory's advice respecting modesty, strangely miscalled! for they both desire a wife to leave it in doubt whether sensibility or weakness led her to her husband's arms.—The woman is immodest who can let the shadow of such a doubt remain on her husband's mind a moment.

7.18 But to state the subject in a different light.—The want of modesty, which I principally deplore as subversive of morality, arises from the state of warfare so strenuously supported by voluptuous men as the very essence of modesty, though, in fact, its bane; because it is a refinement on sensual desire, that men fall into who have not sufficient virtue to relish the innocent pleasures of love. A man of delicacy carries his notions of modesty still further, for neither weakness nor sensibility will gratify him—he looks for affection.

7.19 Again; men boast of their triumphs over women, what do they boast of? Truly the creature of sensibility was surprised by her sensibility into folly—into vice[6]; and the dreadful reckoning falls heavily on her own weak head, when reason wakes. For where art thou to find comfort, forlorn and disconsolate one? He who ought to have directed thy reason, and supported thy weakness, has betrayed thee!

In a dream of passion thou consentedst to wander through flowery lawns, and heedlessly stepping over the precipice to which thy guide, instead of guarding, lured thee, thou startest from thy dream only to face a sneering, frowning world, and to find thyself alone in a waste, for he that triumphed in thy weakness is now pursuing new conquests; but for thee—there is no redemption on this side the grave! And what resource hast thou in an enervated mind to raise a sinking heart?

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ist that sensibility. "Can anything," says Knox, "be more absurd than keeping women in a state of ignorance, and yet insisting so vehemently that they resist temptation?" So when virtue or honor makes it right to check a passion, the burden is thrown onto the weaker shoulders—contrary to reason and true modesty, which should at least make the self-denial mutual, to say nothing of the generosity of courage, supposed to be a manly virtue.

Rousseau's and Dr. Gregory's advice about modesty—strangely misnamed!—runs in the same vein; for they both want a wife to leave it in doubt whether sensibility or weakness led her into her husband's arms. The woman who can let the shadow of such a doubt remain in her husband's mind for a moment is immodest.

But to put the subject in a different light. The lack of modesty that I chiefly deplore as subversive of morality arises from the state of warfare that sensual men so strenuously uphold as the very essence of modesty, though it is in fact its bane. For it is a refinement of sensual desire into which men fall who lack enough virtue to relish the innocent pleasures of love. A man of delicacy carries his notions of modesty further still, for neither weakness nor sensibility will satisfy him—he looks for affection.

Again, men boast of their triumphs over women. What do they boast of? Truly, that the creature of sensibility was surprised by her sensibility into folly—into vice[6]; and the dreadful reckoning falls heavily on her own weak head when reason wakes. For where are you to find comfort, forlorn and disconsolate one? He who ought to have guided your reason and supported your weakness has betrayed you!

In a dream of passion you agreed to wander across flowery lawns, and, heedlessly stepping over the precipice to which your guide lured you instead of guarding you, you start from your dream only to face a sneering, frowning world and to find yourself alone in a wasteland; for he who triumphed in your weakness is now pursuing new conquests. But for you—there is no redemption this side of the grave! And what resource do you have, in an enfeebled mind, to raise a sinking heart?

7.20 But, if the sexes are really to live in a state of warfare, if nature has pointed it out, let men act nobly, or let pride whisper to them, that the victory is mean when they merely vanquish sensibility. The real conquest is that over affection not taken by surprise—when, like Heloisa, a woman gives up all the world, deliberately, for love. I do not now consider the wisdom or virtue of such a sacrifice, I only contend that it was a sacrifice to affection, and not merely to sensibility, though she had her share.—And I must be allowed to call her a modest woman, before I dismiss this part of the subject, by saying, that till men are more chaste women will be immodest.

Where, indeed, could modest women find husbands from whom they would not continually turn with disgust? Modesty must be equally cultivated by both sexes, or it will ever remain a sickly hot-house plant, whilst the affectation of it, the fig leaf borrowed by wantonness, may give a zest to voluptuous enjoyments.

7.21 Men will probably still insist that woman ought to have more modesty than man; but it is not dispassionate reasoners who will most earnestly oppose my opinion. No, they are the men of fancy, the favourites of the sex, who outwardly respect and inwardly despise the weak creatures whom they thus sport with. They cannot submit to resign the highest sensual gratification, nor even to relish the epicurism of virtue—self-denial.

7.22 To take another view of the subject, confining my remarks to women.

7.23 The ridiculous falsities[7] which are told to children, from mistaken notions of modesty, tend very early to inflame their imaginations and set their little minds to work, respecting subjects, which nature never intended they should think of till the body arrived at some degree of maturity; then the passions naturally begin to take place of the senses, as instruments to unfold the understanding, and form the moral character.

But if the sexes really are to live in a state of warfare—if nature has marked it out—let men act nobly, or let pride whisper to them that the victory is contemptible when they merely overpower sensibility. The real conquest is over an affection that has not been taken by surprise—when, like Héloïse, a woman gives up the whole world, deliberately, for love. I am not now considering the wisdom or virtue of such a sacrifice; I only maintain that it was a sacrifice to affection, and not merely to sensibility, though sensibility had its share. And I must be allowed to call her a modest woman, before I close this part of the subject by saying that until men are more chaste, women will be immodest.

Where, indeed, could modest women find husbands from whom they would not continually turn away in disgust? Modesty must be cultivated equally by both sexes, or it will always remain a sickly hothouse plant, while the affectation of it—the fig leaf borrowed by wantonness—may add spice to sensual enjoyments.

Men will probably still insist that woman ought to have more modesty than man; but it is not dispassionate reasoners who will most earnestly oppose my opinion. No, it will be the men of fancy, the favorites of women, who outwardly respect and inwardly despise the weak creatures they toy with in this way. They cannot bring themselves to give up the highest sensual gratification, or even to relish the refined epicureanism of virtue—self-denial.

To take another view of the subject, confining my remarks to women:

The ridiculous falsehoods[7] told to children out of mistaken notions of modesty tend very early to inflame their imaginations and set their little minds working on subjects that nature never intended them to think about until the body had reached some degree of maturity. At that point the passions naturally begin to take the place of the senses as the instruments that unfold the understanding and form the moral character.

[6] The poor moth fluttering round a candle, burns its wings.

[6] The poor moth fluttering around a candle burns its wings.

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7.24	In nurseries, and boarding-schools, I fear, girls are first spoiled; particularly in the latter. A number of girls sleep in the same room, and wash together. And, though I should be sorry to contaminate an innocent creature's mind by instilling false delicacy, or those indecent prudish notions, which early cautions respecting the other sex naturally engender, I should be very anxious to prevent their acquiring indelicate, or immodest habits; and as many girls have learned very indelicate tricks, from ignorant servants, the mixing them thus indiscriminately together, is very improper.	Girls are first spoiled, I fear, in nurseries and boarding schools—especially the latter. A number of girls sleep in the same room and wash together. And though I would be sorry to contaminate an innocent creature's mind by instilling false delicacy, or the indecent prudish notions that early warnings about the other sex naturally breed, I would be very anxious to keep them from acquiring indelicate or immodest habits; and since many girls have learned very indelicate tricks from ignorant servants, mixing them together indiscriminately in this way is highly improper.
7.25	To say the truth women are, in general, too familiar with each other, which leads to that gross degree of familiarity that so frequently renders the marriage state unhappy. Why in the name of decency are sisters, female intimates, or ladies and their waiting-women, to be so grossly familiar as to forget the respect which one human creature owes to another? That squeamish delicacy which shrinks from the most disgusting offices when affection[8] or humanity lead us to watch at a sick pillow, is despicable. But, why women in health should be more familiar with each other than men are, when they boast of their superiour delicacy, is a solecism in manners which I could never solve.	To tell the truth, women are generally too familiar with one another, and this leads to the gross degree of familiarity that so often makes married life unhappy. Why, in the name of decency, should sisters, female friends, or ladies and their maids be so grossly familiar as to forget the respect that one human being owes another? That squeamish delicacy which shrinks from the most disgusting tasks when affection[8] or humanity leads us to watch at a sickbed is despicable. But why women in good health should be more familiar with one another than men are, when they boast of their superior delicacy, is a contradiction in manners I have never been able to resolve.
13		
7.26	In order to preserve health and beauty, I should earnestly recommend frequent ablutions, to	To preserve health and beauty, I would earnestly recommend frequent ablutions—a dignified word,
11		
	[7] Children very early see cats with their kittens, birds with their young ones, &c. Why then are they not to be told that their mothers carry and nourish them in the same way? As there would then be no appearance of mystery they would never think of the subject more. Truth may always be told to children, if it be told gravely; but it is the immodesty of affected modesty, that does all the mischief; and this smoke heats the imagination by vainly endeavouring to obscure certain objects.	[7] Children see cats with their kittens, birds with their young, and so on, very early. Why, then, should they not be told that their mothers carry and nourish them in the same way? Since there would then be no appearance of mystery, they would never think about the subject again. The truth may always be told to children if it is told seriously; it is the immodesty of affected modesty that does all the harm, and this smoke heats the imagination by vainly trying to obscure certain things.
12		
	If, indeed, children could be kept entirely from improper company, we should never allude to any such subjects; but as this is impossible, it is best to tell them the truth, especially as such information, not interesting them, will make no impression on their imagination.	If, indeed, children could be kept entirely away from improper company, we should never allude to any such subjects; but since that is impossible, it is best to tell them the truth—especially as such information, not interesting them, will make no impression on their imaginations.
13		
	[8] Affection would rather make one choose to perform these offices, to spare the delicacy of a friend, by still keeping a veil over them, for the personal helplessness, produced by sickness, is of an humbling nature.	[8] Affection would rather make one choose to perform these tasks oneself, to spare a friend's delicacy by still keeping a veil over them; for the physical helplessness that sickness produces is humbling.

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	dignify my advice that it may not offend the fastidious ear; and, by example, girls ought to be taught to wash and dress alone, without, any distinction of rank; and if custom should make them require some little assistance, let them not require it till that part of the business is over which ought never to be done before a fellow-creature; because it is an insult to the majesty of human nature. Not on the score of modesty, but decency; for the care which some modest women take, making at the same time a display of that care, not to let their legs be seen, is as childish as immodest[9].	so that my advice may not offend fastidious ears; and girls ought to be taught by example to wash and dress alone, whatever their rank. If custom makes them need a little help, let them not ask for it until that part of the business is over which ought never to be done in front of a fellow creature, because it is an insult to the majesty of human nature. I say this not on grounds of modesty but of decency; for the care some modest women take not to let their legs be seen, while making a show of that care, is as childish as it is immodest[9].
14		
7.27	I could proceed still further, till I animadverted on some still more indelicate customs, which men never fall into. Secrets are told—where silence ought to reign; and that regard to cleanliness, which some religious sects have, perhaps, carried too far, especially the Essenes, amongst the Jews, by making that an insult to God which is only an insult to humanity, is violated in a brutal manner. How can *delicate* women obtrude on notice that part of the animal economy, which is so very disgusting? And is it not very rational to conclude, that the women who have not been taught to respect the human nature of their own sex, in these particulars, will not long respect the mere difference of sex in their husbands?	I could go further still and comment on some even more indelicate customs, which men never fall into. Secrets are told where silence ought to reign; and that regard for cleanliness which some religious sects have perhaps carried too far—especially the Essenes among the Jews, who made an insult to God of what is only an insult to humanity—is violated in a brutal way. How can *delicate* women force on others' notice that part of our animal functioning which is so very disgusting? And is it not very reasonable to conclude that women who have not been taught to respect the human nature of their own sex in these particulars will not long respect the mere difference of sex in their husbands?[15]
	After their maidenish bashfulness is once lost, I, in fact, have generally observed, that women fall into old habits; and treat their husbands as they did their sisters or female acquaintance.	Once their girlish bashfulness is lost, I have in fact generally observed, women fall back into old habits and treat their husbands as they treated their sisters or female acquaintances.
7.28	Besides, women from necessity, because their minds are not cultivated, have recourse very often to what I familiarly term bodily wit; and their intimacies are of the same kind. In short, with respect to both mind and body, they are too intimate. That decent personal reserve which is the foundation of dignity of character, must be kept up between women, or their minds will never gain strength or modesty.	Besides, because their minds are not cultivated, women very often resort out of necessity to what I familiarly call bodily wit; and their intimacies are of the same kind. In short, in both mind and body, they are too intimate. That decent personal reserve which is the foundation of dignity of character must be kept up between women, or their minds will never gain strength or modesty.

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[9] I remember to have met with a sentence, in a book of education, that made me smile. 'It would be needless to caution you against putting your hand, by chance, under your neck-handkerchief; for a modest woman never did so!'

[9] I remember coming across a sentence in a book on education that made me smile: "It would be needless to caution you against putting your hand, by chance, under your neckerchief; for a modest woman never did so!"

15 The Essenes were an ascetic Jewish sect of the Second Temple period, known for strict rules of ritual purity and bodily cleanliness.

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7.29 On this account also, I object to many females being shut up together in nurseries, schools, or convents. I cannot recollect without indignation, the jokes and hoiden tricks, which knots of young women indulge themselves in, when in my youth accident threw me, an awkward rustic, in their way. They were almost on a par with the double meanings, which shake the convivial table when the glass has circulated freely. But, it is vain to attempt to keep the heart pure, unless the head is furnished with ideas, and set to work to compare them, in order to acquire judgment, by generalizing simple ones; and modesty, by making the understanding damp the sensibility.

For this reason too I object to many girls being shut up together in nurseries, schools, or convents. I cannot recall without indignation the jokes and hoydenish pranks that knots of young women indulge in, as I saw when, in my youth, chance threw me, an awkward country girl, in their way. They were almost on a level with the double meanings that shake the dinner table when the wine has flowed freely. But it is useless to try to keep the heart pure unless the head is stocked with ideas and set to work comparing them—so as to acquire judgment, by generalizing simple ones, and modesty, by making the understanding damp down the sensibility.

7.30 It may be thought that I lay too great a stress on personal reserve; but it is ever the handmaid of modesty. So that were I to name the graces that ought to adorn beauty, I should instantly exclaim, cleanliness, neatness, and personal reserve. It is obvious, I suppose, that the reserve I mean, has nothing sexual in it, and that I think it *equally* necessary in both sexes.

So necessary, indeed, is that reserve and cleanliness which indolent women too often neglect, that I will venture to affirm that when two or three women live in the same house, the one will be most respected by the male part of the family, who reside with them, leaving love entirely out of the question, who pays this kind of habitual respect to her person.

It may be thought that I put too much stress on personal reserve; but it is always the handmaid of modesty. So if I were to name the graces that ought to adorn beauty, I would immediately exclaim: cleanliness, neatness, and personal reserve. It is obvious, I suppose, that the reserve I mean has nothing sexual about it, and that I think it *equally* necessary in both sexes.

So necessary, indeed, are the reserve and cleanliness that lazy women too often neglect, that I will venture to say that when two or three women live in the same house, the one who pays this kind of habitual respect to her person will be the most respected by the men of the family who live with them—leaving love entirely out of the question.

7.31 When domestic friends meet in a morning, there will naturally prevail an affectionate seriousness, especially, if each look forward to the discharge of daily duties; and, it may be reckoned fanciful, but this sentiment has frequently risen spontaneously in my mind, I have been pleased after breathing the sweet bracing morning air, to see the same kind of freshness in the countenances I particularly loved; I was glad to see them braced, as it were, for the day, and ready to run their course with the sun. The greetings of affection in the morning are by these means more respectful than the familiar tenderness which frequently prolongs the evening talk.

Nay, I have often felt hurt, not to say disgusted, when a friend has appeared, whom I parted with full dressed the evening before, with her clothes

When members of a household meet in the morning, an affectionate seriousness will naturally prevail, especially if each is looking forward to carrying out the day's duties. It may be thought fanciful, but this feeling has often arisen spontaneously in me: after breathing the sweet, bracing morning air, I have been pleased to see the same kind of freshness in the faces I particularly loved. I was glad to see them braced, as it were, for the day, and ready to run their course with the sun. In this way the greetings of affection in the morning are more respectful than the familiar tenderness that often draws out the evening's talk.

Indeed, I have often felt hurt, not to say disgusted, when a friend whom I had left fully dressed the evening before has appeared with her clothes

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huddled on, because she chose to indulge herself in bed till the last moment.	thrown on anyhow, because she chose to lie in bed until the last moment.
7.32 Domestic affection can only be kept alive by these neglected attentions; yet if men and women took half as much pains to dress habitually neat, as they do to ornament, or rather to figure, their persons, much would be done towards the attainment of purity of mind. But women only dress to gratify men of gallantry; for the lover is always best pleased with the simple garb that fits close to the shape. There is an impertinence in ornaments that rebuffs affection; because love always clings round the idea of home.	Domestic affection can be kept alive only by these neglected attentions; yet if men and women took half as much trouble to dress neatly as a habit as they do to adorn—or rather to show off—their persons, much would be done toward attaining purity of mind. But women dress only to please men of gallantry; for the lover is always best pleased by the simple dress that fits close to the figure. There is an impertinence in ornaments that rebuffs affection, because love always clings to the idea of home.
7.33 As a sex, women are habitually indolent; and every thing tends to make them so. I do not forget the spurts of activity which sensibility produces; but as these flights of feelings only increase the evil, they are not to be confounded with the slow, orderly walk of reason. So great in reality is their mental and bodily indolence, that till their body be strengthened and their understanding enlarged by active exertions, there is little reason to expect that modesty will take place of bashfulness. They may find it prudent to assume its semblance; but the fair veil will only be worn on gala days.	As a sex, women are habitually indolent, and everything tends to make them so. I do not forget the bursts of activity that sensibility produces; but since these flights of feeling only increase the evil, they are not to be confused with the slow, orderly walk of reason. So great, in reality, is their mental and bodily indolence that, until their bodies are strengthened and their understanding enlarged by active exertion, there is little reason to expect modesty to take the place of bashfulness. They may find it prudent to put on its appearance; but that lovely veil will be worn only on gala days.
7.34 Perhaps there is not a virtue that mixes so kindly with every other as modesty.—It is the pale moon-beam that renders more interesting every virtue it softens, giving mild grandeur to the contracted horizon. Nothing can be more beautiful than the poetical fiction, which makes Diana with her silver crescent, the goddess of chastity. I have sometimes thought, that wandering with sedate step in some lonely recess, a modest dame of antiquity must have felt a glow of conscious dignity when, after contemplating the soft shadowy landscape, she has invited with placid fervour the mild reflection of her sisters beams to turn to her chaste bosom.	Perhaps there is no virtue that blends so kindly with every other as modesty. It is the pale moon-beam that makes every virtue it softens more interesting, lending a mild grandeur to the narrowed horizon. Nothing could be more beautiful than the poetic fiction that makes Diana, with her silver crescent, the goddess of chastity. I have sometimes thought that a modest lady of antiquity, wandering with sedate step in some lonely retreat, must have felt a glow of conscious dignity when, after contemplating the soft, shadowy landscape, she invited with calm fervor the mild reflection of her sister's beams to turn toward her chaste breast.
7.35 A Christian has still nobler motives to incite her to preserve her chastity and acquire modesty, for her body has been called the Temple of the living God; of that God who requires more than modesty of mien. His eye searcheth the heart; and let her remember, that if she hopeth to find favour in the sight of purity itself, her chastity must be founded on modesty and not on worldly prudence; or	A Christian woman has nobler motives still to spur her to preserve her chastity and acquire modesty, for her body has been called the Temple of the living God—of that God who requires more than a modest demeanor. His eye searches the heart; and let her remember that, if she hopes to find favor in the sight of purity itself, her chastity must be

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verily a good reputation will be her only reward; for that awful intercourse, that sacred communication, which virtue establishes between man and his Maker, must give rise to the wish of being pure as he is pure!

7.36 After the foregoing remarks, it is almost superfluous to add, that I consider all those feminine airs of maturity, which succeed bashfulness, to which truth is sacrificed, to secure the heart of a husband, or rather to force him to be still a lover when nature would, had she not been interrupted in her operations, have made love give place to friendship, as immodest. The tenderness which a man will feel for the mother of his children is an excellent substitute for the ardour of unsatisfied passion; but to prolong that ardour it is indelicate, not to say immodest, for women to feign an unnatural coldness of constitution.

Women as well as men ought to have the common appetites and passions of their nature, they are only brutal when unchecked by reason: but the obligation to check them is the duty of mankind, not a sexual duty. Nature, in these respects, may safely be left to herself; let women only acquire knowledge and humanity, and love will teach them modesty[10]. There is no need of falsehoods, disgusting as futile, for studied rules of behaviour only impose on shallow observers; a man of sense soon sees through, and despises the affectation.

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7.37 The behaviour of young people, to each other, as men and women, is the last thing that should be thought of in education. In fact, behaviour in most circumstances is now so much thought of, that simplicity of character is rarely to be seen: yet, if men were only anxious to cultivate each virtue, and let it take root firmly in the mind, the grace resulting from it, its natural exteriour mark, would soon strip affectation of its flaunting

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founded on modesty and not on worldly prudence —or truly a good reputation will be her only reward. For that awe-inspiring intercourse, that sacred communion which virtue establishes between man and his Maker, must give rise to the wish to be pure as He is pure!

After the preceding remarks it is almost superfluous to add that I consider immodest all those feminine airs of maturity which replace bashfulness and to which truth is sacrificed in order to secure a husband's heart—or rather to force him to remain a lover when nature, had her operations not been interrupted, would have made love give way to friendship. The tenderness a man feels for the mother of his children is an excellent substitute for the ardor of unsatisfied passion; but it is indelicate, not to say immodest, for women to feign an unnatural coldness of constitution in order to prolong that ardor.

Women as well as men ought to have the common appetites and passions of their nature; these are brutal only when unchecked by reason. But the obligation to check them is the duty of humanity, not a duty of one sex. In these respects nature may safely be left to herself: let women only acquire knowledge and humanity, and love will teach them modesty[10]. There is no need for falsehoods, as disgusting as they are futile; for studied rules of behavior impose only on shallow observers—a man of sense soon sees through the affectation and despises it.

How young people behave toward one another, as men and women, is the last thing that should be thought about in education. In fact, behavior is now thought about so much in most circumstances that simplicity of character is rarely seen. Yet if people were only anxious to cultivate each virtue and let it take firm root in the mind, the grace that results from it—its natural outward sign —would soon strip affectation of its flaunting

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[10] The behaviour of many newly married women has often disgusted me. They seem anxious never to let their husbands forget the privilege of marriage; and to find no pleasure in his society unless he is acting the lover. Short, indeed, must be the reign of love, when the flame is thus constantly blown up, without its receiving any solid fuel!

[10] The behavior of many newly married women has often disgusted me. They seem anxious never to let their husbands forget the privilege of marriage, and to find no pleasure in a husband's company unless he is playing the lover. Short indeed must be the reign of love when the flame is constantly fanned in this way without receiving any solid fuel!

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plumes; because, fallacious as unstable, is the conduct that is not founded upon truth!

7.38 Would ye, O my sisters, really possess modesty, ye must remember that the possession of virtue, of any denomination, is incompatible with ignorance and vanity! ye must acquire that soberness of mind, which the exercise of duties, and the pursuit of knowledge, alone inspire, or ye will still remain in a doubtful dependent situation, and only be loved whilst ye are fair! The downcast eye, the rosy blush, the retiring grace, are all proper in their season; but modesty, being the child of reason, cannot long exist with the sensibility that is not tempered by reflection.

Besides, when love, even innocent love, is the whole employ of your lives, your hearts will be too soft to afford modesty that tranquil retreat, where she delights to dwell, in close union with humanity.

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plumes; for conduct not founded on truth is as deceptive as it is unstable!

If you, my sisters, would really possess modesty, you must remember that possessing virtue of any kind is incompatible with ignorance and vanity! You must acquire that sobriety of mind which only the performance of duties and the pursuit of knowledge can inspire, or you will still remain in a precarious, dependent position and be loved only while you are pretty! The downcast eye, the rosy blush, the retiring grace are all proper in their season; but modesty, being the child of reason, cannot long survive alongside a sensibility that is not tempered by reflection.

Besides, when love—even innocent love—is the whole occupation of your lives, your hearts will be too soft to give modesty that tranquil retreat where she delights to dwell, in close union with humanity.

Chapter VIII: Morality Undermined by Sexual Notions of the Importance of a Good Reputation

Teaching women to guard their reputation rather than their virtue breeds hypocrisy.

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8.1	It has long since occurred to me that advice respecting behaviour, and all the various modes of preserving a good reputation, which have been so strenuously inculcated on the female world, were specious poisons, that incrusting morality eat away the substance. And, that this measuring of shadows produced a false calculation, because their length depends so much on the height of the sun, and other adventitious circumstances.	It occurred to me long ago that the advice about behavior, and all the various ways of preserving a good reputation, so strenuously drummed into the female world, were plausible-looking poisons that coat morality with a crust and eat away its substance. And that this measuring of shadows produced a false calculation, because their length depends so much on the height of the sun and other incidental circumstances.
8.2	From whence arises the easy fallacious behaviour of a courtier? From his situation, undoubtedly: for standing in need of dependents, he is obliged to learn the art of denying without giving offence, and, of evasively feeding hope with the chameleon's food: thus does politeness sport with truth, and eating away the sincerity and humanity natural to man, produce the fine gentleman.	Where does the easy, deceptive manner of a courtier come from? From his situation, undoubtedly. Since he needs dependents, he is obliged to learn the art of refusing without giving offense, and of evasively feeding hope on the chameleon's food. Thus politeness toys with truth and, eating away the sincerity and humanity natural to man, produces the fine gentleman.[1]
8.3	Women in the same way acquire, from a supposed necessity, an equally artificial mode of behaviour. Yet truth is not with impunity to be sported with, for the practised dissembler, at last, become the dupe of his own arts, loses that sagacity, which has been justly termed common sense; namely, a quick perception of common truths: which are constantly received as such by the unsophisticated mind, though it might not have had sufficient energy to discover them itself, when obscured by local prejudices. The greater number of people take their opinions on trust to avoid the trouble of exercising their own minds, and these indolent beings naturally adhere to the letter, rather than the spirit of a law, divine or human.	In the same way women acquire, from a supposed necessity, an equally artificial manner. Yet truth cannot be toyed with unpunished; for the practiced dissembler, at last the dupe of his own arts, loses that sagacity which has rightly been called common sense—namely, a quick perception of common truths, which the unsophisticated mind always accepts as such, though it might not have had enough energy to discover them itself when they were obscured by local prejudices. Most people take their opinions on trust to avoid the trouble of using their own minds, and these indolent beings naturally stick to the letter rather than the spirit of a law, divine or human.
	'Women,' says some author, I cannot recollect who, 'mind not what only heaven sees.' Why, indeed should they? it is the eye of man that they	"Women," says some author—I cannot remember who—"do not mind what only heaven sees." Why indeed should they? It is the eye of man they have

1 Chameleons were popularly believed to live on air—hence "the chameleon's food" means empty promises.

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have been taught to dread—and if they can lull their Argus to sleep, they seldom think of heaven or themselves, because their reputation is safe; and it is reputation, not chastity and all its fair train, that they are employed to keep free from spot, not as a virtue, but to preserve their station in the world.

8.4 To prove the truth of this remark, I need only advert to the intrigues of married women, particularly in high life, and in countries where women are suitably married, according to their respective ranks, by their parents. If an innocent girl become a prey to love, she is degraded forever, though her mind was not polluted by the arts which married women, under the convenient cloke of marriage, practise; nor has she violated any duty—but the duty of respecting herself. The married woman, on the contrary, breaks a most sacred engagement, and becomes a cruel mother when she is a false and faithless wife.

If her husband has still an affection for her, the arts which she must practise to deceive him, will render her the most contemptible of human beings; and, at any rate, the contrivances necessary to preserve appearances, will keep her mind in that childish, or vicious, tumult, which destroys all its energy. Besides, in time, like those people who habitually take cordials to raise their spirits, she will want an intrigue to give life to her thoughts, having lost all relish for pleasures that are not highly seasoned by hope or fear.

8.5 Sometimes married women act still more audaciously; I will mention an instance.

8.6 A woman of quality, notorious for her gallantries, though as she still lived with her husband, nobody chose to place her in the class where she ought to have been placed, made a point of treating with the most insulting contempt a poor timid creature, abashed by a sense of her former weakness, whom a neighbouring gentleman had seduced and afterwards married. This woman had actually confounded virtue with reputation; and, I do believe, valued herself on the propriety of her behaviour before marriage, though when once settled, to the satisfaction of her family, she and her lord were equally faithless,—so that the

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been taught to dread; and if they can lull their Argus to sleep, they seldom think of heaven or of themselves, because their reputation is safe. And it is reputation, not chastity and all its lovely train, that they are busy keeping spotless—not as a virtue, but to preserve their position in the world.[2]

To prove the truth of this remark I need only point to the intrigues of married women, particularly in high society, and in countries where women are married off suitably, according to their rank, by their parents. If an innocent girl falls prey to love, she is degraded forever, though her mind was not polluted by the arts that married women practice under the convenient cloak of marriage; nor has she violated any duty—except the duty of respecting herself. The married woman, on the other hand, breaks a most sacred commitment, and becomes a cruel mother when she is a false and faithless wife.

If her husband still has some affection for her, the arts she must practice to deceive him will make her the most contemptible of human beings; and in any case, the contrivances needed to keep up appearances will keep her mind in that childish or vicious turmoil which destroys all its energy. Besides, in time, like people who habitually take cordials to lift their spirits, she will need an intrigue to give life to her thoughts, having lost all taste for pleasures that are not highly seasoned with hope or fear.

Sometimes married women behave more brazenly still; I will mention an example.

A woman of rank, notorious for her love affairs—though, since she still lived with her husband, nobody chose to put her in the class where she belonged—made a point of treating with the most insulting contempt a poor timid creature, ashamed of her past weakness, whom a gentleman in the neighborhood had seduced and afterward married. This woman had actually confused virtue with reputation; and I really believe she prided herself on the propriety of her behavior before marriage, though once she was settled to her family's satisfaction, she and her lord were equally

2 Argus: the hundred-eyed watchman of Greek myth, lulled to sleep and slain by Hermes; here, the watchful husband or world.

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	half alive heir to an immense estate, came from heaven knows where!	unfaithful—so that the half-alive heir to an immense estate came from heaven knows where!
8.7	To view this subject in another light.	To view this subject in another light:
8.8	I have known a number of women who, if they did not love their husbands, loved nobody else, give themselves entirely up to vanity and dissipation, neglecting every domestic duty; nay, even squandering away all the money which should have been saved for their helpless younger children, yet have plumed themselves on their unsullied reputation, as if the whole compass of their duty as wives and mothers was only to preserve it. Whilst other indolent women neglecting every personal duty, have thought that they deserved their husband's affection, because they acted, in this respect with propriety.	I have known a number of women who—if they did not love their husbands, loved nobody else—gave themselves up entirely to vanity and dissipation, neglecting every domestic duty, and even squandering all the money that should have been saved for their helpless younger children; yet they prided themselves on their unsullied reputation, as if the whole scope of their duty as wives and mothers were simply to preserve it. Other indolent women, meanwhile, neglecting every personal duty, have thought they deserved their husbands' affection because in this respect they acted with propriety.
8.9	Weak minds are always fond of resting in the ceremonials of duty, but morality offers much simpler motives; and it were to be wished that superficial moralists had said less respecting behaviour, and outward observances, for unless virtue, of any kind, is built on knowledge, it will only produce a kind of insipid decency. Respect for the opinion of the world, has, however, been termed the principal duty of woman in the most express words, for Rousseau declares, 'that reputation is no less indispensable than chastity.' 'A man,' adds he, 'secure in his own good conduct, depends only on himself, and may brave the public opinion; but a woman, in behaving well, performs but half her duty; as what is thought of her, is as important to her as what she really is. It follows hence, that the system of a woman's education should, in this respect, be directly contrary to that of ours. Opinion is the grave of virtue among the men; but its throne among women.' It is strictly logical to infer that the virtue that rests on opinion is merely worldly, and that it is the virtue of a being to whom reason has been denied. But, even with respect to the opinion of the world, I am convinced that this class of reasoners are mistaken.	Weak minds always like to rest in the ceremonies of duty, but morality offers much simpler motives; and one could wish that superficial moralists had said less about behavior and outward observances, for unless virtue of any kind is built on knowledge, it will produce only a sort of insipid decency. Respect for the opinion of the world has, however, been called woman's principal duty in the most explicit words; for Rousseau declares "that reputation is no less indispensable than chastity." "A man," he adds, "secure in his own good conduct, depends only on himself and may defy public opinion; but a woman, in behaving well, performs only half her duty, since what is thought of her is as important to her as what she really is. It follows that the system of a woman's education should in this respect be directly contrary to ours. Opinion is the grave of virtue among men, but its throne among women." It is strictly logical to infer that the virtue that rests on opinion is merely worldly, and that it is the virtue of a being to whom reason has been denied. But even as regards the opinion of the world, I am convinced that this class of reasoners is mistaken.
8.10	This regard for reputation, independent of its being one of the natural rewards of virtue, however, took its rise from a cause that I have already deplored as the grand source of female	This regard for reputation, however—apart from its being one of the natural rewards of virtue—arose from a cause I have already deplored as the great source of female depravity: the impossibility

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depravity, the impossibility of regaining respectability by a return to virtue, though men preserve theirs during the indulgence of vice. It was natural for women then to endeavour to preserve what once lost—was lost for ever, till this care swallowing up every other care, reputation for chastity, became the one thing needful to the sex.

But vain is the scrupulosity of ignorance, for neither religion nor virtue, when they reside in the heart, require such a puerile attention to mere ceremonies, because the behaviour must, upon the whole, be proper, when the motive is pure.

8.11 To support my opinion I can produce very respectable authority; and the authority of a cool reasoner ought to have weight to enforce consideration, though not to establish a sentiment. Speaking of the general laws of morality, Dr. Smith observes,—'That by some very extraordinary and unlucky circumstance, a good man may come to be suspected of a crime of which he was altogether incapable, and upon that account be most unjustly exposed for the remaining part of his life to the horror and aversion of mankind.

By an accident of this kind he may be said to lose his all, notwithstanding his integrity and justice, in the same manner as a cautious man, notwithstanding his utmost circumspection, may be ruined by an earthquake or an inundation. Accidents of the first kind, however, are perhaps still more rare, and still more contrary to the common course of things than those of the second; and it still remains true, that the practice of truth, justice, and humanity, is a certain and almost infallible method of acquiring what those virtues chiefly aim at, the confidence and love of those we live with.

A person may be easily misrepresented with regard to a particular action; but it is scarcely possible that he should be so with regard to the general tenor of his conduct. An innocent man may be believed to have done wrong: this, however, will rarely happen. On the contrary, the established opinion of the innocence of his manners will often lead us to absolve him where he has really been in the fault, notwithstanding very strong presumptions.'

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of regaining respectability by returning to virtue, though men keep theirs while indulging in vice. It was natural, then, for women to try to preserve what, once lost, was lost forever—until this care swallowed up every other, and a reputation for chastity became the one thing needful for women.

But the scrupulousness of ignorance is futile; for neither religion nor virtue, when they live in the heart, requires such childish attention to mere ceremonies, because behavior must on the whole be proper when the motive is pure.

To support my opinion I can call on very respectable authority; and the authority of a cool reasoner ought to carry weight in compelling consideration, though not in establishing a view. Speaking of the general laws of morality, Dr. Smith observes: “That by some very extraordinary and unlucky circumstance, a good man may come to be suspected of a crime of which he was altogether incapable, and on that account be most unjustly exposed for the rest of his life to the horror and aversion of mankind.[3]

By an accident of this kind he may be said to lose everything, despite his integrity and justice, in the same way that a cautious man, despite his utmost care, may be ruined by an earthquake or a flood. Accidents of the first kind, however, are perhaps even rarer, and even more contrary to the ordinary course of things, than those of the second; and it still remains true that the practice of truth, justice, and humanity is a certain and almost infallible way of acquiring what those virtues chiefly aim at: the confidence and love of those we live with.

A person may easily be misrepresented with regard to a particular action; but it is scarcely possible that he should be so with regard to the general tenor of his conduct. An innocent man may be believed to have done wrong; this, however, will rarely happen. On the contrary, the established opinion of the innocence of his manners will often lead us to acquit him where he has really been at fault, despite very strong presumptions.”

3 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*.

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8.12	I perfectly coincide in opinion with this writer, for I verily believe that few of either sex were ever despised for certain vices without deserving to be despised. I speak not of the calumny of the moment, which hangs over a character, like one of the dense fogs of November, over this metropolis, till it gradually subsides before the common light of day, I only contend that the daily conduct of the majority prevails to stamp their character with the impression of truth. Quietly does the clear light, shining day after day, refute the ignorant surmise, or malicious tale, which has thrown dirt on a pure character.	I entirely agree with this writer; for I truly believe that few people of either sex were ever despised for certain vices without deserving to be despised. I am not speaking of the passing slander that hangs over a character like one of the dense November fogs over this city, until it gradually lifts before the ordinary light of day; I only maintain that the daily conduct of most people prevails in stamping their character with the mark of truth. Quietly, the clear light shining day after day refutes the ignorant suspicion or malicious tale that has thrown dirt on a pure character.
	A false light distorted, for a short time, its shadow —reputation; but it seldom fails to become just when the cloud is dispersed that produced the mistake in vision.	A false light distorted its shadow—reputation—for a short time; but that shadow seldom fails to become true once the cloud that caused the error of vision has dispersed.
8.13	Many people, undoubtedly, in several respects obtain a better reputation than, strictly speaking, they deserve; for unremitting industry will mostly reach its goal in all races. They who only strive for this paltry prize, like the Pharisees, who prayed at the corners of streets, to be seen of men, verily obtain the reward they seek; for the heart of man cannot be read by man! Still the fair fame that is naturally reflected by good actions, when the man is only employed to direct his steps aright, regardless of the lookers-on, is, in general, not only more true, but more sure.	Many people no doubt obtain, in several respects, a better reputation than, strictly speaking, they deserve; for unremitting effort will usually reach its goal in any race. Those who strive only for this paltry prize, like the Pharisees who prayed on street corners to be seen by men, truly obtain the reward they seek; for the heart of man cannot be read by man! Still, the good name that is naturally reflected by good actions—when a person is concerned only to direct his steps rightly, regardless of the onlookers—is generally not only more true but more secure.[4]
8.14	There are, it is true, trials when the good man must appeal to God from the injustice of man; and amidst the whining candour or hissings of envy, erect a pavilion in his own mind to retire to till the rumour be overpast; nay, the darts of undeserved censure may pierce an innocent tender bosom through with many sorrows; but these are all exceptions to general rules. And it is according to these common laws that human behaviour ought to be regulated. The eccentric orbit of the comet never influences astronomical calculations respecting the invariable order established in the motion of the principal bodies of the solar system.	There are, it is true, trials in which the good man must appeal to God against the injustice of man, and, amid the whining candor or the hisses of envy, build a pavilion in his own mind to retire into until the rumor has passed; indeed, the darts of undeserved censure may pierce an innocent, tender heart through with many sorrows. But these are all exceptions to general rules, and it is by these common laws that human behavior ought to be regulated. The eccentric orbit of the comet never affects astronomical calculations about the unchanging order established in the motions of the principal bodies of the solar system.
8.15	I will then venture to affirm, that after a man is arrived at maturity, the general outline of his character in the world is just, allowing for the	I will venture, then, to affirm that once a man has reached maturity, the general outline of his character as the world sees it is accurate, allowing for

4 The Pharisees praying on street corners "to be seen of men": Matthew 6:5.

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before-mentioned exceptions to the rule. I do not say that a prudent, worldly-wise man, with only negative virtues and qualities, may not sometimes obtain a more smooth reputation than a wiser or a better man. So far from it, that I am apt to conclude from experience, that where the virtue of two people is nearly equal, the most negative character will be liked best by the world at large, whilst the other may have more friends in private life.

But the hills and dales, clouds and sunshine, conspicuous in the virtues of great men, set off each other; and though they afford envious weakness a fairer mark to shoot at, the real character will still work its way to light, though bespattered by weak affection, or ingenious malice[1].

6

8.16 With respect to that anxiety to preserve a reputation hardly earned, which leads sagacious people to analyze it, I shall not make the obvious comment; but I am afraid that morality is very insidiously undermined, in the female world, by the attention being turned to the shew instead of the substance. A simple thing is thus made strangely complicated; nay, sometimes virtue and its shadow are set at variance. We should never, perhaps, have heard of Lucretia, had she died to preserve her chastity instead of her reputation.

If we really deserve our own good opinion we shall commonly be respected in the world; but if we pant after higher improvement and higher attainments, it is not sufficient to view ourselves as we suppose that we are viewed by others, though this has been ingeniously argued, as the foundation of our moral sentiments[2]. Because each by-stander may have his own prejudices, beside the prejudices of his age or country. We

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the exceptions just mentioned. I do not say that a prudent, worldly-wise man, with only negative virtues and qualities, may not sometimes gain a smoother reputation than a wiser or a better man. Far from it: experience inclines me to conclude that where two people are nearly equal in virtue, the more negative character will be liked best by the world at large, while the other may have more friends in private life.

But the hills and valleys, the clouds and sunshine, so conspicuous in the virtues of great men, set each other off; and though they give envious weakness an easier target, the real character will still work its way into the light, however spattered by weak affection or ingenious malice[1].

As for the anxiety to preserve a hard-earned reputation, which leads shrewd people to analyze it, I will not make the obvious comment. But I fear that morality is very insidiously undermined in the female world by attention being turned to the show instead of the substance. A simple thing is thus made strangely complicated; indeed, virtue and its shadow are sometimes set at odds. We would perhaps never have heard of Lucretia had she died to preserve her chastity instead of her reputation.[7]

If we really deserve our own good opinion, we will usually be respected in the world. But if we long for higher improvement and higher attainments, it is not enough to view ourselves as we suppose others view us—though this has been ingeniously argued to be the foundation of our moral sentiments[2]. For each bystander may have his own prejudices, besides the prejudices of his age or country. We should rather try to view ourselves as

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[1] I allude to various biographical writings, but particularly to Boswell's Life of Johnson.

[1] I am alluding to various biographical writings, but particularly to Boswell's *Life of Johnson*.[5]

5 James Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson* (1791), famous for recording its subject's faults and quirks alongside his greatness.
7 Lucretia, a legendary Roman noblewoman, killed herself after being raped by the king's son; her death was said to have led to the founding of the Roman Republic.

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should rather endeavour to view ourselves as we suppose that Being views us who seeth each thought ripen into action, and whose judgment never swerves from the eternal rule of right. Righteous are all his judgments—just as merciful!

9

8.17 The humble mind that seeketh to find favour in His sight, and calmly examines its conduct when only His presence is felt, will seldom form a very erroneous opinion of its own virtues. During the still hour of self-collection the angry brow of offended justice will be fearfully deprecated, or the tie which draws man to the Deity will be recognized in the pure sentiment of reverential adoration, that swells the heart without exciting any tumultuous emotions. In these solemn moments man discovers the germ of those vices, which like the Java tree shed a pestiferous vapour around—death is in the shade!

and he perceives them without abhorrence, because he feels himself drawn by some cord of love to all his fellow-creatures, for whose follies he is anxious to find every extenuation in their nature—in himself. If I, he may thus argue, who exercise my own mind, and have been refined by tribulation, find the serpent's egg in some fold of my heart, and crush it with difficulty, shall not I pity those who have stamped with less vigour, or who have heedlessly nurtured the insidious reptile till it poisoned the vital stream it sucked? Can I, conscious of my secret sins, throw off my fellow-creatures, and calmly see them drop into the chasm of perdition, that yawns to receive them.—No! no!

The agonized heart will cry with suffocating impatience—I too am a man! and have vices, hid, perhaps, from human eye, that bend me to the dust before God, and loudly tell me, when all is mute, that we are formed of the same earth, and breathe the same element. Humanity thus rises

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we suppose we are viewed by that Being who sees each thought ripen into action, and whose judgment never swerves from the eternal rule of right. Righteous are all his judgments—as just as they are merciful!

The humble mind that seeks to find favor in His sight, and calmly examines its conduct when only His presence is felt, will seldom form a very mistaken opinion of its own virtues. In the still hour of self-collection, we will either fearfully pray to be spared the angry brow of offended justice, or recognize the tie that draws man to God in the pure feeling of reverent adoration, which swells the heart without stirring any tumultuous emotion. In these solemn moments man discovers the seeds of those vices which, like the Java tree, shed a poisonous vapor all around—death is in the shade![10]

and he sees them without horror, because he feels himself drawn by some cord of love to all his fellow creatures, for whose follies he is eager to find every excuse in their nature—in himself. If I, he may argue, who exercise my own mind and have been refined by suffering, find the serpent's egg in some fold of my heart and crush it only with difficulty, shall I not pity those who have stamped on it less vigorously, or who have heedlessly nurtured the insidious reptile until it poisoned the lifeblood it fed on? Can I, conscious of my secret sins, cast off my fellow creatures and calmly watch them drop into the chasm of damnation that yawns to receive them?—No! no!

The anguished heart will cry out with suffocating impatience—I too am a man! and I have vices, hidden perhaps from human eyes, that bow me to the dust before God, and tell me loudly, when all is silent, that we are formed of the same earth and breathe the same air. Humanity thus rises natur-

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[2] Smith. | [2] Smith.[8]

8 Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* grounds moral judgment in how we imagine an impartial spectator would see us.

10 The upas tree of Java, reputed in travelers' tales to poison everything that came near it.

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naturally out of humility, and twists the cords of love that in various convolutions entangle the heart.	ally out of humility, and twists the cords of love that entangle the heart in their many coils.
8.18 This sympathy extends still further, till a man well pleased observes force in arguments that do not carry conviction to his own bosom, and he gladly places in the fairest light, to himself, the shews of reason that have led others astray, rejoiced to find some reason in all the errors of man; though before convinced that he who rules the day makes his sun to shine on all. Yet, shaking hands thus as it were with corruption, one foot on earth, the other with bold stride mounts to heaven, and claims kindred with superiour natures.	This sympathy extends still further, until a man is pleased to see force in arguments that do not convince him. He gladly places in the best light, for himself, the appearances of reason that have led others astray, delighted to find some reason in all human errors—though already convinced that he who rules the day makes his sun shine on all. Yet while he thus shakes hands, as it were, with corruption, one foot on earth, the other mounts to heaven in a bold stride and claims kinship with higher natures.
Virtues, unobserved by man, drop their balmy fragrance at this cool hour, and the thirsty land, refreshed by the pure streams of comfort that suddenly gush out, is crowned with smiling verdure; this is the living green, on which that eye may look with complacency that is too pure to behold iniquity!	Virtues unobserved by man release their soothing fragrance in this cool hour, and the thirsty land, refreshed by the pure streams of comfort that suddenly gush out, is crowned with smiling green. This is the living green on which that eye may look with pleasure which is too pure to behold wickedness!
8.19 But my spirits flag; and I must silently indulge the reverie these reflections lead to, unable to describe the sentiments, that have calmed my soul, when watching the rising sun, a soft shower drizzling through the leaves of neighbouring trees, seemed to fall on my languid, yet tranquil spirits, to cool the heart that had been heated by the passions which reason laboured to tame.	But my spirits are flagging, and I must silently indulge the reverie these reflections lead to. I cannot describe the feelings that have calmed my soul when, as I watched the sun rise, a soft shower drizzling through the leaves of nearby trees seemed to fall on my weary yet tranquil spirits, cooling a heart heated by passions that reason labored to tame.
8.20 The leading principles which run through all my disquisitions, would render it unnecessary to enlarge on this subject, if a constant attention to keep the varnish of the character fresh, and in good condition, were not often inculcated as the sum total of female duty; if rules to regulate the behaviour, and to preserve the reputation, did not too frequently supersede moral obligations. But, with respect to reputation, the attention is confined to a single virtue—chastity. If the honour of a woman, as it is absurdly called, is safe, she may neglect every social duty; nay, ruin her family by gaming and extravagance; yet still present a shameless front—for truly she is an honourable woman!	The leading principles running through all my arguments would make it unnecessary to enlarge on this subject, if constant care to keep the varnish of the character fresh and in good condition were not often taught as the sum total of female duty—if rules for regulating behavior and preserving reputation did not too often replace moral obligations. But where reputation is concerned, attention is confined to a single virtue—chastity. If a woman's honor, as it is absurdly called, is safe, she may neglect every social duty, may even ruin her family by gambling and extravagance, and still show a shameless face to the world—for truly she is an honorable woman!
8.21 Mrs. Macaulay has justly observed, that 'there is but one fault which a woman of honour may not commit with impunity.' She then justly, and	Mrs. Macaulay has rightly observed that "there is but one fault which a woman of honor may not commit with impunity." She then adds, justly and

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	humanely adds—'This has given rise to the trite and foolish observation, that the first fault against chastity in woman has a radical power to deprave the character. But no such frail beings come out of the hands of nature. The human mind is built of nobler materials than to be so easily corrupted; and with all their disadvantages of situation and education, women seldom become entirely abandoned till they are thrown into a state of desperation, by the venomous rancour of their own sex.'	humanely: "This has given rise to the trite and foolish observation that the first fault against chastity in a woman has a radical power to deprave the character. But no such frail beings come out of the hands of nature. The human mind is built of nobler materials than to be so easily corrupted; and with all their disadvantages of situation and education, women seldom become entirely abandoned until they are thrown into a state of desperation by the venomous spite of their own sex."[11]
8.22	But, in proportion as this regard for the reputation of chastity is prized by women, it is despised by men: and the two extremes are equally destructive to morality.	But in proportion as women prize this regard for the reputation of chastity, men despise it; and the two extremes are equally destructive to morality.
8.23	Men are certainly more under the influence of their appetites than women; and their appetites are more depraved by unbridled indulgence and the fastidious contrivances of satiety. Luxury has introduced a refinement in eating, that destroys the constitution; and a degree of gluttony which is so beastly, that a perception of seemliness of behaviour must be worn out before one being could eat immoderately in the presence of another, and afterwards complain of the oppression that his intemperance naturally produced. Some women, particularly French women, have also lost a sense of decency in this respect; for they will talk very calmly of an indigestion.	Men are certainly more under the influence of their appetites than women, and their appetites are more depraved by unbridled indulgence and the fussy contrivances of satiety. Luxury has introduced a refinement in eating that destroys the constitution, and a degree of gluttony so beastly that all sense of decent behavior must be worn away before one person could eat immoderately in front of another and afterward complain of the discomfort his excess naturally produced. Some women, particularly Frenchwomen, have also lost a sense of decency in this respect, for they will talk quite calmly about indigestion.
	It were to be wished that idleness was not allowed to generate, on the rank soil of wealth, those swarms of summer insects that feed on putrefaction, we should not then be disgusted by the sight of such brutal excesses.	One could wish that idleness were not allowed to breed, on the rank soil of wealth, those swarms of summer insects that feed on rot; we would not then be disgusted by the sight of such brutal excesses.
8.24	There is one rule relative to behaviour that, I think, ought to regulate every other; and it is simply to cherish such an habitual respect for mankind as may prevent us from disgusting a fellow-creature for the sake of a present indulgence. The shameful indolence of many married women, and others a little advanced in life, frequently leads them to sin against delicacy. For, though convinced that the person is the band of union between the sexes, yet, how often do	There is one rule of behavior that, I think, ought to govern every other. It is simply to cherish such a habitual respect for humanity as will keep us from disgusting a fellow creature for the sake of a momentary indulgence. The shameful laziness of many married women, and of others a little advanced in years, often leads them to sin against delicacy. For though they are convinced that the body is the bond of union between the sexes, how often, out of sheer laziness or to enjoy some trifling indulgence, do they disgust?

11 From Catharine Macaulay's *Letters on Education* (1790).

they from sheer indolence, or, to enjoy some trifling indulgence, disgust?

8.25 The depravity of the appetite which brings the sexes together, has had a still more fatal effect. Nature must ever be the standard of taste, the gauge of appetite—yet how grossly is nature insulted by the voluptuary. Leaving the refinements of love out of the question; nature, by making the gratification of an appetite, in this respect, as well as every other, a natural and imperious law to preserve the species, exalts the appetite, and mixes a little mind and affection with a sensual gust. The feelings of a parent mingling with an instinct merely animal, give it dignity; and the man and woman often meeting on account of the child, a mutual interest and affection is excited by the exercise of a common sympathy.

The depravity of the appetite that brings the sexes together has had a still more fatal effect. Nature must always be the standard of taste, the gauge of appetite—yet how grossly the sensualist insults nature! Leave aside the refinements of love. Nature, by making the gratification of this appetite, as of every other, a natural and commanding law for preserving the species, elevates the appetite and mixes a little mind and affection with sensual relish. The feelings of a parent, mingling with a merely animal instinct, give it dignity; and as the man and woman often meet on account of the child, a mutual interest and affection is aroused by the exercise of a shared sympathy.

Women then having necessarily some duty to fulfil, more noble than to adorn their persons, would not contentedly be the slaves of casual appetite; which is now the situation of a very considerable number who are, literally speaking, standing dishes to which every glutton may have access.

Women, then, necessarily having some duty to fulfill nobler than adorning their bodies, would not contentedly be the slaves of casual appetite. That is now the situation of a very considerable number of women who are, literally speaking, standing dishes that every glutton may help himself to.

8.26 I may be told that great as this enormity is, it only affects a devoted part of the sex—devoted for the salvation of the rest. But, false as every assertion might easily be proved, that recommends the sanctioning a small evil to produce a greater good; the mischief does not stop here, for the moral character, and peace of mind, of the chaster part of the sex, is undermined by the conduct of the very women to whom they allow no refuge from guilt: whom they inexorably consign to the exercise of arts that lure their husbands from them, debauch their sons, and force them, let not modest women start, to assume, in some degree, the same character themselves.

I may be told that, great as this outrage is, it affects only a sacrificed portion of women—sacrificed for the salvation of the rest. But every claim that recommends sanctioning a small evil to produce a greater good could easily be proved false; and in any case the harm does not stop there. For the moral character and peace of mind of the chaster part of the sex are undermined by the conduct of the very women to whom they allow no refuge from guilt: women whom they relentlessly consign to practicing arts that lure their husbands away from them, debauch their sons, and force them—let modest women not be startled—to take on, to some degree, the same character themselves.

For I will venture to assert, that all the causes of female weakness, as well as depravity, which I have already enlarged on, branch out of one grand cause—want of chastity in men.

For I will venture to assert that all the causes of female weakness, as well as depravity, which I have already discussed at length, branch out from one great cause—lack of chastity in men.

8.27 This intemperance, so prevalent, depraves the appetite to such a degree, that a wanton stimulus is necessary to rouse it; but the parental design of nature is forgotten, and the mere person, and that

This intemperance, so widespread, depraves the appetite to such a degree that a lewd stimulus is needed to rouse it. The parental design of nature is forgotten, and the mere body—and that only for a

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for a moment, alone engrosses the thoughts. So voluptuous, indeed, often grows the lustful prowler, that he refines on female softness. Something more soft than woman is then sought for; till, in Italy and Portugal, men attend the levees of equivocal beings, to sigh for more than female langour.

8.28 To satisfy this genus of men, women are made systematically voluptuous, and though they may not all carry their libertinism to the same height, yet this heartless intercourse with the sex, which they allow themselves, depraves both sexes, because the taste of men is vitiated; and women, of all classes, naturally square their behaviour to gratify the taste by which they obtain pleasure and power.

Women becoming, consequently, weaker, in mind and body, than they ought to be, were one of the grand ends of their being taken into the account, that of bearing and nursing children, have not sufficient strength to discharge the first duty of a mother; and sacrificing to lasciviousness the parental affection, that ennobles instinct, either destroy the embryo in the womb, or cast it off when born. Nature in every thing demands respect, and those who violate her laws seldom violate them with impunity.

The weak enervated women who particularly catch the attention of libertines, are unfit to be mothers, though they may conceive, so that the rich sensualist, who has rioted among women, spreading depravity and misery, when he wishes to perpetuate his name, receives from his wife only an half-formed being that inherits both its father's and mother's weakness.

8.29 Contrasting the humanity of the present age with the barbarism of antiquity, great stress has been laid on the savage custom of exposing the children whom their parents could not maintain; whilst the man of sensibility, who thus, perhaps, complains, by his promiscuous amours produces a most destructive barrenness and contagious flagitiousness of manners. Surely nature never intended that women, by satisfying an appetite, should frustrate the very purpose for which it was implanted!

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moment—alone occupies the thoughts. Indeed, the lustful prowler often grows so voluptuous that he refines upon female softness. Something softer than woman is then sought, until, in Italy and Portugal, men attend the receptions of ambiguous beings, to sigh for more than female languor.[12]

To satisfy this type of man, women are made systematically voluptuous. And though they may not all carry their libertinism to the same height, this heartless intercourse with women, which men allow themselves, depraves both sexes: the taste of men is corrupted, and women of all classes naturally shape their behavior to gratify the taste through which they obtain pleasure and power.

Consequently women, grown weaker in mind and body than they ought to be—if one of the great ends of their existence, bearing and nursing children, were taken into account—do not have enough strength to perform the first duty of a mother. Sacrificing to lust the parental affection that ennobles instinct, they either destroy the embryo in the womb or abandon the child once it is born. Nature demands respect in everything, and those who violate her laws seldom do so with impunity.

The weak, enervated women who particularly catch the attention of libertines are unfit to be mothers, though they may conceive. So the rich sensualist who has run riot among women, spreading depravity and misery, receives from his wife, when he wishes to perpetuate his name, only a half-formed being that inherits the weakness of both its father and its mother.

In contrasting the humanity of the present age with the barbarism of antiquity, great stress has been laid on the cruel custom of exposing children whom their parents could not support; while the man of sensibility who perhaps makes this complaint produces, by his promiscuous affairs, a most destructive barrenness and a contagious wickedness of manners. Surely nature never intended that women, by satisfying an appetite, should frustrate the very purpose for which it was implanted!

12 Probably an allusion to the castrati, the celebrated castrated male singers of Italian opera.

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8.30	I have before observed, that men ought to maintain the women whom they have seduced; this would be one means of reforming female manners, and stopping an abuse that has an equally fatal effect on population and morals. Another, no less obvious, would be to turn the attention of woman to the real virtue of chastity; for to little respect has that woman a claim, on the score of modesty, though her reputation may be white as the driven snow, who smiles on the libertine whilst she spurns the victims of his lawless appetites and their own folly.	I have observed before that men ought to support the women they have seduced. This would be one means of reforming female manners and stopping an abuse that has an equally fatal effect on population and on morals. Another, no less obvious, would be to turn women's attention to the real virtue of chastity. For a woman has little claim to respect on the score of modesty—though her reputation may be white as the driven snow—if she smiles on the libertine while spurning the victims of his lawless appetites and their own folly.
8.31	Besides, she has a taint of the same folly, pure as she esteems herself, when she studiously adorns her person only to be seen by men, to excite respectful sighs, and all the idle homage of what is called innocent gallantry. Did women really respect virtue for its own sake, they would not seek for a compensation in vanity, for the self-denial which they are obliged to practise to preserve their reputation, nor would they associate with men who set reputation at defiance.	Besides, pure as she thinks herself, she has a taint of the same folly when she carefully adorns her body only to be seen by men, to draw respectful sighs and all the idle homage of what is called innocent gallantry. If women really respected virtue for its own sake, they would not seek compensation in vanity for the self-denial they are obliged to practice to preserve their reputation; nor would they associate with men who defy reputation.
8.32	The two sexes mutually corrupt and improve each other. This I believe to be an indisputable truth, extending it to every virtue. Chastity, modesty, public spirit, and all the noble train of virtues, on which social virtue and happiness is built, should be understood and cultivated by all mankind, or they will be cultivated to little effect. And, instead of furnishing the vicious or idle with a pretext for violating some sacred duty, by terming it a sexual one, it would be wiser to shew that nature has not made any difference, for that the unchaste man doubly defeats the purpose of nature, by rendering women barren, and destroying his own constitution, though he avoids the shame that pursues the crime in the other sex.	The two sexes corrupt and improve each other. I believe this to be an indisputable truth, and I extend it to every virtue. Chastity, modesty, public spirit, and the whole noble train of virtues on which social virtue and happiness are built, should be understood and cultivated by all humanity, or they will be cultivated to little effect. And instead of giving the vicious or idle a pretext for violating some sacred duty by calling it a duty of one sex only, it would be wiser to show that nature has made no difference here. For the unchaste man doubly defeats the purpose of nature, by making women barren and by destroying his own health—though he escapes the shame that pursues the crime in the other sex.
	These are the physical consequences, the moral are still more alarming; for virtue is only a nominal distinction when the duties of citizens, husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, and directors of families, become merely the selfish ties of convenience.	These are the physical consequences; the moral ones are still more alarming. For virtue is only a distinction in name when the duties of citizens, husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, and heads of families become merely the selfish ties of convenience.
8.33	Why then do philosophers look for public spirit? Public spirit must be nurtured by private virtue, or it will resemble the factitious sentiment which makes women careful to preserve their	Why, then, do philosophers look for public spirit? Public spirit must be nurtured by private virtue, or it will resemble the artificial sentiment that

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reputation, and men their honour. A sentiment that often exists unsupported by virtue, unsupported by that sublime morality which makes the habitual breach of one duty a breach of the whole moral law.

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makes women careful to preserve their reputation, and men their honor—a sentiment that often exists unsupported by virtue, unsupported by that sublime morality which makes the habitual breach of one duty a breach of the whole moral law.

Chapter IX: Of the Pernicious Effects Which Arise from the Unnatural Distinctions Established in Society

Rank and wealth corrupt rich and poor alike; women should be citizens, with work, rights and representation of their own.

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9.1	From the respect paid to property flow, as from a poisoned fountain, most of the evils and vices which render this world such a dreary scene to the contemplative mind. For it is in the most polished society that noisome reptiles and venomous serpents lurk under the rank herbage; and there is voluptuousness pampered by the still sultry air, which relaxes every good disposition before it ripens into virtue.	From the respect paid to property flow, as from a poisoned spring, most of the evils and vices that make this world such a dreary scene to the reflective mind. For it is in the most polished society that loathsome reptiles and venomous serpents lurk under the rank grass; and there voluptuousness is pampered by the still, sultry air, which relaxes every good disposition before it can ripen into virtue.
9.2	One class presses on another; for all are aiming to procure respect on account of their property: and property, once gained, will procure the respect due only to talents and virtue. Men neglect the duties incumbent on man, yet are treated like demi-gods; religion is also separated from morality by a ceremonial veil, yet men wonder that the world is almost, literally speaking, a den of sharpers or oppressors.	One class presses on another, for all are aiming to win respect on account of their property; and property, once gained, will win the respect due only to talent and virtue. Men neglect the duties that fall to them as human beings, yet are treated like demigods. Religion, too, is separated from morality by a veil of ceremony—and yet people wonder that the world is almost, literally speaking, a den of swindlers or oppressors.
9.3	There is a homely proverb, which speaks a shrewd truth, that whoever the devil finds idle he will employ. And what but habitual idleness can hereditary wealth and titles produce? For man is so constituted that he can only attain a proper use of his faculties by exercising them, and will not exercise them unless necessity, of some kind, first set the wheels in motion. Virtue likewise can only be acquired by the discharge of relative duties; but the importance of these sacred duties will scarcely be felt by the being who is cajoled out of his humanity by the flattery of sycophants.	There is a homely proverb that speaks a shrewd truth: whoever the devil finds idle, he will put to work. And what can hereditary wealth and titles produce but habitual idleness? For man is so made that he can learn the proper use of his faculties only by exercising them, and he will not exercise them unless necessity of some kind first sets the wheels in motion. Virtue, likewise, can be acquired only by performing the duties that arise from our relations to others; but the importance of these sacred duties will hardly be felt by a being who is coaxed out of his humanity by the flattery of sycophants.
	There must be more equality established in society, or morality will never gain ground, and this virtuous equality will not rest firmly even when founded on a rock, if one half of mankind are chained to its bottom by fate, for they will be	There must be more equality established in society, or morality will never gain ground. And this virtuous equality will not stand firm, even when founded on a rock, if one half of humanity is chained to its base by fate; for they will continu-

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continually undermining it through ignorance or pride.

9.4 It is vain to expect virtue from women till they are, in some degree, independent of men; nay, it is vain to expect that strength of natural affection, which would make them good wives and mothers. Whilst they are absolutely dependent on their husbands they will be cunning, mean, and selfish, and the men who can be gratified by the fawning fondness of spaniel-like affection, have not much delicacy, for love is not to be bought, in any sense of the words, its silken wings are instantly shrivelled up when any thing beside a return in kind is sought.

Yet whilst wealth enervates men; and women live, as it were, by their personal charms, how can we expect them to discharge those ennobling duties which equally require exertion and self-denial. Hereditary property sophisticates the mind, and the unfortunate victims to it, if I may so express myself, swathed from their birth, seldom exert the locomotive faculty of body or mind; and, thus viewing every thing through one medium, and that a false one, they are unable to discern in what true merit and happiness consist.

9.5 False, indeed, must be the light when the drapery of situation hides the man, and makes him stalk in masquerade, dragging from one scene of dissipation to another the nerveless limbs that hang with stupid listlessness, and rolling round the vacant eye which plainly tells us that there is no mind at home.

9.6 I mean, therefore, to infer that the society is not properly organized which does not compel men and women to discharge their respective duties, by making it the only way to acquire that countenance from their fellow-creatures, which every human being wishes some way to attain. The respect, consequently, which is paid to wealth and mere personal charms, is a true northeast blast, that blights the tender blossoms of affection and virtue. Nature has wisely attached affections to duties, to sweeten toil, and to give that vigour to the exertions of reason which only the heart can give.

But, the affection which is put on merely because it is the appropriated insignia of a certain character, when its duties are not fulfilled, is one

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ally be undermining it through ignorance or pride.

It is vain to expect virtue from women until they are, to some degree, independent of men; indeed, it is vain to expect that strength of natural affection which would make them good wives and mothers. As long as they are absolutely dependent on their husbands, they will be cunning, mean, and selfish. And the men who can be gratified by the fawning fondness of a spaniel-like affection have little delicacy; for love is not to be bought, in any sense of the words—its silken wings instantly shrivel up when anything is sought besides a return in kind.

Yet while wealth enervates men, and women live, as it were, by their personal charms, how can we expect them to perform those ennobling duties which alike require effort and self-denial? Hereditary property corrupts the mind. Its unfortunate victims, swaddled from birth, if I may put it so, seldom exert their powers of movement, in body or in mind; and so, viewing everything through one medium, and a false one, they are unable to discern what true merit and happiness consist in.

False indeed must be the light when the drapery of rank hides the man and makes him stalk about in masquerade, dragging from one scene of dissipation to another his nerveless limbs, which hang in stupid listlessness, and rolling round a vacant eye that plainly tells us there is no mind at home.

I mean, therefore, to conclude that a society is not properly organized if it does not compel men and women to perform their respective duties by making this the only way to win that approval from their fellow creatures which every human being wishes to obtain in some way. The respect paid to wealth and mere personal charms is, consequently, a true northeast wind that blights the tender blossoms of affection and virtue. Nature has wisely attached affections to duties, to sweeten toil and to give the exertions of reason that vigor which only the heart can give.

But affection that is put on merely because it is the assigned badge of a certain role, when the duties of that role are not fulfilled, is one of the empty

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of the empty compliments which vice and folly are obliged to pay to virtue and the real nature of things.

9.7 To illustrate my opinion, I need only observe, that when a woman is admired for her beauty, and suffers herself to be so far intoxicated by the admiration she receives, as to neglect to discharge the indispensable duty of a mother, she sins against herself by neglecting to cultivate an affection that would equally tend to make her useful and happy. True happiness, I mean all the contentment, and virtuous satisfaction, that can be snatched in this imperfect state, must arise from well regulated affections; and an affection includes a duty.

Men are not aware of the misery they cause, and the vicious weakness they cherish, by only inciting women to render themselves pleasing; they do not consider that they thus make natural and artificial duties clash, by sacrificing the comfort and respectability of a woman's life to voluptuous notions of beauty, when in nature they all harmonize.

9.8 Cold would be the heart of a husband, were he not rendered unnatural by early debauchery, who did not feel more delight at seeing his child suckled by its mother, than the most artful wanton tricks could ever raise; yet this natural way of cementing the matrimonial tie, and twisting esteem with fonder recollections, wealth leads women to spurn. To preserve their beauty, and wear the flowery crown of the day, that gives them a kind of right to reign for a short time over the sex, they neglect to stamp impressions on their husbands' hearts, that would be remembered with more tenderness when the snow on the head began to chill the bosom, than even their virgin charms.

The maternal solicitude of a reasonable affectionate woman is very interesting, and the chastened dignity with which a mother returns the caresses that she and her child receive from a father who has been fulfilling the serious duties of his station, is not only a respectable, but a beautiful sight. So singular, indeed, are my feelings, and I have endeavoured not to catch factitious ones, that after having been fatigued with the sight of insipid grandeur and the slavish ceremonies that with cumbrous pomp supplied

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compliments that vice and folly are obliged to pay to virtue and to the real nature of things.

To illustrate my view, I need only observe this. When a woman is admired for her beauty, and lets herself be so intoxicated by the admiration she receives that she neglects the indispensable duty of a mother, she sins against herself by neglecting to cultivate an affection that would tend equally to make her useful and happy. True happiness—I mean all the contentment and virtuous satisfaction that can be snatched in this imperfect state—must arise from well-regulated affections; and an affection includes a duty.

Men are not aware of the misery they cause, and the vicious weakness they foster, by urging women only to make themselves pleasing. They do not consider that they thus make natural and artificial duties clash, sacrificing the comfort and respectability of a woman's life to sensual notions of beauty, when in nature they all harmonize.

Cold would be the heart of a husband—unless early debauchery had made him unnatural—who did not feel more delight at seeing his child nursed by its mother than the most artful wanton tricks could ever arouse. Yet wealth leads women to spurn this natural way of cementing the marriage bond and entwining esteem with fonder memories. To preserve their beauty, and to wear the flowery crown of the day that gives them a kind of right to reign for a short time over their sex, they neglect to stamp impressions on their husbands' hearts that would be remembered with more tenderness, when the snow on the head began to chill the breast, than even their virgin charms.

The maternal care of a reasonable, affectionate woman is very touching; and the chastened dignity with which a mother returns the caresses that she and her child receive from a father who has been fulfilling the serious duties of his position is not only a respectable but a beautiful sight. So peculiar, indeed, are my feelings—and I have tried not to catch artificial ones—that after being wearied by the sight of insipid grandeur, and of the slavish ceremonies that took the place of domestic affections with cumbersome pomp, I have turned

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the place of domestic affections, I have turned to some other scene to relieve my eye by resting it on the refreshing green every where scattered by nature.

I have then viewed with pleasure a woman nursing her children, and discharging the duties of her station with, perhaps, merely a servant maid to take off her hands the servile part of the household business. I have seen her prepare herself and children, with only the luxury of cleanliness, to receive her husband, who returning weary home in the evening found smiling babes and a clean hearth. My heart has loitered in the midst of the group, and has even throbbed with sympathetic emotion, when the scraping of the well known foot has raised a pleasing tumult.

9.9 Whilst my benevolence has been gratified by contemplating this artless picture, I have thought that a couple of this description, equally necessary and independent of each other, because each fulfilled the respective duties of their station, possessed all that life could give.—Raised sufficiently above abject poverty not to be obliged to weigh the consequence of every farthing they spend, and having sufficient to prevent their attending to a frigid system of economy, which narrows both heart and mind.

I declare, so vulgar are my conceptions, that I know not what is wanted to render this the happiest as well as the most respectable situation in the world, but a taste for literature, to throw a little variety and interest into social converse, and some superfluous money to give to the needy and to buy books. For it is not pleasant when the heart is opened by compassion and the head active in arranging plans of usefulness, to have a prim urchin continually twitching back the elbow to prevent the hand from drawing out an almost empty purse, whispering at the same time some prudential maxim about the priority of justice.

9.10 Destructive, however, as riches and inherited honours are to the human character, women are more debased and cramped, if possible, by them, than men, because men may still, in some degree, unfold their faculties by becoming soldiers and statesmen.

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to some other scene to relieve my eye by resting it on the refreshing green that nature scatters everywhere.

I have then watched with pleasure a woman nursing her children and performing the duties of her station with, perhaps, only a maidservant to take the menial part of the housework off her hands. I have seen her get herself and her children ready, with no luxury but cleanliness, to receive her husband, who, coming home weary in the evening, found smiling babies and a clean hearth. My heart has lingered in the midst of the group, and has even throbbed with sympathetic emotion when the scrape of the well-known foot raised a pleasant commotion.

While my benevolence has been gratified by contemplating this artless picture, I have thought that a couple like this—equally necessary to each other and independent of each other, because each fulfilled the respective duties of their station—possessed all that life could give.—They were raised far enough above abject poverty not to have to weigh the consequences of every last penny they spent, and had enough to be spared a frigid system of economy that narrows both heart and mind.

I declare—so commonplace are my ideas—that I do not know what is needed to make this the happiest as well as the most respectable situation in the world, except a taste for literature, to bring a little variety and interest into conversation, and some spare money to give to the needy and to buy books. For it is not pleasant, when the heart is opened by compassion and the head is busy arranging useful plans, to have a prim little imp constantly tugging back your elbow to keep your hand from drawing out an almost empty purse, whispering all the while some prudent maxim about justice coming first.

Destructive as riches and inherited honors are to human character, however, women are, if possible, even more debased and cramped by them than men. For men can still, to some degree, develop their faculties by becoming soldiers and statesmen.

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As soldiers, I grant, they can now only gather, for the most part, vain glorious laurels, whilst they adjust to a hair the European balance, taking especial care that no bleak northern nook or sound incline the beam. But the days of true heroism are over, when a citizen fought for his country like a Fabricius or a Washington, and then returned to his farm to let his virtuous fervour run in a more placid, but not a less salutary, stream.

No, our British heroes are oftener sent from the gaming table than from the plow; and their passions have been rather inflamed by hanging with dumb suspense on the turn of a die, than sublimated by panting after the adventurous march of virtue in the historic page.

9.12 The statesman, it is true, might with more propriety quit the Faro Bank, or card-table, to guide the helm, for he has still but to shuffle and trick. The whole system of British politics, if system it may courteously be called, consisting in multiplying dependents and contriving taxes which grind the poor to pamper the rich; thus a war, or any wild goose chace is, as the vulgar use the phrase, a lucky turn-up of patronage for the minister, whose chief merit is the art of keeping himself in place.

9.13 It is not necessary then that he should have bowels for the poor, so he can secure for his family the odd trick. Or should some shew of respect, for what is termed with ignorant ostentation an Englishman's birth-right, be expedient to bubble the gruff mastiff that he has to lead by the nose, he can make an empty shew, very safely, by giving his single voice, and suffering his light squadron to file off to the other side.

And when a question of humanity is agitated he may dip a sop in the milk of human kindness, to silence Cerberus, and talk of the interest which his heart takes in an attempt to make the earth no longer cry for vengeance as it sucks in its children's blood, though his cold hand may at the very moment rivet their chains, by sanctioning the abominable traffick. A minister is no longer a

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As soldiers, I grant, they can now for the most part gather only vainglorious laurels, while they adjust the European balance to a hair, taking special care that no bleak northern nook or sound tips the scale. But the days of true heroism are over, when a citizen fought for his country like a Fabricius or a Washington and then returned to his farm, to let his virtuous ardor flow in a calmer but no less wholesome stream.[1]

No, our British heroes are more often sent from the gambling table than from the plow; and their passions have been inflamed by hanging in mute suspense on the roll of a die, rather than lifted by longing after the adventurous march of virtue in the pages of history.

The statesman, it is true, might more fittingly leave the faro bank or the card table to take the helm, for he still has only to shuffle and play tricks. The whole system of British politics—if it may politely be called a system—consists in multiplying dependents and devising taxes that grind the poor to pamper the rich. So a war, or any wild-goose chase, is, as common people say, a lucky turn-up of patronage for the minister, whose chief merit is the art of keeping himself in office.[2]

It is not necessary, then, that he should have any compassion for the poor, as long as he can secure the odd trick for his family. Or, should some show of respect for what is called, with ignorant ostentation, an Englishman's birthright be expedient to fool the gruff mastiff he has to lead by the nose, he can make an empty show quite safely by casting his single vote and letting his light squadron file off to the other side.

And when a question of humanity is debated, he may dip a sop in the milk of human kindness to silence Cerberus, and talk of the interest his heart takes in an attempt to make the earth no longer cry out for vengeance as it drinks in its children's blood—though his cold hand may at that very moment rivet their chains by sanctioning the abominable trade. A minister is a minister only so long

1 Fabricius, like Washington, went home to his farm after his campaigns. "Sound" likely glances at the Nootka Sound crisis of 1790, when Britain nearly went to war with Spain over a remote Pacific inlet.
2 Faro was a fashionable card game for high-stakes gambling.

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minister than while he can carry a point, which he is determined to carry.—Yet it is not necessary that a minister should feel like a man, when a bold push might shake his seat.	as he can carry a point he is determined to carry.—Yet it is not necessary that a minister should feel like a man, when a bold push might shake his seat.[3]
9.14 But, to have done with these episodical observations, let me return to the more specious slavery which chains the very soul of woman, keeping her for ever under the bondage of ignorance.	But, to be done with these digressions, let me return to the more plausible-looking slavery that chains the very soul of woman, keeping her forever in the bondage of ignorance.
9.15 The preposterous distinctions of rank, which render civilization a curse, by dividing the world between voluptuous tyrants, and cunning envious dependents, corrupt, almost equally, every class of people, because respectability is not attached to the discharge of the relative duties of life, but to the station, and when the duties are not fulfilled the affections cannot gain sufficient strength to fortify the virtue of which they are the natural reward. Still there are some loopholes out of which a man may creep, and dare to think and act for himself; but for a woman it is an herculean task, because she has difficulties peculiar to her sex to overcome, which require almost superhuman powers.	The preposterous distinctions of rank, which make civilization a curse by dividing the world between voluptuous tyrants and cunning, envious dependents, corrupt almost every class of people equally. For respectability is attached not to performing the duties of our relations in life, but to rank; and when the duties are not fulfilled, the affections cannot gain enough strength to fortify the virtue of which they are the natural reward. Still, there are some loopholes through which a man may creep out and dare to think and act for himself. But for a woman it is a Herculean task, because she has difficulties peculiar to her sex to overcome, which require almost superhuman powers.
9.16 A truly benevolent legislator always endeavours to make it the interest of each individual to be virtuous; and thus private virtue becoming the cement of public happiness, an orderly whole is consolidated by the tendency of all the parts towards a common centre. But, the private or public virtue of woman is very problematical; for Rousseau, and a numerous list of male writers, insist that she should all her life be subjected to a severe restraint, that of propriety. Why subject her to propriety—blind propriety, if she be capable of acting from a nobler spring, if she be an heir of immortality? Is sugar always to be produced by vital blood?	A truly benevolent legislator always tries to make it in each individual's interest to be virtuous; and so, with private virtue becoming the cement of public happiness, an orderly whole is consolidated by the tendency of all the parts toward a common center. But the private or public virtue of woman is very doubtful; for Rousseau, and a long list of male writers, insist that she should be subjected all her life to a severe restraint—that of propriety. Why subject her to propriety—blind propriety—if she is capable of acting from a nobler motive, if she is an heir of immortality? Is sugar always to be produced by lifeblood?[4]
Is one half of the human species, like the poor African slaves, to be subject to prejudices that brutalize them, when principles would be a surer guard, only to sweeten the cup of man? Is not this indirectly to deny woman reason? for a gift is a mockery, if it be unfit for use.	Is one half of the human species, like the poor African slaves, to be subjected to prejudices that brutalize them, when principles would be a surer safeguard, only to sweeten man's cup? Is this not indirectly to deny woman reason? For a gift is a mockery if it is unfit for use.

3 The debate is over the slave trade, which Parliament refused to abolish in 1791 despite Prime Minister Pitt's professed support. Cerberus, the three-headed dog guarding the underworld, was pacified with a honeyed sop.
4 Sugar was produced by enslaved labor in the West Indies; a popular boycott of slave-grown sugar was under way in 1791–92.

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9.17	Women are, in common with men, rendered weak and luxurious by the relaxing pleasures which wealth procures; but added to this they are made slaves to their persons, and must render them alluring that man may lend them his reason to guide their tottering steps aright. Or should they be ambitious, they must govern their tyrants by sinister tricks, for without rights there cannot be any incumbent duties. The laws respecting woman, which I mean to discuss in a future part, make an absurd unit of a man and his wife; and then, by the easy transition of only considering him as responsible, she is reduced to a mere cypher.	Women, like men, are made weak and luxurious by the relaxing pleasures that wealth procures. But on top of this they are made slaves to their bodies, and must make them alluring so that man may lend them his reason to guide their tottering steps aright. Or, if they are ambitious, they must govern their tyrants by sinister tricks, for without rights there cannot be any binding duties. The laws concerning woman, which I intend to discuss in a later part, make an absurd unit of a man and his wife; and then, by the easy step of treating only him as responsible, she is reduced to a mere zero.[5]

WOMEN AS CITIZENS

Women's first duties are to themselves as rational beings and as citizens, which requires civil protection and independence.

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9.18	The being who discharges the duties of its station is independent; and, speaking of women at large, their first duty is to themselves as rational creatures, and the next, in point of importance, as citizens, is that, which includes so many, of a mother. The rank in life which dispenses with their fulfilling this duty, necessarily degrades them by making them mere dolls. Or, should they turn to something more important than merely fitting drapery upon a smooth block, their minds are only occupied by some soft platonic attachment; or, the actual management of an intrigue may keep their thoughts in motion; for when they neglect domestic duties, they have it not in their power to take the field and march and counter-march like soldiers, or wrangle in the senate to keep their faculties from rusting.	The being who performs the duties of its station is independent. Speaking of women generally, their first duty is to themselves as rational creatures; and the next in importance, as citizens, is the duty of a mother, which includes so many others. The rank in life that excuses them from fulfilling this duty necessarily degrades them by making them mere dolls. Or, if they turn to something more important than merely fitting drapery on a smooth block, their minds are occupied only by some soft platonic attachment; or the actual management of an intrigue may keep their thoughts in motion. For when they neglect domestic duties, they cannot take the field and march and countermarch like soldiers, or wrangle in the senate, to keep their faculties from rusting.
9.19	I know that as a proof of the inferiority of the sex, Rousseau has exultingly exclaimed, How can they leave the nursery for the camp!—And the camp has by some moralists been termed the school of the most heroic virtues; though, I think, it would puzzle a keen casuist to prove the reasonableness of the greater number of wars that have dubbed heroes. I do not mean to consider this question critically; because, having frequently viewed these freaks of	I know that Rousseau, as proof of women's inferiority, has exclaimed in triumph: How can they leave the nursery for the camp!—And some moralists have called the camp the school of the most heroic virtues; though I think it would puzzle a sharp casuist to prove the reasonableness of most of the wars that have dubbed men heroes. I do not intend to consider this question critically. Having often regarded these freaks of ambition as

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ambition as the first natural mode of civilization, when the ground must be torn up, and the woods cleared by fire and sword, I do not choose to call them pests; but surely the present system of war has little connection with virtue of any denomination, being rather the school of *finesse* and effeminacy, than of fortitude.

9.20 Yet, if defensive war, the only justifiable war, in the present advanced state of society, where virtue can shew its face and ripen amidst the rigours which purify the air on the mountain's top, were alone to be adopted as just and glorious, the true heroism of antiquity might again animate female bosoms.—But fair and softly, gentle reader, male or female, do not alarm thyself, for though I have contrasted the character of a modern soldier with that of a civilized woman, I am not going to advise them to turn their distaff into a musket, though I sincerely wish to see the bayonet converted into a pruning-hook.

I only recreated an imagination, fatigued by contemplating the vices and follies which all proceed from a feculent stream of wealth that has muddied the pure rills of natural affection, by supposing that society will some time or other be so constituted, that man must necessarily fulfil the duties of a citizen, or be despised, and that while he was employed in any of the departments of civil life, his wife, also an active citizen, should be equally intent to manage her family, educate her children, and assist her neighbours.

9.21 But, to render her really virtuous and useful, she must not, if she discharge her civil duties, want, individually, the protection of civil laws; she must not be dependent on her husband's bounty for her subsistence during his life, or support after his death—for how can a being be generous who has nothing of its own? or, virtuous, who is not free? The wife, in the present state of things, who is faithful to her husband, and neither suckles nor educates her children, scarcely deserves the name of a wife, and has no right to that of a citizen. But take away natural rights, and there is of course an end of duties.

9.22 Women thus infallibly become only the wanton solace of men, when they are so weak in mind

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the first natural mode of civilization, when the ground must be torn up and the woods cleared by fire and sword, I do not choose to call them plagues. But surely the present system of war has little connection with virtue of any kind, being the school of *finesse* and effeminacy rather than of fortitude.

Yet if defensive war—the only justifiable war in the present advanced state of society—were alone adopted as just and glorious, a war in which virtue can show its face and ripen amid the rigors that purify the air on the mountaintop, the true heroism of antiquity might again inspire women's hearts.—But gently, softly, reader, male or female, do not be alarmed! Though I have compared the character of a modern soldier with that of a civilized woman, I am not going to advise women to turn their distaffs into muskets—though I sincerely wish to see the bayonet turned into a pruning hook.

I was only refreshing an imagination wearied by contemplating the vices and follies that all flow from a foul stream of wealth, which has muddied the pure brooks of natural affection. I did so by supposing that society will one day be so constituted that a man must necessarily fulfill the duties of a citizen or be despised; and that while he was employed in any department of civil life, his wife, also an active citizen, would be equally intent on managing her family, educating her children, and helping her neighbors.

But to make her really virtuous and useful, she must not, if she performs her civic duties, lack the protection of civil laws as an individual. She must not depend on her husband's generosity for her living during his life, or for her support after his death—for how can a being be generous who has nothing of its own? Or virtuous, who is not free? In the present state of things, the wife who is faithful to her husband, but neither nurses nor educates her children, hardly deserves the name of wife, and has no right to that of citizen. But take away natural rights, and of course there is an end of duties.

Women thus inevitably become merely the wanton comfort of men, when they are so weak in

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and body, that they cannot exert themselves, unless to pursue some frothy pleasure, or to invent some frivolous fashion. What can be a more melancholy sight to a thinking mind, than to look into the numerous carriages that drive helter-skelter about this metropolis in a morning full of pale-faced creatures who are flying from themselves. I have often wished, with Dr. Johnson, to place some of them in a little shop with half a dozen children looking up to their languid countenances for support.

I am much mistaken, if some latent vigour would not soon give health and spirit to their eyes, and some lines drawn by the exercise of reason on the blank cheeks, which before were only undulated by dimples, might restore lost dignity to the character, or rather enable it to attain the true dignity of its nature. Virtue is not to be acquired even by speculation, much less by the negative supineness that wealth naturally generates.

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mind and body that they cannot exert themselves except to pursue some frothy pleasure or invent some frivolous fashion. What can be a more melancholy sight to a thinking mind than to look into the many carriages that drive helter-skelter about this city in the morning, full of pale-faced creatures fleeing from themselves? I have often wished, with Dr. Johnson, to put some of them in a little shop with half a dozen children looking up to their languid faces for support.

Unless I am much mistaken, some hidden vigor would soon bring health and spirit to their eyes; and a few lines drawn by the exercise of reason on those blank cheeks, which before had been rippled only by dimples, might restore lost dignity to the character—or rather enable it to attain the true dignity of its nature. Virtue is not to be acquired even by speculation, much less by the negative passivity that wealth naturally breeds.

REPRESENTATION AND WORK FOR WOMEN

She proposes that women have representatives in government and be able to work as physicians, farmers and shopkeepers.

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9.23 Besides, when poverty is more disgraceful than even vice, is not morality cut to the quick? Still to avoid misconstruction, though I consider that women in the common walks of life are called to fulfil the duties of wives and mothers, by religion and reason, I cannot help lamenting that women of a superiour cast have not a road open by which they can pursue more extensive plans of usefulness and independence. I may excite laughter, by dropping an hint, which I mean to pursue, some future time, for I really think that women ought to have representatives, instead of being arbitrarily governed without having any direct share allowed them in the deliberations of government.

9.24 But, as the whole system of representation is now, in this country, only a convenient handle for despotism, they need not complain, for they are as well represented as a numerous class of hard working mechanics, who pay for the support of royalty when they can scarcely stop their

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Besides, when poverty is more disgraceful than even vice, is not morality cut to the quick? Still, to avoid being misunderstood: though I consider that women in the ordinary walks of life are called by religion and reason to fulfill the duties of wives and mothers, I cannot help lamenting that women of a higher sort have no road open by which they can pursue wider plans of usefulness and independence. I may provoke laughter by dropping a hint, which I mean to pursue at some future time: I really think that women ought to have representatives, instead of being arbitrarily governed without any direct share allowed them in the deliberations of government.

But since the whole system of representation in this country is now only a convenient handle for despotism, they need not complain; they are as well represented as a numerous class of hardworking laborers who pay for the upkeep of royalty when they can scarcely stop their children's

5 Under the English common-law doctrine of coverture, a married woman's legal identity was absorbed into her husband's. The promised later part was never written.

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children's mouths with bread. How are they represented whose very sweat supports the splendid stud of an heir apparent, or varnishes the chariot of some female favourite who looks down on shame? Taxes on the very necessaries of life, enable an endless tribe of idle princes and princesses to pass with stupid pomp before a gaping crowd, who almost worship the very parade which costs them so dear.

This is mere gothic grandeur, something like the barbarous useless parade of having sentinels on horseback at Whitehall, which I could never view without a mixture of contempt and indignation.

9.25 How strangely must the mind be sophisticated when this sort of state impresses it! But, till these monuments of folly are levelled by virtue, similar follies will leaven the whole mass. For the same character, in some degree, will prevail in the aggregate of society: and the refinements of luxury, or the vicious repinings of envious poverty, will equally banish virtue from society, considered as the characteristic of that society, or only allow it to appear as one of the stripes of the harlequin coat, worn by the civilized man.

9.26 In the superiour ranks of life, every duty is done by deputies, as if duties could ever be waved, and the vain pleasures which consequent idleness forces the rich to pursue, appear so enticing to the next rank, that the numerous scramblers for wealth sacrifice every thing to tread on their heels. The most sacred trusts are then considered as sinecures, because they were procured by interest, and only sought to enable a man to keep *good company*. Women, in particular, all want to be ladies. Which is simply to have nothing to do, but listlessly to go they scarcely care where, for they cannot tell what.

9.27 But what have women to do in society? I may be asked, but to loiter with easy grace; surely you would not condemn them all to suckle fools and chronicle small beer! No. Women might certainly study the art of healing, and be physicians as well as nurses. And midwifery, decency seems to allot to them, though I am afraid the word midwife, in our dictionaries, will soon give place to

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mouths with bread. How are they represented whose very sweat supports the splendid stable of an heir apparent, or varnishes the carriage of some female favorite who looks down on shame? Taxes on the very necessities of life enable an endless tribe of idle princes and princesses to pass in stupid pomp before a gaping crowd, who almost worship the very parade that costs them so dear.[6]

This is mere Gothic grandeur, something like the barbarous, useless parade of mounted sentries at Whitehall, which I could never see without a mixture of contempt and indignation.[7]

How strangely corrupted the mind must be when this sort of pomp impresses it! But until these monuments of folly are leveled by virtue, similar follies will leaven the whole lump. For the same character will, to some degree, prevail throughout society as a whole; and the refinements of luxury, or the vicious grumbling of envious poverty, will equally banish virtue from society, considered as the characteristic of that society, or will allow it to appear only as one of the stripes of the harlequin coat worn by civilized man.

In the upper ranks of life every duty is done by deputies, as if duties could ever be waived; and the vain pleasures that the resulting idleness forces the rich to pursue appear so enticing to the rank below that the numerous scramblers for wealth sacrifice everything to tread on their heels. The most sacred trusts are then regarded as sinecures, because they were obtained through influence and sought only to enable a man to keep *good company*. Women, in particular, all want to be ladies—which simply means having nothing to do but go listlessly they hardly care where, for they cannot tell what.

But what have women to do in society, I may be asked, except to idle about with easy grace? Surely you would not condemn them all to suckle fools and chronicle small beer! No. Women might certainly study the art of healing, and be physicians as well as nurses. And decency seems to assign midwifery to them—though I am afraid the word midwife will soon give way in our dictionaries to

6 The heir apparent was the Prince of Wales, the future George IV, notorious for his debts, horses and mistresses.
7 The mounted guard of the Horse Guards at Whitehall, London, still posted there today.

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accoucheur, and one proof of the former delicacy of the sex be effaced from the language.

9.28 They might, also, study politics, and settle their benevolence on the broadest basis; for the reading of history will scarcely be more useful than the perusal of romances, if read as mere biography; if the character of the times, the political improvements, arts, &c. be not observed. In short, if it be not considered as the history of man; and not of particular men, who filled a niche in the temple of fame, and dropped into the black rolling stream of time, that silently sweeps all before it, into the shapeless void called—eternity.—For shape, can it be called, 'that shape hath none?'

9.29 Business of various kinds, they might likewise pursue, if they were educated in a more orderly manner, which might save many from common and legal prostitution. Women would not then marry for a support, as men accept of places under government, and neglect the implied duties; nor would an attempt to earn their own subsistence, a most laudable one! sink them almost to the level of those poor abandoned creatures who live by prostitution. For are not milliners and mantua-makers reckoned the next class?

The few employments open to women, so far from being liberal, are menial; and when a superiour education enables them to take charge of the education of children as governesses, they are not treated like the tutors of sons, though even clerical tutors are not always treated in a manner calculated to render them respectable in the eyes of their pupils, to say nothing of the private comfort of the individual.

But as women educated like gentlewomen, are never designed for the humiliating situation which necessity sometimes forces them to fill; these situations are considered in the light of a degradation; and they know little of the human heart, who need to be told, that nothing so painfully sharpens the sensibility as such a fall in life.

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accoucheur, and one proof of women's former delicacy be erased from the language.[8]

They might also study politics, and base their benevolence on the broadest foundation. Reading history will hardly be more useful than reading romances if it is read as mere biography, and the character of the times, political improvements, the arts, and so on are not noticed. In short, history must be read as the history of humanity, and not of particular men who filled a niche in the temple of fame and then dropped into the black, rolling stream of time, which silently sweeps everything before it into the shapeless void called —eternity.—For can it be called a shape, "that shape hath none"?[9]

They might likewise go into business of various kinds, if they were educated in a more orderly way, and this might save many from common and legal prostitution. Women would not then marry for support, the way men accept government posts and neglect the duties that come with them. Nor would an attempt to earn their own living (a most praiseworthy attempt!) sink them almost to the level of those poor abandoned creatures who live by prostitution. For are not milliners and dressmakers counted as the next class down?

The few jobs open to women, far from being liberal professions, are menial. When a superior education enables them to take charge of children's education as governesses, they are not treated like the tutors of sons. Yet even clergymen who work as tutors are not always treated in a way that makes them respected in their pupils' eyes, to say nothing of their private comfort.

But women educated as gentlewomen are never intended for the humiliating situations that necessity sometimes forces them into, so these situations are seen as a degradation. Anyone who needs to be told that nothing sharpens sensibility so painfully as such a fall in life knows little of the human heart.

8 "To suckle fools and chronicle small beer" is Iago's sneer at women's proper sphere in Shakespeare's *Othello* (2.1). *Accoucheur* is French for a male obstetrician: men were displacing female midwives in her day.
9 Echoes Milton's description of Death in *Paradise Lost* (2.666–67): "If shape it might be called that shape had none."

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Some of these women might be restrained from marrying by a proper spirit or delicacy, and others may not have had it in their power to escape in this pitiful way from servitude; is not that government then very defective, and very unmindful of the happiness of one half of its members, that does not provide for honest, independent women, by encouraging them to fill respectable stations? But in order to render their private virtue a public benefit, they must have a civil existence in the state, married or single; else we shall continually see some worthy woman, whose sensibility has been rendered painfully acute by undeserved contempt, droop like 'the lily broken down by a plow-share.'	Some of these women might be kept from marrying by a proper spirit or delicacy. Others may not have had the chance to escape servitude in this pitiful way. Is not a government very defective, then, and very careless of the happiness of half its members, if it does not provide for honest, independent women by encouraging them to fill respectable positions? But if their private virtue is to become a public benefit, they must have a civil existence in the state, married or single. Otherwise we shall continually see some worthy woman, whose sensibility has been made painfully acute by undeserved contempt, droop like “the lily broken down by a plowshare.”
9.31 It is a melancholy truth; yet such is the blessed effect of civilization! the most respectable women are the most oppressed; and, unless they have understandings far superiour to the common run of understandings, taking in both sexes, they must, from being treated like contemptible beings, become contemptible.	It is a melancholy truth (yet such is the blessed effect of civilization!) that the most respectable women are the most oppressed. Unless their understandings are far above the common run of understandings in both sexes, they must become contemptible from being treated as contemptible beings.
How many women thus waste life away the prey of discontent, who might have practised as physicians, regulated a farm, managed a shop, and stood erect, supported by their own industry, instead of hanging their heads surcharged with the dew of sensibility, that consumes the beauty to which it at first gave lustre; nay, I doubt whether pity and love are so near akin as poets feign, for I have seldom seen much compassion excited by the helplessness of females, unless they were fair; then, perhaps, pity was the soft handmaid of love, or the harbinger of lust.	How many women waste their lives away like this, a prey to discontent, who might have practiced as physicians, run a farm, managed a shop, and stood upright, supported by their own work! Instead they hang their heads, weighed down with the dew of sensibility, which consumes the beauty it at first gave luster to. Indeed, I doubt whether pity and love are as closely related as poets pretend, for I have seldom seen much compassion aroused by the helplessness of women unless they were pretty. Then, perhaps, pity was the gentle handmaid of love, or the forerunner of lust.
9.32 How much more respectable is the woman who earns her own bread by fulfilling any duty, than the most accomplished beauty!—beauty did I say?—so sensible am I of the beauty of moral loveliness, or the harmonious propriety that attunes the passions of a well-regulated mind, that I blush at making the comparison; yet I sigh to think how few women aim at attaining this respectability by withdrawing from the giddy whirl of pleasure, or the indolent calm that stupifies the good sort of women it sucks in.	How much more respectable is the woman who earns her own bread by fulfilling any duty than the most accomplished beauty!—beauty, did I say? I am so conscious of the beauty of moral loveliness, the harmonious propriety that tunes the passions of a well-regulated mind, that I blush at making the comparison. Yet I sigh to think how few women aim at this respectability by withdrawing from the giddy whirl of pleasure, or from the lazy calm that stupefies the good sort of women it sucks in.
9.33 Proud of their weakness, however, they must always be protected, guarded from care, and all the rough toils that dignify the mind.—If this be	Proud of their weakness, however, they must always be protected, guarded from care and from all the rough labors that dignify the mind.—If this is

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the fiat of fate, if they will make themselves insignificant and contemptible, sweetly to waste 'life away' let them not expect to be valued when their beauty fades, for it is the fate of the fairest flowers to be admired and pulled to pieces by the careless hand that plucked them.

In how many ways do I wish, from the purest benevolence, to impress this truth on my sex; yet I fear that they will not listen to a truth that dear bought experience has brought home to many an agitated bosom, nor willingly resign the privileges of rank and sex for the privileges of humanity, to which those have no claim who do not discharge its duties.

9.34 Those writers are particularly useful, in my opinion, who make man feel for man, independent of the station he fills, or the drapery of factitious sentiments. I then would fain convince reasonable men of the importance of some of my remarks, and prevail on them to weigh dispassionately the whole tenor of my observations.—I appeal to their understandings; and, as a fellow-creature claim, in the name of my sex, some interest in their hearts. I entreat them to assist to emancipate their companion, to make her a help meet for them!

9.35 Would men but generously snap our chains, and be content with rational fellowship instead of slavish obedience, they would find us more observant daughters, more affectionate sisters, more faithful wives, more reasonable mothers—in a word, better citizens. We should then love them with true affection, because we should learn to respect ourselves; and the peace of mind of a worthy man would not be interrupted by the idle vanity of his wife, nor his babes sent to nestle in a strange bosom, having never found a home in their mother's.

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the decree of fate, if they will make themselves insignificant and contemptible, sweetly to waste "life away," then let them not expect to be valued when their beauty fades. It is the fate of the fairest flowers to be admired and then pulled to pieces by the careless hand that plucked them.

In how many ways do I wish, out of the purest benevolence, to impress this truth on my sex! Yet I fear they will not listen to a truth that dearly bought experience has brought home to many an agitated heart. Nor will they willingly give up the privileges of rank and sex for the privileges of humanity, and those who do not fulfill humanity's duties have no claim to them.

In my opinion the most useful writers are those who make one human being feel for another, regardless of the station he fills or the drapery of artificial sentiments. So I would gladly convince reasonable men of the importance of some of my remarks, and persuade them to weigh the whole drift of my observations without passion.—I appeal to their understandings. As a fellow creature, I claim in the name of my sex some place in their hearts. I beg them to help emancipate their companion, to make her a help meet for them![10]

If men would only generously snap our chains, and be content with rational fellowship instead of slavish obedience, they would find us more attentive daughters, more affectionate sisters, more faithful wives, more reasonable mothers—in a word, better citizens. We would then love them with true affection, because we would learn to respect ourselves. A worthy man's peace of mind would not be disturbed by his wife's idle vanity, and his babies would not be sent to nestle at a stranger's breast, never having found a home at their mother's.

10 "An help meet for him": God's phrase for the woman in Genesis 2:18.

Chapter X: Parental Affection

Parental love is often a pretext for tyranny; a good mother needs understanding.

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10.1 Parental affection is, perhaps, the blindest modification of perverse self-love; for we have not, like the French[1], two terms to distinguish the pursuit of a natural and reasonable desire, from the ignorant calculations of weakness. Parents often love their children in the most brutal manner, and sacrifice every relative duty to promote their advancement in the world.—To promote, such is the perversity of unprincipled prejudices, the future welfare of the very beings whose present existence they embitter by the most despotic stretch of power. Power, in fact, is ever true to its vital principle, for in every shape it would reign without controul or inquiry.

Its throne is built across a dark abyss, which no eye must dare to explore, lest the baseless fabric should totter under investigation. Obedience, unconditional obedience, is the catch-word of tyrants of every description, and to render 'assurance doubly sure,' one kind of despotism supports another. Tyrants would have cause to tremble if reason were to become the rule of duty in any of the relations of life, for the light might spread till perfect day appeared. And when it did appear, how would men smile at the sight of the bugbears at which they started during the night of ignorance, or the twilight of timid inquiry.

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10.2 Parental affection, indeed, in many minds, is but a pretext to tyrannize where it can be done with impunity, for only good and wise men are content with the respect that will bear discussion. Convinced that they have a right to what they

[1] *L'amour propre. L'amour de soi-même.*

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Parental affection is perhaps the blindest form of perverse self-love. Unlike the French[1], we have no pair of terms to distinguish the pursuit of a natural and reasonable desire from the ignorant calculations of weakness. Parents often love their children in the most brutal way, and sacrifice every duty they owe to others in order to advance them in the world.—They mean to promote (such is the perversity of unprincipled prejudices) the future welfare of the very beings whose present existence they embitter by the most despotic stretch of power. Power, in fact, is always true to its vital principle, for in every form it wants to reign without check or question.

Its throne is built over a dark abyss that no eye must dare explore, for fear the baseless structure should totter under investigation. Obedience, unconditional obedience, is the catchword of tyrants of every kind, and to make “assurance doubly sure,” one kind of despotism props up another. Tyrants would have reason to tremble if reason became the rule of duty in any of life’s relationships, for the light might spread until full day appeared. And when it did, how people would smile at the bogeymen that startled them during the night of ignorance, or the twilight of timid inquiry!

In many minds, indeed, parental affection is only a pretext for tyrannizing where it can be done with impunity, for only good and wise men are content with a respect that will stand up to discussion. Convinced that they have a right to what

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[1] *L’amour propre. L’amour de soi-même.*[1]

1 Rousseau’s distinction between *amour-propre* (vain, comparative self-love) and *amour de soi* (natural, healthy self-regard).

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insist on, they do not fear reason, or dread the sifting of subjects that recur to natural justice: because they firmly believe that the more enlightened the human mind becomes the deeper root will just and simple principles take. They do not rest in expedients, or grant that what is metaphysically true can be practically false; but disdaining the shifts of the moment they calmly wait till time, sanctioning innovation, silences the hiss of selfishness or envy.

10.3 If the power of reflecting on the past, and darting the keen eye of contemplation into futurity, be the grand privilege of man, it must be granted that some people enjoy this prerogative in a very limited degree. Every thing now appears to them wrong; and not able to distinguish the possible from the monstrous, they fear where no fear should find a place, running from the light of reason, as if it were a firebrand; yet the limits of the possible have never been defined to stop the sturdy innovator's hand.

10.4 Woman, however, a slave in every situation to prejudice, seldom exerts enlightened maternal affection; for she either neglects her children, or spoils them by improper indulgence. Besides, the affection of some women for their children is, as I have before termed it, frequently very brutish: for it eradicates every spark of humanity. Justice, truth, every thing is sacrificed by these Rebekah's, and for the sake of their *own* children they violate the most sacred duties, forgetting the common relationship that binds the whole family on earth together. Yet, reason seems to say, that they who suffer one duty, or affection, to swallow up the rest, have not sufficient heart or mind to fulfil that one conscientiously.

It then loses the venerable aspect of a duty, and assumes the fantastic form of a whim.

10.5 As the care of children in their infancy is one of the grand duties annexed to the female character by nature, this duty would afford many forcible arguments for strengthening the female understanding, if it were properly considered.

10.6 The formation of the mind must be begun very early, and the temper, in particular, requires the

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they insist on, they do not fear reason or dread the sifting of questions that go back to natural justice. They firmly believe that the more enlightened the human mind becomes, the deeper just and simple principles will take root. They do not settle for expedients, or grant that what is true in principle can be false in practice. Disdaining the shifts of the moment, they calmly wait until time sanctions innovation and silences the hiss of selfishness or envy.

If the power to reflect on the past, and to dart the keen eye of contemplation into the future, is humanity's great privilege, it must be granted that some people enjoy this prerogative only to a very limited degree. Everything now looks wrong to them. Unable to tell the possible from the monstrous, they fear where fear has no place, and run from the light of reason as if it were a firebrand. Yet the limits of the possible have never been defined in a way that could stop the sturdy innovator's hand.

Woman, however, is in every situation a slave to prejudice, and so she seldom shows enlightened maternal affection. She either neglects her children or spoils them by improper indulgence. Besides, the affection of some women for their children is often, as I have called it before, very brutish, for it roots out every spark of humanity. Justice, truth, everything is sacrificed by these Rebekahs. For the sake of their *own* children they violate the most sacred duties, forgetting the common kinship that binds the whole family on earth together. Yet reason seems to say that those who let one duty, or one affection, swallow up all the rest do not have enough heart or mind to fulfill even that one conscientiously.[3]

It then loses the venerable look of a duty, and takes on the fantastic shape of a whim.

Nature has attached the care of children in infancy to the female character as one of its great duties. If this duty were properly considered, it would supply many forceful arguments for strengthening women's understanding.

The formation of the mind must begin very early, and the temper in particular needs the most judicious attention. Women cannot give that attention

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most judicious attention—an attention which women cannot pay who only love their children because they are their children, and seek no further for the foundation of their duty, than in the feelings of the moment. It is this want of reason in their affections which makes women so often run into extremes, and either be the most fond or most careless and unnatural mothers.

10.7 To be a good mother—a woman must have sense, and that independence of mind which few women possess who are taught to depend entirely on their husbands. Meek wives are, in general, foolish mothers; wanting their children to love them best, and take their part, in secret, against the father, who is held up as a scarecrow.

If they are to be punished, though they have offended the mother, the father must inflict the punishment; he must be the judge in all disputes: but I shall more fully discuss this subject when I treat of private education, I now only mean to insist, that unless the understanding of woman be enlarged, and her character rendered more firm, by being allowed to govern her own conduct, she will never have sufficient sense or command of temper to manage her children properly.

Her parental affection, indeed, scarcely deserves the name, when it does not lead her to suckle her children, because the discharge of this duty is equally calculated to inspire maternal and filial affection: and it is the indispensable duty of men and women to fulfil the duties which give birth to affections that are the surest preservatives against vice. Natural affection, as it is termed, I believe to be a very faint tie, affections must grow out of the habitual exercise of a mutual sympathy; and what sympathy does a mother exercise who sends her babe to a nurse, and only takes it from a nurse to send it to a school?

10.8 In the exercise of their maternal feelings providence has furnished women with a natural substitute for love, when the lover becomes only a friend and mutual confidence takes place of overstrained admiration—a child then gently twists the relaxing cord, and a mutual care produces a new mutual sympathy.—But a child, though a pledge of affection, will not enliven it, if

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if they love their children only because they are their children, and look for the foundation of their duty no further than the feelings of the moment. It is this lack of reason in their affections that so often makes women run to extremes, so that they are either the fondest mothers or the most careless and unnatural ones.

To be a good mother, a woman must have sense, and that independence of mind which few women possess who are taught to depend entirely on their husbands. Meek wives are, in general, foolish mothers. They want their children to love them best, and to take their side in secret against the father, who is held up as a bogeyman.

If the children are to be punished, the father must inflict the punishment, even when it is the mother they have offended; he must be the judge in all disputes. But I shall discuss this subject more fully when I deal with private education. For now I only mean to insist on one point: unless woman's understanding is enlarged, and her character made firmer by being allowed to govern her own conduct, she will never have enough sense or self-command to manage her children properly.

Her parental affection, indeed, hardly deserves the name if it does not lead her to breastfeed her children. Fulfilling this duty is equally suited to inspire maternal and filial affection, and men and women are absolutely bound to fulfill the duties that give birth to the affections, which are the surest safeguards against vice. What is called natural affection I believe to be a very faint tie. Affections must grow out of the habitual exercise of mutual sympathy. And what sympathy does a mother exercise who sends her baby to a wet nurse, and takes it back from the nurse only to send it to school?

In the exercise of their maternal feelings, providence has given women a natural substitute for love. Once the lover has become only a friend, and mutual trust has taken the place of overstrained admiration, a child gently twists the slackening cord, and a shared care produces a new mutual sympathy.—But a child, though a pledge of affec-

3 Rebekah helped her favorite son Jacob deceive his blind father Isaac and cheat his brother Esau of the paternal blessing (Genesis 27).

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both father and mother are content to transfer the charge to hirelings; for they who do their duty by proxy should not murmur if they miss the reward of duty—parental affection produces filial duty.

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tion, will not enliven it if both father and mother are content to hand the charge over to hired help. Those who do their duty by proxy should not complain if they miss the reward of duty—parental affection produces filial duty.

Chapter XI: Duty to Parents

Children owe parents respect earned by reason and care, not blind obedience.

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11.1	There seems to be an indolent propensity in man to make prescription always take place of reason, and to place every duty on an arbitrary foundation. The rights of kings are deduced in a direct line from the King of kings; and that of parents from our first parent.	Human beings seem to have a lazy tendency to let established custom always take the place of reason, and to set every duty on an arbitrary foundation. The rights of kings are traced in a direct line from the King of kings, and the rights of parents from our first parent.
11.2	Why do we thus go back for principles that should always rest on the same base, and have the same weight to-day that they had a thousand years ago —and not a jot more? If parents discharge their duty they have a strong hold and sacred claim on the gratitude of their children; but few parents are willing to receive the respectful affection of their offspring on such terms. They demand blind obedience, because they do not merit a reasonable service: and to render these demands of weakness and ignorance more binding, a mysterious sanctity is spread round the most arbitrary principle; for what other name can be given to the blind duty of obeying vicious or weak beings merely because they obeyed a powerful instinct?	Why do we go back like this for principles that should always rest on the same base, and have the same weight today that they had a thousand years ago—and not one bit more? If parents do their duty, they have a strong hold and a sacred claim on their children's gratitude. But few parents are willing to receive their children's respectful affection on such terms. They demand blind obedience because they do not deserve a reasonable service. To make these demands of weakness and ignorance more binding, a mysterious sanctity is spread around the most arbitrary principle. For what other name can be given to the blind duty of obeying vicious or weak beings merely because they obeyed a powerful instinct?
11.3	The simple definition of the reciprocal duty, which naturally subsists between parent and child, may be given in a few words: The parent who pays proper attention to helpless infancy has a right to require the same attention when the feebleness of age comes upon him. But to subjugate a rational being to the mere will of another, after he is of age to answer to society for his own conduct, is a most cruel and undue stretch of power; and, perhaps, as injurious to morality as those religious systems which do not allow right and wrong to have any existence, but in the Divine will.	The reciprocal duty that naturally exists between parent and child can be defined simply, in a few words. The parent who pays proper attention to helpless infancy has a right to require the same attention when the feebleness of age comes upon him. But to subject a rational being to the mere will of another, after he is old enough to answer to society for his own conduct, is a most cruel and unjustified stretch of power. It is perhaps as harmful to morality as those religious systems that allow right and wrong no existence except in the Divine will.
11.4	I never knew a parent who had paid more than common attention to his children, disregarded[1]; on the contrary, the early habit of relying almost implicitly on the opinion of a respected parent is not easily shook, even when matured reason	I never knew a parent who had paid more than ordinary attention to his children to be disregarded by them[1]. On the contrary, the early habit of relying almost implicitly on the opinion of a respected parent is not easily shaken, even when mature

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convinces the child that his father is not the wisest man in the world. This weakness, for a weakness it is, though the epithet amiable may be tacked to it, a reasonable man must steel himself against; for the absurd duty, too often inculcated, of obeying a parent only on account of his being a parent, shackles the mind, and prepares it for a slavish submission to any power but reason.

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11.5 I distinguish between the natural and accidental duty due to parents.

11.6 The parent who sedulously endeavours to form the heart and enlarge the understanding of his child, has given that dignity to the discharge of a duty, common to the whole animal world, that only reason can give. This is the parental affection of humanity, and leaves instinctive natural affection far behind. Such a parent acquires all the rights of the most sacred friendship, and his advice, even when his child is advanced in life, demands serious consideration.

11.7 With respect to marriage, though after one and twenty a parent seems to have no right to withhold his consent on any account; yet twenty years of solicitude call for a turn, and the son ought, at least, to promise not to marry for two or three years, should the object of his choice not entirely meet with the approbation of his first friend.

11.8 But, respect for parents is, generally speaking, a much more debasing principle; it is only a selfish respect for property. The father who is blindly obeyed, is obeyed from sheer weakness, or from motives that degrade the human character.

11.9 A great proportion of the misery that wanders, in hideous forms around the world, is allowed to rise from the negligence of parents; and still these are the people who are most tenacious of what they term a natural right, though it be subversive of the birth-right of man, the right of acting according to the direction of his own reason.

11.10 I have already very frequently had occasion to observe, that vicious or indolent people are

[1] Dr. Johnson makes the same observation.

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reason convinces the child that his father is not the wisest man in the world. A reasonable man must steel himself against this weakness, for a weakness it is, though the word “amiable” may be tacked onto it. The absurd duty, too often taught, of obeying a parent only because he is a parent shackles the mind, and prepares it for slavish submission to any power but reason.

I distinguish between the natural and the accidental duty owed to parents.

The whole animal world shares the duty of caring for its young. The parent who diligently tries to form his child’s heart and enlarge his child’s understanding has given the fulfillment of that duty the dignity that only reason can give. This is the parental affection of humanity, and it leaves instinctive natural affection far behind. Such a parent acquires all the rights of the most sacred friendship, and his advice demands serious consideration even when his child is grown.

As for marriage, after the age of twenty-one a parent seems to have no right to withhold his consent on any grounds. Still, twenty years of care call for some return. The son ought at least to promise not to marry for two or three years if the person he has chosen does not fully meet with the approval of his first friend.

But respect for parents is, generally speaking, a much more degrading principle: it is only a selfish respect for property. The father who is blindly obeyed is obeyed out of sheer weakness, or from motives that degrade human character.

A great part of the misery that wanders in hideous forms around the world is admitted to arise from the negligence of parents. Yet these are the very people who cling most tightly to what they call a natural right, even though it overturns humanity’s birthright, the right to act as one’s own reason directs.

I have already had frequent occasion to observe that vicious or lazy people are always eager to

[1] Dr. Johnson makes the same observation.

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always eager to profit by enforcing arbitrary privileges; and, generally, in the same proportion as they neglect the discharge of the duties which alone render the privileges reasonable. This is at the bottom a dictate of common sense, or the instinct of self-defence, peculiar to ignorant weakness; resembling that instinct, which makes a fish muddy the water it swims in to elude its enemy, instead of boldly facing it in the clear stream.

11.11 From the clear stream of argument, indeed, the supporters of prescription, of every denomination, fly; and, taking refuge in the darkness, which, in the language of sublime poetry, has been supposed to surround the throne of Omnipotence, they dare to demand that implicit respect which is only due to His unsearchable ways. But, let me not be thought presumptuous, the darkness which hides our God from us, only respects speculative truths—it never obscures moral ones, they shine clearly, for God is light, and never, by the constitution of our nature, requires the discharge of a duty, the reasonableness of which does not beam on us when we open our eyes.

11.12 The indolent parent of high rank may, it is true, extort a shew of respect from his child, and females on the continent are particularly subject to the views of their families, who never think of consulting their inclination, or providing for the comfort of the poor victims of their pride. The consequence is notorious; these dutiful daughters become adulteresses, and neglect the education of their children, from whom they, in their turn, exact the same kind of obedience.

11.13 Females, it is true, in all countries, are too much under the dominion of their parents; and few parents think of addressing their children in the following manner, though it is in this reasonable way that Heaven seems to command the whole human race, it is your interest to obey me till you can judge for yourself; and the Almighty Father of all has implanted an affection in me to serve as a guard to you whilst your reason is unfolding; but when your mind arrives at maturity, you must only obey me, or rather respect my opinions, so far as they coincide with the light that is breaking in on your own mind.

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profit by enforcing arbitrary privileges. Generally they are eager in the same proportion as they neglect the duties that alone make those privileges reasonable. At bottom this is a dictate of common sense, or rather the instinct of self-defense peculiar to ignorant weakness. It resembles the instinct that makes a fish muddy the water it swims in to elude its enemy, instead of boldly facing it in the clear stream.

Indeed, the defenders of established custom, of every kind, flee from the clear stream of argument. They take refuge in the darkness that sublime poetry has imagined surrounding the throne of the Almighty, and dare to demand the implicit respect that is due only to His unsearchable ways. But (let me not be thought presumptuous) the darkness that hides our God from us concerns only speculative truths. It never obscures moral ones; they shine clearly, for God is light. By the constitution of our nature, he never requires us to perform a duty whose reasonableness does not shine on us when we open our eyes.

The lazy parent of high rank may, it is true, extort a show of respect from his child. Women on the Continent are particularly subject to the designs of their families, who never think of consulting their inclinations or providing for the comfort of the poor victims of their pride. The consequence is notorious. These dutiful daughters become adulteresses and neglect the education of their children, and in their turn they demand the same kind of obedience from them.

It is true that in all countries women are too much under the dominion of their parents. Few parents think of addressing their children in the following way, though it is in this reasonable way that Heaven seems to command the whole human race: “It is in your interest to obey me until you can judge for yourself. The Almighty Father of all has implanted an affection in me to serve as a guard for you while your reason is unfolding. But when your mind reaches maturity, you must obey me, or rather respect my opinions, only so far as they agree with the light that is breaking in on your own mind.”

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11.14 A slavish bondage to parents cramps every faculty of the mind; and Mr. Locke very judiciously observes, that 'if the mind be curbed and humbled too much in children; if their spirits be abased and broken much by too strict an hand over them; they lose all their vigour and industry.' This strict hand may in some degree account for the weakness of women; for girls, from various causes, are more kept down by their parents, in every sense of the word, than boys.

The duty expected from them is, like all the duties arbitrarily imposed on women, more from a sense of propriety, more out of respect for decorum than reason; and thus taught slavishly to submit to their parents, they are prepared for the slavery of marriage. I may be told that a number of women are not slaves in the marriage state. True, but they then become tyrants; for it is not rational freedom, but a lawless kind of power resembling the authority exercised by the favourites of absolute monarchs, which they obtain by debasing means.

I do not, likewise, dream of insinuating that either boys or girls are always slaves, I only insist that when they are obliged to submit to authority blindly, their faculties are weakened, and their tempers rendered imperious or abject. I also lament that parents, indolently availing themselves of a supposed privilege, damp the first faint glimmering of reason, rendering at the same time the duty, which they are so anxious to enforce, an empty name; because they will not let it rest on the only basis on which a duty can rest securely: for unless it be founded on knowledge, it cannot gain sufficient strength to resist the squalls of passion, or the silent sapping of self-love.

But it is not the parents who have given the surest proof of their affection for their children, or, to speak more properly, who by fulfilling their duty, have allowed a natural parental affection to take root in their hearts, the child of exercised sympathy and reason, and not the over-weening offspring of selfish pride, who most vehemently insist on their children submitting to their will merely because it is their will. On the contrary, the parent, who sets a good example, patiently

A slavish bondage to parents cramps every faculty of the mind. Mr. Locke very wisely observes that "if the mind be curbed and humbled too much in children; if their spirits be abased and broken much by too strict a hand over them; they lose all their vigor and industry." This strict hand may partly account for the weakness of women, since girls, for various reasons, are kept down by their parents more than boys are, in every sense of the word.[2]

The duty expected of them is, like all the duties arbitrarily imposed on women, more a matter of propriety, more out of respect for decorum than for reason. Taught in this way to submit slavishly to their parents, they are prepared for the slavery of marriage. I may be told that many women are not slaves in marriage. True, but then they become tyrants. What they obtain by degrading means is not rational freedom but a lawless kind of power, like the authority exercised by the favorites of absolute monarchs.

Nor do I dream of suggesting that boys or girls are always slaves. I only insist that when they are obliged to submit blindly to authority, their faculties are weakened and their tempers made either imperious or abject. I also lament that parents, lazily taking advantage of a supposed privilege, damp the first faint glimmer of reason. At the same time they make the duty they are so anxious to enforce an empty name, because they will not let it rest on the only basis on which a duty can rest securely. Unless it is founded on knowledge, it cannot gain enough strength to resist the squalls of passion or the silent undermining of self-love.

But the parents who most vehemently insist that their children submit to their will, merely because it is their will, are not those who have given the surest proof of their affection for their children. More properly, they are not the parents who have fulfilled their duty and so allowed a natural parental affection to take root in their hearts, one that is the child of exercised sympathy and reason and not the overbearing offspring of selfish pride. On the contrary, the parent who sets a good example

2 John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693).

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lets that example work; and it seldom fails to produce its natural effect—filial respect.	patiently lets that example work, and it seldom fails to produce its natural effect—filial respect.
11.15 Children cannot be taught too early to submit to reason, the true definition of that necessity, which Rousseau insisted on, without defining it; for to submit to reason is to submit to the nature of things, and to that God, who formed them so, to promote our real interest.	Children cannot be taught too early to submit to reason. Reason is the true definition of the necessity that Rousseau insisted on without defining it, for to submit to reason is to submit to the nature of things, and to the God who made them so in order to promote our real interest.[3]
11.16 Why should the minds of children be warped as they just begin to expand, only to favour the indolence of parents, who insist on a privilege without being willing to pay the price fixed by nature? I have before had occasion to observe, that a right always includes a duty, and I think it may, likewise, fairly be inferred, that they forfeit the right, who do not fulfil the duty.	Why should children's minds be warped just as they begin to expand, merely to indulge the laziness of parents who insist on a privilege without being willing to pay the price nature has fixed for it? I have had occasion before to observe that a right always includes a duty. I think it may also fairly be inferred that those who do not fulfill the duty forfeit the right.
11.17 It is easier, I grant, to command than reason; but it does not follow from hence that children cannot comprehend the reason why they are made to do certain things habitually; for, from a steady adherence to a few simple principles of conduct flows that salutary power which a judicious parent gradually gains over a child's mind. And this power becomes strong indeed, if tempered by an even display of affection brought home to the child's heart. For I believe, as a general rule, it must be allowed that the affection which we inspire always resembles that we cultivate; so that natural affections, which have been supposed almost distinct from reason, may be found more nearly connected with judgment than is commonly allowed.	It is easier, I grant, to command than to reason. But it does not follow that children cannot understand why they are made to do certain things habitually. A judicious parent gradually gains a healthy power over a child's mind, and that power flows from a steady adherence to a few simple principles of conduct. It becomes strong indeed if it is tempered by a steady display of affection brought home to the child's heart. I believe it must be allowed, as a general rule, that the affection we inspire always resembles the affection we cultivate. So natural affections, which have been thought almost separate from reason, may turn out to be more closely connected with judgment than is commonly admitted.
Nay, as another proof of the necessity of cultivating the female understanding, it is but just to observe, that the affections seem to have a kind of animal capriciousness when they merely reside in the heart.	Indeed, as a further proof that women's understanding needs to be cultivated, it is only fair to observe that the affections seem to have a kind of animal capriciousness when they reside merely in the heart.
11.18 It is the irregular exercise of parental authority that first injures the mind, and to these irregularities girls are more subject than boys. The will of those who never allow their will to be disputed, unless they happen to be in a good humour, when they relax proportionally, is almost always unreasonable.	It is the irregular exercise of parental authority that first injures the mind, and girls are more subject to these irregularities than boys. Some people never allow their will to be disputed unless they happen to be in a good mood, and then they relax to the same degree. Their will is almost always unreasonable.
To elude this arbitrary authority girls very early learn the lessons which they afterwards practise	To elude this arbitrary authority, girls learn very early the lessons they later practice on their hus-

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on their husbands; for I have frequently seen a little sharp-faced miss rule a whole family, excepting that now and then mamma's anger will burst out of some accidental cloud; either her hair was ill dressed[2], or she had lost more money at cards, the night before, than she was willing to own to her husband; or some such moral cause of anger.

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11.19 After observing sallies of this kind, I have been led into a melancholy train of reflection respecting females, concluding that when their first affection must lead them astray, or make their duties clash till they rest on mere whims and customs, little can be expected from them as they advance in life. How indeed can an instructor remedy this evil? for to teach them virtue on any solid principle is to teach them to despise their parents. Children cannot, ought not, to be taught to make allowance for the faults of their parents, because every such allowance weakens the force of reason in their minds, and makes them still more indulgent to their own.

It is one of the most sublime virtues of maturity that leads us to be severe with respect to ourselves, and forbearing to others; but children should only be taught the simple virtues, for if they begin too early to make allowance for human passions and manners, they wear off the fine edge of the criterion by which they should regulate their own, and become unjust in the same proportion as they grow indulgent.

11.20 The affections of children, and weak people, are always selfish; they love others, because others love them, and not on account of their virtues. Yet, till esteem and love are blended together in the first affection, and reason made the foundation of the first duty, morality will stumble at the threshold. But, till society is very differently constituted, parents, I fear, will still insist on being obeyed, because they will be obeyed, and constantly endeavour to settle that

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bands. I have often seen a sharp-faced little miss rule a whole family, except when mamma's anger now and then bursts out of some chance cloud. Either her hair was badly dressed[2], or she had lost more money at cards the night before than she wanted to admit to her husband, or there was some other such moral cause of anger.

Watching outbursts of this kind has led me into a melancholy train of reflection about women. I conclude that when their first affection must lead them astray, or set their duties in conflict until those duties rest on mere whims and customs, little can be expected of them as they grow older. How, indeed, can a teacher remedy this evil? To teach them virtue on any solid principle is to teach them to despise their parents. Children cannot, and ought not to, be taught to make allowances for their parents' faults, because every such allowance weakens the force of reason in their minds and makes them still more indulgent toward their own.

It is one of the most sublime virtues of maturity that leads us to be severe with ourselves and forbearing toward others. But children should be taught only the simple virtues. If they begin too early to make allowances for human passions and manners, they wear down the fine edge of the standard by which they should regulate their own, and become unjust in the same proportion as they grow indulgent.

The affections of children, and of weak people, are always selfish. They love others because others love them, and not on account of their virtues. Yet until esteem and love are blended together in the first affection, and reason is made the foundation of the first duty, morality will stumble at the threshold. But until society is constituted very differently, parents will still, I fear, insist on being obeyed because they will be obeyed. They will

3 In *Emile*, Rousseau wants children to yield only to "necessity," the force of things, and never to another person's will.

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[2] I myself heard a little girl once say to a servant, 'My mamma has been scolding me finely this morning, because her hair was not dressed to please her.' Though this remark was pert, it was just. And what respect could a girl acquire for such a parent without doing violence to reason?

[2] I myself once heard a little girl say to a servant, "My mamma has been scolding me finely this morning, because her hair was not done to please her." Though the remark was pert, it was just. And what respect could a girl gain for such a parent without doing violence to reason?

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power on a Divine right which will not bear the investigation of reason.

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constantly try to rest that power on a Divine right, since it cannot bear the scrutiny of reason.

Chapter XII: On National Education

A plan for free national day schools where boys and girls are taught together.

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12.1	The good effects resulting from attention to private education will ever be very confined, and the parent who really puts his own hand to the plow, will always, in some degree, be disappointed, till education become a grand national concern. A man cannot retire into a desart with his child, and if he did he could not bring himself back to childhood, and become the proper friend and play-fellow of an infant or youth. And when children are confined to the society of men and women, they very soon acquire that kind of premature manhood which stops the growth of every vigorous power of mind or body.	The good effects of attention to private education will always be very limited. Until education becomes a great national concern, the parent who really puts his own hand to the plow will always be disappointed to some degree. A man cannot retire into a desert with his child; and if he did, he could not make himself a child again and become the proper friend and playmate of an infant or a youth. When children are confined to the company of men and women, they very soon acquire a kind of premature adulthood that stops the growth of every vigorous power of mind or body.
	In order to open their faculties they should be excited to think for themselves; and this can only be done by mixing a number of children together, and making them jointly pursue the same objects.	To open their faculties, children should be stirred to think for themselves. This can only be done by bringing a number of children together and having them pursue the same objects jointly.
12.2	A child very soon contracts a benumbing indolence of mind, which he has seldom sufficient vigour afterwards to shake off, when he only asks a question instead of seeking for information, and then relies implicitly on the answer he receives. With his equals in age this could never be the case, and the subjects of inquiry, though they might be influenced, would not be entirely under the direction of men, who frequently damp, if not destroy, abilities, by bringing them forward too hastily: and too hastily they will infallibly be brought forward, if the child be confined to the society of a man, however sagacious that man may be.	A child who merely asks a question instead of looking for information, and then relies implicitly on the answer he gets, very soon falls into a numbing laziness of mind that he seldom has the vigor to shake off later. This could never happen with his equals in age. The subjects of inquiry, though they might be influenced, would not be entirely under the direction of men, who often damp, if not destroy, abilities by bringing them forward too hastily. And they will infallibly be brought forward too hastily if the child is confined to the company of a man, however wise that man may be.
12.3	Besides, in youth the seeds of every affection should be sown, and the respectful regard, which is felt for a parent, is very different from the social affections that are to constitute the happiness of life as it advances. Of these equality is the basis, and an intercourse of sentiments unclogged by that observant seriousness which	Besides, the seeds of every affection should be sown in youth. The respectful regard felt for a parent is very different from the social affections that are to make up the happiness of later life. Those affections are based on equality, and on an exchange of feelings unhampered by the watchful seriousness that prevents argument, even if it does not enforce submission.

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prevents disputation, though it may not enforce submission.

Let a child have ever such an affection for his parent, he will always languish to play and chat with children; and the very respect which he entertains, for filial esteem always has a dash of fear mixed with it, will, if it do not teach him cunning, at least prevent him from pouring out the little secrets which first open the heart to friendship and confidence, gradually leading to more expansive benevolence. Added to this, he will never acquire that frank ingenuousness of behaviour, which young people can only attain by being frequently in society where they dare to speak what they think; neither afraid of being reproved for their presumption, nor laughed at for their folly.

12.4 Forcibly impressed by the reflections which the sight of schools, as they are at present conducted, naturally suggested, I have formerly delivered my opinion rather warmly in favour of a private education; but further experience has led me to view the subject in a different light. I still, however, think schools, as they are now regulated, the hotbeds of vice and folly, and the knowledge of human nature, supposed to be attained there, merely cunning selfishness.

12.5 At school boys become gluttons and slovens, and, instead of cultivating domestic affections, very early rush into the libertinism which destroys the constitution before it is formed; hardening the heart as it weakens the understanding.

12.6 I should, in fact, be averse to boarding-schools, if it were for no other reason than the unsettled state of mind which the expectation of the vacations produce. On these the children's thoughts are fixed with eager anticipating hopes, for, at least, to speak with moderation, half of the time, and when they arrive they are spent in total dissipation and beastly indulgence.

12.7 But, on the contrary, when they are brought up at home, though they may pursue a plan of study in a more orderly manner than can be adopted when near a fourth part of the year is actually spent in idleness, and as much more in regret and anticipation; yet they there acquire too high an

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However much a child loves his parent, he will always long to play and chat with other children. He will feel respect, for filial esteem always has a dash of fear mixed into it, and that very respect, if it does not teach him cunning, will at least keep him from pouring out the little secrets that first open the heart to friendship and trust and gradually lead to a wider benevolence. On top of this, he will never acquire the frank openness of behavior that young people can gain only by being often in company where they dare to say what they think, afraid neither of being scolded for presumption nor of being laughed at for foolishness.

The sight of schools as they are now run naturally suggested certain reflections, and I was so strongly struck by them that I once gave my opinion rather warmly in favor of private education. But further experience has led me to see the subject differently. I still think, however, that schools as they are now regulated are hotbeds of vice and folly, and that the knowledge of human nature supposed to be gained there is merely cunning selfishness.[1]

At school boys become gluttons and slobs. Instead of cultivating domestic affections, they rush very early into the debauchery that destroys the constitution before it is formed, hardening the heart as it weakens the understanding.

In fact, I would oppose boarding schools if only for the unsettled state of mind that the prospect of vacations produces. The children's thoughts are fixed on vacations with eager, anticipating hopes for at least half the time, to put it moderately. When the vacations arrive, they are spent in total dissipation and beastly indulgence.

On the other hand, children brought up at home may follow a plan of study in a more orderly way than is possible when nearly a quarter of the year is actually spent in idleness, and as much again in regret and anticipation. Yet at home they acquire too high an opinion of their own importance. This

1 Probably a reference to her earlier *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* (1787).

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opinion of their own importance, from being allowed to tyrannize over servants, and from the anxiety expressed by most mothers, on the score of manners, who, eager to teach the accomplishments of a gentleman, stifle, in their birth, the virtues of a man. Thus brought into company when they ought to be seriously employed, and treated like men when they are still boys, they become vain and effeminate.

12.8 The only way to avoid two extremes equally injurious to morality, would be to contrive some way of combining a public and private education. Thus to make men citizens two natural steps might be taken, which seem directly to lead to the desired point; for the domestic affections, that first open the heart to the various modifications of humanity, would be cultivated, whilst the children were nevertheless allowed to spend great part of their time, on terms of equality, with other children.

12.9 I still recollect, with pleasure, the country day school; where a boy trudged in the morning, wet or dry, carrying his books, and his dinner, if it were at a considerable distance; a servant did not then lead master by the hand, for, when he had once put on coat and breeches, he was allowed to shift for himself, and return alone in the evening to recount the feats of the day close at the parental knee.

His father's house was his home, and was ever after fondly remembered; nay, I appeal to some superiour men, who were educated in this manner, whether the recollection of some shady lane where they conned their lesson; or, of some stile, where they sat making a kite, or mending a bat, has not endeared their country to them?

12.10 But, what boy ever recollected with pleasure the years he spent in close confinement, at an academy near London? unless, indeed, he should, by chance, remember the poor scarecrow of an usher, whom he tormented; or, the tartman, from whom he caught a cake, to devour it with the cattish appetite of selfishness. At boarding-schools of every description, the relaxation of the junior boys is mischief; and of the senior, vice. Besides, in great schools, what can be more prejudicial to the moral character than the system of tyranny and abject slavery which is

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comes from being allowed to tyrannize over servants, and from the anxiety most mothers show about manners, for in their eagerness to teach the accomplishments of a gentleman they stifle the virtues of a man at birth. Brought into company in this way when they ought to be seriously occupied, and treated like men while they are still boys, they become vain and soft.

The only way to avoid two extremes, each as harmful to morality as the other, would be to devise some way of combining public and private education. Two natural steps might then be taken to make men citizens, and they seem to lead directly to the desired point. The domestic affections, which first open the heart to the various forms of humanity, would be cultivated. At the same time the children would be allowed to spend a large part of their time with other children on terms of equality.

I still remember with pleasure the country day school. A boy trudged there in the morning, rain or shine, carrying his books, and his dinner too if it was a good distance away. No servant led the young master by the hand in those days. Once he had put on coat and breeches, he was allowed to fend for himself, and to come home alone in the evening and tell the day's exploits at his parent's knee.

His father's house was his home, and was fondly remembered ever after. Indeed, I appeal to some superior men who were educated this way. Has not the memory of some shady lane where they learned their lessons, or of some stile where they sat making a kite or mending a bat, endeared their country to them?

But what boy ever remembered with pleasure the years he spent in close confinement at an academy near London? He might, of course, happen to remember the poor scarecrow of an assistant master whom he tormented, or the tart-seller from whom he snatched a cake to devour it with the catlike appetite of selfishness. At boarding schools of every description, the younger boys' recreation is mischief, and the older boys' is vice. Besides, in the great schools, what could be more harmful to moral character than the system of tyranny and abject slavery established among the boys? And that is to

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established amongst the boys, to say nothing of the slavery to forms, which makes religion worse than a farce?

For what good can be expected from the youth who receives the sacrament of the Lord's supper, to avoid forfeiting half a guinea, which he probably afterwards spends in some sensual manner? Half the employment of the youths is to elude the necessity of attending public worship; and well they may, for such a constant repetition of the same thing must be a very irksome restraint on their natural vivacity.

As these ceremonies have the most fatal effect on their morals, and as a ritual performed by the lips, when the heart and mind are far away, is not now stored up by our church as a bank to draw on for the fees of the poor souls in purgatory, why should they not be abolished?

12.11 But the fear of innovation, in this country, extends to every thing.—This is only a covert fear, the apprehensive timidity of indolent slugs, who guard, by sliming it over, the snug place, which they consider in the light of an hereditary estate; and eat, drink, and enjoy themselves, instead of fulfilling the duties, excepting a few empty forms, for which it was endowed. These are the people who most strenuously insist on the will of the founder being observed, crying out against all reformation, as if it were a violation of justice.

I am now alluding particularly to the relicks of popery retained in our colleges, when the protestant members seem to be such sticklers for the established church; but their zeal never makes them lose sight of the spoil of ignorance, which rapacious priests of superstitious memory have scraped together. No, wise in their generation, they venerate the prescriptive right of possession, as a strong hold, and still let the sluggish bell tinkle to prayers, as during the days when the elevation of the host was supposed to atone for the sins of the people, lest one reformation should lead to another, and the spirit kill the letter.

These Romish customs have the most baneful effect on the morals of our clergy; for the idle vermin who two or three times a day perform in the most slovenly manner a service which they

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say nothing of the slavery to forms, which makes religion worse than a farce.

What good can be expected of a youth who takes the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to avoid a fine of half a guinea, which he then probably spends in some sensual way? Half of what these youths do is dodge the obligation to attend public worship. And well they may, for such constant repetition of the same thing must be a very irksome restraint on their natural liveliness.

These ceremonies have the most fatal effect on their morals. And our church no longer stores up a ritual performed by the lips, while the heart and mind are far away, as a bank to draw on for the fees of the poor souls in purgatory. So why should these ceremonies not be abolished?

But in this country the fear of innovation extends to everything.—It is only a covert fear, the anxious timidity of lazy slugs. They guard the snug place they regard as a hereditary estate by sliming it over, and they eat, drink, and enjoy themselves instead of fulfilling the duties it was endowed for, apart from a few empty forms. These are the people who most strenuously insist that the founder's will be observed, and cry out against all reform as if it were a violation of justice.

I am alluding here particularly to the relics of popery kept up in our colleges, whose Protestant members seem to be such sticklers for the established church. Yet their zeal never makes them lose sight of the spoils of ignorance that grasping priests of superstitious memory scraped together. No, wise in their generation, they revere the right that long possession confers as a stronghold. They still let the sluggish bell tinkle for prayers as in the days when the elevation of the host was supposed to atone for the people's sins, for fear that one reformation should lead to another, and the spirit kill the letter.[2]

These Catholic customs have the most harmful effect on the morals of our clergy. The idle vermin who two or three times a day perform, in the most slovenly way, a service they think useless but call

2 She inverts St. Paul's "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Corinthians 3:6).

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think useless, but call their duty, soon lose a sense of duty. At college, forced to attend or evade public worship, they acquire an habitual contempt for the very service, the performance of which is to enable them to live in idleness.

It is mumbled over as an affair of business, as a stupid boy repeats his task, and frequently the college cant escapes from the preacher the moment after he has left the pulpit, and even whilst he is eating the dinner which he earned in such a dishonest manner.

12.12 Nothing, indeed, can be more irreverent than the cathedral service as it is now performed in this country, nor does it contain a set of weaker men than those who are the slaves of this childish routine. A disgusting skeleton of the former state is still exhibited; but all the solemnity that interested the imagination, if it did not purify the heart, is stripped off. The performance of high mass on the continent must impress every mind, where a spark of fancy glows, with that awful melancholy, that sublime tenderness, so near akin to devotion.

I do not say that these devotional feelings are of more use, in a moral sense, than any other emotion of taste; but I contend that the theatrical pomp which gratifies our senses, is to be preferred to the cold parade that insults the understanding without reaching the heart.

12.13 Amongst remarks on national education, such observations cannot be misplaced, especially as the supporters of these establishments, degenerated into puerilities, affect to be the champions of religion.—Religion, pure source of comfort in this vale of tears! how has thy clear stream been muddied by the dabblers, who have presumptuously endeavoured to confine in one narrow channel, the living waters that ever flow towards God—the sublime ocean of existence! What would life be without that peace which the love of God, when built on humanity, alone can impart?

Every earthly affection turns back, at intervals, to prey upon the heart that feeds it; and the purest effusions of benevolence, often rudely damped by man, must mount as a free-will offering to Him who gave them birth, whose bright image they faintly reflect.

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their duty soon lose all sense of duty. At college, forced either to attend public worship or to evade it, they acquire a habitual contempt for the very service whose performance is to let them live in idleness.

It is mumbled through as a piece of business, the way a stupid boy repeats his lesson. Often the college slang slips out of the preacher the moment he has left the pulpit, and even while he is eating the dinner he earned in such a dishonest way.

Nothing, indeed, could be more irreverent than the cathedral service as it is now performed in this country, and no set of men is weaker than the slaves of this childish routine. A disgusting skeleton of its former state is still put on show, but all the solemnity that engaged the imagination, even if it did not purify the heart, has been stripped away. On the Continent, the performance of high mass must impress every mind in which a spark of imagination glows with that awful melancholy, that sublime tenderness, which is so close to devotion.

I do not say that these devotional feelings are of more moral use than any other emotion of taste. But I maintain that the theatrical pomp that gratifies our senses is preferable to the cold parade that insults the understanding without reaching the heart.

Such observations cannot be out of place among remarks on national education, especially since the supporters of these establishments, which have degenerated into childishness, pose as the champions of religion.—Religion, pure source of comfort in this vale of tears! How your clear stream has been muddied by the dabblers who presumptuously tried to confine in one narrow channel the living waters that forever flow toward God—the sublime ocean of existence! What would life be without that peace which the love of God alone can give, when it is built on humanity?

Every earthly affection turns back at intervals to prey on the heart that feeds it. The purest outpourings of benevolence are often rudely damped by man, and so they must rise as a freewill offering to Him who gave them birth, whose bright image they faintly reflect.

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12.14	In public schools, however, religion, confounded with irksome ceremonies and unreasonable restraints, assumes the most ungracious aspect: not the sober austere one that commands respect whilst it inspires fear; but a ludicrous cast, that serves to point a pun. For, in fact, most of the good stories and smart things which enliven the spirits that have been concentrated at whist, are manufactured out of the incidents to which the very men labour to give a droll turn who countenance the abuse to live on the spoil.	In public schools, however, religion is mixed up with tedious ceremonies and unreasonable restrictions, and so it takes on its least attractive face. This is not the sober, austere face that commands respect while it inspires fear. It is a ridiculous one that serves as the point of a pun. In fact, most of the good stories and witty remarks that revive spirits worn out by concentrating at whist are made out of these very incidents. The men who work hardest to give them a comic twist are the same men who tolerate the abuse in order to live off the spoils.[3]
12.15	There is not, perhaps, in the kingdom, a more dogmatical, or luxurious set of men, than the pedantic tyrants who reside in colleges and preside at public schools. The vacations are equally injurious to the morals of the masters and pupils, and the intercourse, which the former keep up with the nobility, introduces the same vanity and extravagance into their families, which banish domestic duties and comforts from the lordly mansion, whose state is awkwardly aped on a smaller scale. The boys, who live at a great expense with the masters and assistants, are never domesticated, though placed there for that purpose; for, after a silent dinner, they swallow a hasty glass of wine, and retire to plan some mischievous trick, or to ridicule the person or manners of the very people they have just been cringing to, and whom they ought to consider as the representatives of their parents.	There is perhaps no more dogmatic or self-indulgent set of men in the kingdom than the pedantic tyrants who live in colleges and preside over public schools. The vacations are equally harmful to the morals of masters and pupils. The masters keep up social contact with the nobility, and this brings into their own families the same vanity and extravagance that drive domestic duties and comforts out of the lordly mansion, whose grandeur they clumsily ape on a smaller scale. The boys live at great expense with the masters and their assistants, yet they never become part of a household, though they were placed there for that purpose. After a silent dinner they gulp down a quick glass of wine and withdraw to plan some mischievous prank. Or they mock the looks or manners of the very people they have just been fawning on, people whom they ought to regard as standing in for their parents.
12.16	Can it then be a matter of surprise that boys become selfish and vicious who are thus shut out from social converse? or that a mitre often graces the brow of one of these diligent pastors?	Is it any surprise, then, that boys shut out like this from social conversation become selfish and vicious? Or that a bishop's miter often crowns the head of one of these diligent pastors?[4]
12.17	The desire of living in the same style, as the rank just above them, infects each individual and every class of people, and meanness is the concomitant of this ignoble ambition; but those professions are most debasing whose ladder is patronage: yet, out of one of these professions the tutors of youth are, in general, chosen. But, can they be expected to inspire independent	The desire to live in the same style as the rank just above them infects every individual and every class of people, and meanness goes hand in hand with this ignoble ambition. But the most degrading professions are those in which one climbs by the ladder of patronage. Yet the tutors of the young are generally chosen from one of these professions. Can we expect people to inspire inde-

3 In Britain, "public schools" are the old endowed boarding schools such as Eton and Winchester. Whist was a fashionable card game.

4 The masters of the great schools were usually clergymen, and many were later promoted to bishoprics.

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	sentiments, whose conduct must be regulated by the cautious prudence that is ever on the watch for preferment?	pendent feelings when their own conduct must be governed by the cautious prudence that is always on the lookout for promotion?
12.18	So far, however, from thinking of the morals of boys, I have heard several masters of schools argue, that they only undertook to teach Latin and Greek; and that they had fulfilled their duty, by sending some good scholars to college.	Far from thinking about the boys' morals, however, I have heard several schoolmasters argue that they had undertaken only to teach Latin and Greek. They had done their duty, they said, by sending some good scholars on to university.
12.19	A few good scholars, I grant, may have been formed by emulation and discipline; but to bring forward these clever boys, the health and morals of a number have been sacrificed. The sons of our gentry and wealthy commoners are mostly educated at these seminaries, and will any one pretend to assert that the majority, making every allowance, come under the description of tolerable scholars?	A few good scholars, I grant, may have been produced by competition and discipline. But to push these clever boys forward, the health and morals of many others have been sacrificed. The sons of our gentry and of wealthy commoners are mostly educated at these institutions. Will anyone claim that the majority of them, making every allowance, can even be described as passable scholars?
12.20	It is not for the benefit of society that a few brilliant men should be brought forward at the expense of the multitude. It is true, that great men seem to start up, as great revolutions occur, at proper intervals, to restore order, and to blow aside the clouds that thicken over the face of truth; but let more reason and virtue prevail in society, and these strong winds would not be necessary. Public education, of every denomination, should be directed to form citizens; but if you wish to make good citizens, you must first exercise the affections of a son and a brother.	It does not benefit society to bring a few brilliant men forward at the expense of the many. It is true that great men seem to spring up at fitting intervals, as great revolutions do, to restore order and to blow away the clouds that gather over the face of truth. But let more reason and virtue prevail in society, and these strong winds would not be needed. Public education of every kind should aim to form citizens. But if you want to make good citizens, you must first exercise the affections of a son and a brother.
	This is the only way to expand the heart; for public affections, as well as public virtues, must ever grow out of the private character, or they are merely meteors that shoot athwart a dark sky and disappear as they are gazed at and admired.	This is the only way to enlarge the heart. Public affections, like public virtues, must always grow out of private character. Otherwise they are mere meteors that streak across a dark sky and vanish even as they are gazed at and admired.
12.21	Few, I believe, have had much affection for mankind, who did not first love their parents, their brothers, sisters, and even the domestic brutes, whom they first played with. The exercise of youthful sympathies forms the moral temperature; and it is the recollection of these first affections and pursuits that gives life to those that are afterwards more under the direction of reason. In youth, the fondest friendships are formed, the genial juices mounting at the same time, kindly mix; or, rather the heart, tempered for the reception of friendship, is accustomed to	Few people, I believe, have felt much affection for humanity who did not first love their parents, their brothers and sisters, and even the household animals they first played with. The exercise of youthful sympathies sets the moral temperature. It is the memory of these first affections and pursuits that gives life to later ones, which are more under the direction of reason. In youth the fondest friendships are formed, as the warm juices of life rise at the same time and blend kindly. Or rather, the heart is tempered to receive friendship, and so

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	seek for pleasure in something more noble than the churlish gratification of appetite.	it grows used to seeking pleasure in something nobler than the boorish gratification of appetite.
12.22	In order then to inspire a love of home and domestic pleasures, children ought to be educated at home, for riotous holidays only make them fond of home for their own sakes. Yet, the vacations, which do not foster domestic affections, continually disturb the course of study, and render any plan of improvement abortive which includes temperance; still, were they abolished, children would be entirely separated from their parents, and I question whether they would become better citizens by sacrificing the preparatory affections, by destroying the force of relationships that render the marriage state as necessary as respectable. But, if a private education produces self-importance, or insulates a man in his family, the evil is only shifted, not remedied.	So, to inspire a love of home and domestic pleasures, children ought to be educated at home. Rowdy holidays only make them fond of home for the sake of the holidays themselves. Yet the vacations, which do not foster domestic affections, constantly interrupt the course of study. They also wreck any plan of improvement that includes self-restraint. Still, if the vacations were abolished, children would be completely separated from their parents. I doubt they would become better citizens by sacrificing the affections that prepare them for citizenship, and by destroying the force of the family ties that make marriage as necessary as it is respectable. But if a private education produces self-importance, or isolates a man within his family, the evil is only moved, not cured.

DAY SCHOOLS

Boarding schools and home education both fail, so she argues for day schools run as national institutions.

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12.23	This train of reasoning brings me back to a subject, on which I mean to dwell, the necessity of establishing proper day-schools.	This line of reasoning brings me back to a subject I intend to dwell on: the need to establish proper day schools.
12.24	But, these should be national establishments, for whilst school-masters are dependent on the caprice of parents, little exertion can be expected from them, more than is necessary to please ignorant people. Indeed, the necessity of a master's giving the parents some sample of the boys abilities, which during the vacation is shewn to every visitor[1], is productive of more mischief than would at first be supposed. For they are seldom done entirely, to speak with moderation, by the child itself; thus the master countenances falsehood, or winds the poor machine up to some extraordinary exertion, that injures the wheels, and stops the progress of gradual improvement.	But these should be national institutions. As long as schoolmasters depend on the whims of parents, we can expect little effort from them beyond what is needed to please ignorant people. Indeed, a master is obliged to give the parents some sample of the boys' abilities, which is shown to every visitor during the vacation[1], and this does more harm than one would at first suppose. To put it mildly, these samples are seldom done entirely by the child. So the master either tolerates falsehood or winds the poor machine up to some extraordinary effort. That effort damages the wheels and halts the progress of gradual improvement.
	The memory is loaded with unintelligible words, to make a shew of, without the understanding's acquiring any distinct ideas: but only that education deserves emphatically to be termed cultivation of mind, which teaches young people how to begin to think. The imagination should not be allowed to debauch the understanding before it gained strength, or vanity will become	The memory is loaded with unintelligible words for show, while the understanding acquires no clear ideas at all. Yet only an education that teaches young people how to begin to think truly deserves to be called cultivation of the mind. The imagination should not be allowed to corrupt the understanding before the understanding has

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the forerunner of vice: for every way of exhibiting the acquirements of a child is injurious to its moral character.

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12.25 How much time is lost in teaching them to recite what they do not understand? whilst seated on benches, all in their best array, the mammas listen with astonishment to the parrot-like prattle, uttered in solemn cadences, with all the pomp of ignorance and folly. Such exhibitions only serve to strike the spreading fibres of vanity through the whole mind; for they neither teach children to speak fluently, nor behave gracefully.

So far from it, that these frivolous pursuits might comprehensively be termed the study of affectation; for we now rarely see a simple, bashful boy, though few people of taste were ever disgusted by that awkward sheepishness so natural to the age, which schools and an early introduction into society, have changed into impudence and apish grimace.

12.26 Yet, how can these things be remedied whilst school-masters depend entirely on parents for a subsistence; and when so many rival schools hang out their lures, to catch the attention of vain fathers and mothers, whose parental affection only leads them to wish that their children should outshine those of their neighbours?

12.27 Without great good luck, a sensible, conscientious man, would starve before he could raise a school, if he disdained to bubble weak parents by practising the secret tricks of the craft.

12.28 In the best regulated schools, however; where swarms are not crammed together, many bad habits must be acquired; but, at common schools, the body, heart, and understanding, are equally stunted, for parents are often only in quest of the cheapest school, and the master could not live, if he did not take a much greater number than he could manage himself; nor will the scanty pittance, allowed for each child, permit him to hire ushers sufficient to assist in the discharge of the mechanical part of the business. Besides,

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gained strength, or vanity will become the forerunner of vice. Every way of showing off a child's attainments harms its moral character.

How much time is wasted teaching them to recite what they do not understand? The mothers sit on benches, all in their finest array, and listen in astonishment to the parrot-like chatter. It is delivered in solemn cadences, with all the pomp of ignorance and folly. Such exhibitions only drive the spreading fibers of vanity through the whole mind. They teach children neither to speak fluently nor to behave gracefully.

So far from it, in fact, that these frivolous pursuits could be summed up as the study of affectation. We now rarely see a simple, bashful boy. Yet few people of taste were ever put off by the awkward sheepishness so natural to that age, which schools and an early entry into society have turned into impudence and apish grimacing.

Yet how can these things be remedied as long as schoolmasters depend entirely on parents for their living? And how, while so many rival schools hang out their bait to catch the attention of vain fathers and mothers, whose parental affection only makes them wish that their children should outshine the neighbors'?

Without great good luck, a sensible, conscientious man would starve before he could build up a school, if he scorned to dupe foolish parents by practicing the secret tricks of the trade.

Even in the best-run schools, where swarms of children are not crammed together, many bad habits must be picked up. But at ordinary schools the body, the heart, and the understanding are all equally stunted. Parents are often looking only for the cheapest school, and the master could not make a living unless he took far more pupils than he could manage himself. Nor will the meager fee paid for each child allow him to hire enough assistant teachers to help with the mechanical part

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[1] I now particularly allude to the numerous academies in, and about London, and to the behaviour of the trading part of this great city.

[1] I am thinking particularly of the numerous academies in and around London, and of the behavior of the trading class of this great city.

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whatever appearance the house and garden may make, the children do not enjoy the comfort of either, for they are continually reminded by irksome restrictions that they are not at home, and the state-rooms, garden, &c.

must be kept in order for the recreation of the parents; who, of a Sunday, visit the school, and are impressed by the very parade that renders the situation of their children uncomfortable.

12.29 With what disgust have I heard sensible women, for girls are more restrained and cowed than boys, speak of the wearisome confinement, which they endured at school. Not allowed, perhaps, to step out of one broad walk in a superb garden, and obliged to pace with steady deportment stupidly backwards and forwards, holding up their heads and turning out their toes, with shoulders braced back, instead of bounding, as nature directs to complete her own design, in the various attitudes so conducive to health[2].

The pure animal spirits, which make both mind and body shoot out, and unfold the tender blossoms of hope, are turned sour, and vented in vain wishes, or pert repinings, that contract the faculties and spoil the temper; else they mount to the brain, and sharpening the understanding before it gains proportionable strength, produce that pitiful cunning which disgracefully characterizes the female mind—and I fear will ever characterize it whilst women remain the slaves of power!

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12.30 The little respect which the male world pay to chastity is, I am persuaded, the grand source of many of the physical and moral evils that torment

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of the work. Besides, whatever impression the house and garden may make, the children enjoy the comfort of neither. Irksome restrictions constantly remind them that they are not at home. The best rooms, the garden, and so on

must be kept in order for the enjoyment of the parents. The parents visit the school on Sundays and are impressed by the very show that makes their children's situation so uncomfortable.

With what disgust have I heard sensible women speak of the wearisome confinement they endured at school, for girls are more restricted and cowed than boys. Perhaps they were not allowed to step off one broad path in a superb garden. They were made to pace stupidly back and forth with a steady bearing, holding up their heads and turning out their toes, with shoulders braced back. Nature directs them instead to bound about in the various postures so good for health, and so to complete her own design[2].

The pure animal spirits, which make both mind and body shoot up and unfold the tender blossoms of hope, are turned sour. They are vented in vain wishes or pert complaints that narrow the faculties and spoil the temper. Or else they rise to the brain and sharpen the understanding before it gains proportionate strength. This produces that pitiful cunning which so disgracefully characterizes the female mind—and which, I fear, always will characterize it as long as women remain the slaves of power!

The male world pays little respect to chastity, and this, I am convinced, is the chief source of many of the physical and moral evils that torment human-

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[2] I remember a circumstance that once came under my own observation, and raised my indignation. I went to visit a little boy at a school where young children were prepared for a larger one. The master took me into the school-room, &c. but whilst I walked down a broad gravel walk, I could not help observing that the grass grew very luxuriantly on each side of me. I immediately asked the child some questions, and found that the poor boys were not allowed to stir off the walk, and that the master sometimes permitted sheep to be turned in to crop the untrodden grass.

[2] I remember an incident I once witnessed myself, which roused my indignation. I went to visit a little boy at a school where young children were prepared for a bigger one. The master showed me the schoolroom and so on. But as I walked down a broad gravel path, I could not help noticing that the grass grew very thickly on either side of me. I at once asked the child some questions. I learned that the poor boys were not allowed to step off the path, and that the master sometimes let sheep in to crop the untrodden grass.

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The tyrant of this domain used to sit by a window that overlooked the prison yard, and one nook turning from it, where the unfortunate babes could sport freely, he enclosed, and planted it with potatoes. The wife likewise was equally anxious to keep the children in order, lest they should dirty or tear their clothes.

The tyrant of this domain used to sit by a window that overlooked the prison yard. There was one corner, turning off from the yard, where the unfortunate little ones could play freely, and he fenced it in and planted it with potatoes. His wife was just as anxious to keep the children in order, in case they dirtied or tore their clothes.

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mankind, as well as of the vices and follies that degrade and destroy women; yet at school, boys infallibly lose that decent bashfulness, which might have ripened into modesty, at home.

12.31 And what nasty indecent tricks do they also learn from each other, when a number of them pig together in the same bedchamber, not to speak of the vices, which render the body weak whilst they effectually prevent the acquisition of any delicacy of mind. The little attention paid to the cultivation of modesty, amongst men, produces great depravity in all the relationships of society; for, not only love—love that ought to purify the heart, and first call forth all the youthful powers, to prepare the man to discharge the benevolent duties of life, is sacrificed to premature lust; but, all the social affections are deadened by the selfish gratifications, which very early pollute the mind, and dry up the generous juices of the heart.

In what an unnatural manner is innocence often violated; and what serious consequences ensue to render private vices a public pest. Besides, an habit of personal order, which has more effect on the moral character, than is, in general, supposed, can only be acquired at home, where that respectable reserve is kept up which checks the familiarity, that sinking into beastliness, undermines the affection it insults.

12.32 I have already animadverted on the bad habits which females acquire when they are shut up together; and, I think, that the observation may fairly be extended to the other sex, till the natural inference is drawn which I have had in view throughout—that to improve both sexes they ought, not only in private families, but in public schools, to be educated together.

If marriage be the cement of society, mankind should all be educated after the same model, or the intercourse of the sexes will never deserve the name of fellowship, nor will women ever fulfil the peculiar duties of their sex, till they become enlightened citizens, till they become free by being enabled to earn their own subsistence, independent of men; in the same manner, I mean, to prevent misconstruction, as one man is independent of another. Nay, marriage will never be held sacred till women, by being brought up with men, are prepared to be their companions

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ity. It is also the source of the vices and follies that degrade and destroy women. Yet at school boys inevitably lose that decent bashfulness which, at home, might have ripened into modesty.

And what nasty, indecent tricks they also learn from one another when a number of them are herded together like pigs in the same bedroom! That is not to mention the vices that weaken the body while effectively preventing any delicacy of mind from developing. The little attention paid to cultivating modesty among men produces great depravity in all the relationships of society. Love ought to purify the heart and first call forth all the youthful powers, preparing the man to carry out the benevolent duties of life. Yet love is sacrificed to premature lust. And not only that: all the social affections are deadened by the selfish gratifications that very early pollute the mind and dry up the generous juices of the heart.

How unnaturally innocence is often violated, and what serious consequences follow, turning private vices into a public plague. Besides, a habit of personal order has more effect on moral character than is generally supposed. It can be acquired only at home, where a respectable reserve is maintained. That reserve checks the kind of familiarity which sinks into beastliness and undermines the very affection it insults.

I have already criticized the bad habits that girls pick up when they are shut up together. I think the observation may fairly be extended to the other sex, and this leads to the natural conclusion I have had in view throughout. To improve both sexes, they ought to be educated together, not only in private families but in public schools.

If marriage is the cement of society, all humanity should be educated on the same model. Otherwise relations between the sexes will never deserve the name of fellowship. Nor will women ever fulfill the particular duties of their sex until they become enlightened citizens. They must become free by being able to earn their own living, independent of men. To prevent misunderstanding, I mean independent in the same way that one man is independent of another. Indeed, marriage will never be held sacred until women are brought up with men and so prepared to be their companions

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rather than their mistresses; for the mean doublings of cunning will ever render them contemptible, whilst oppression renders them timid.

So convinced am I of this truth, that I will venture to predict that virtue will never prevail in society till the virtues of both sexes are founded on reason; and, till the affections common to both are allowed to gain their due strength by the discharge of mutual duties.

12.33 Were boys and girls permitted to pursue the same studies together, those graceful decencies might early be inculcated which produce modesty without those sexual distinctions that taint the mind. Lessons of politeness, and that formulary of decorum, which treads on the heels of falsehood, would be rendered useless by habitual propriety of behaviour. Not indeed, put on for visitors like the courtly robe of politeness, but the sober effect of cleanliness of mind. Would not this simple elegance of sincerity be a chaste homage paid to domestic affections, far surpassing the meretricious compliments that shine with false lustre in the heartless intercourse of fashionable life?

But, till more understanding preponderate in society, there will ever be a want of heart and taste, and the harlot's *rouge* will supply the place of that celestial suffusion which only virtuous affections can give to the face. Gallantry, and what is called love, may subsist without simplicity of character; but the main pillars of friendship, are respect and confidence—esteem is never founded on it cannot tell what!

12.34 A taste for the fine arts requires great cultivation; but not more than a taste for the virtuous affections; and both suppose that enlargement of mind which opens so many sources of mental pleasure. Why do people hurry to noisy scenes, and crowded circles? I should answer, because they want activity of mind, because they have not cherished the virtues of the heart. They only, therefore, see and feel in the gross, and continually pine after variety, finding every thing that is simple insipid.

12.35 This argument may be carried further than philosophers are aware of, for if nature destined woman, in particular, for the discharge of

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rather than their mistresses. The mean twists and turns of cunning will always make women contemptible, while oppression makes them timid.

I am so convinced of this truth that I will venture a prediction. Virtue will never prevail in society until the virtues of both sexes are founded on reason, and until the affections common to both are allowed to gain their proper strength through the performance of mutual duties.

If boys and girls were allowed to pursue the same studies together, graceful decencies could be instilled early. These produce modesty without the sexual distinctions that taint the mind. Habitually proper behavior would make lessons in politeness useless, along with that rulebook of decorum which follows close on the heels of falsehood. I do not mean behavior put on for visitors like the court robe of politeness. I mean the sober result of a clean mind. Would not this simple elegance of sincerity be a chaste tribute to the domestic affections? Would it not far surpass the tawdry compliments that shine with false luster in the heartless social life of fashionable society?

But until more understanding carries weight in society, there will always be a lack of heart and taste. The prostitute's *rouge* will take the place of that heavenly blush which only virtuous affections can give the face. Gallantry, and what is called love, may survive without simplicity of character. But the main pillars of friendship are respect and confidence. Esteem is never founded on something it cannot put a name to!

A taste for the fine arts requires great cultivation, but no more than a taste for the virtuous affections does. Both presuppose that enlargement of mind which opens up so many sources of mental pleasure. Why do people rush to noisy scenes and crowded gatherings? I would answer: because they lack activity of mind, and because they have not cultivated the virtues of the heart. So they see and feel only crudely. They constantly crave variety and find everything simple insipid.

This argument can be carried further than philosophers realize. If nature intended woman in particular to carry out domestic duties, she made her

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domestic duties, she made her susceptible of the attached affections in a great degree. Now women are notoriously fond of pleasure; and, naturally must be so according to my definition, because they cannot enter into the minutiæ of domestic taste; lacking judgment, the foundation of all taste. For the understanding, in spite of sensual cavillers, reserves to itself the privilege of conveying pure joy to the heart.

12.36 With what a languid yawn have I seen an admirable poem thrown down, that a man of true taste returns to, again and again with rapture; and, whilst melody has almost suspended respiration, a lady has asked me where I bought my gown. I have seen also an eye glanced coldly over a most exquisite picture, rest, sparkling with pleasure, on a caricature rudely sketched; and whilst some terrific feature in nature has spread a sublime stillness through my soul, I have been desired to observe the pretty tricks of a lap-dog, that my perverse fate forced me to travel with. Is it surprising that such a tasteless being should rather caress this dog than her children?

Or, that she should prefer the rant of flattery to the simple accents of sincerity?

12.37 To illustrate this remark I must be allowed to observe, that men of the first genius and most cultivated minds, have appeared to have the highest relish for the simple beauties of nature; and they must have forcibly felt, what they have so well described, the charm, which natural affections, and unsophisticated feelings spread round the human character. It is this power of looking into the heart, and responsively vibrating with each emotion, that enables the poet to personify each passion, and the painter to sketch with a pencil of fire.

12.38 True taste is ever the work of the understanding employed in observing natural effects; and till women have more understanding, it is vain to expect them to possess domestic taste. Their lively senses will ever be at work to harden their hearts, and the emotions struck out of them will continue to be vivid and transitory, unless a proper education stores their mind with knowledge.

12.39 It is the want of domestic taste, and not the acquirement of knowledge, that takes women out

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highly susceptible to the affections of attachment. Now women are notoriously fond of pleasure. By my definition they naturally must be, because they cannot enter into the fine details of domestic taste, since they lack judgment, the foundation of all taste. For whatever sensualist quibblers may say, the understanding reserves to itself the privilege of bringing pure joy to the heart.

With what a languid yawn have I seen an admirable poem tossed aside, one that a man of true taste returns to again and again with rapture! And while music has almost made me hold my breath, a lady has asked me where I bought my gown. I have also seen an eye glance coldly over a most exquisite painting and then rest, sparkling with pleasure, on a crudely drawn caricature. And while some awe-inspiring feature of nature has spread a sublime stillness through my soul, I have been asked to watch the pretty tricks of a lapdog that my perverse fate forced me to travel with. Is it surprising that such a tasteless creature would rather cuddle this dog than her children?

Or that she should prefer the ranting of flattery to the simple accents of sincerity?

To illustrate this remark, I must be allowed to point out that men of the highest genius and most cultivated minds have seemed to have the keenest relish for the simple beauties of nature. They must have felt strongly what they have described so well: the charm that natural affections and unspoiled feelings spread around the human character. The poet has the power to look into the heart and vibrate in response to each emotion. It is this power that enables him to personify every passion, and the painter to sketch with a brush of fire.

True taste is always the work of the understanding employed in observing natural effects. Until women have more understanding, it is useless to expect them to have domestic taste. Their lively senses will always be at work hardening their hearts. The emotions struck out of them will go on being vivid and fleeting, unless a proper education stocks their minds with knowledge.

It is the lack of domestic taste that takes women away from their families, not the acquisition of

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of their families, and tears the smiling babe from the breast that ought to afford it nourishment. Women have been allowed to remain in ignorance, and slavish dependence, many, very many years, and still we hear of nothing but their fondness of pleasure and sway, their preference of rakes and soldiers, their childish attachments to toys, and the vanity that makes them value accomplishments more than virtues.

12.40 History brings forward a fearful catalogue of the crimes which their cunning has produced, when the weak slaves have had sufficient address to overreach their masters. In France, and in how many other countries, have men been the luxurious despots, and women the crafty ministers?—Does this prove that ignorance and dependence domesticate them? Is not their folly the by-word of the libertines, who relax in their society; and do not men of sense continually lament that an immoderate fondness for dress and dissipation carries the mother of a family for ever from home.

Their hearts have not been debauched by knowledge, nor their minds led astray by scientific pursuits; yet, they do not fulfil the peculiar duties which as women they are called upon by nature to fulfil. On the contrary, the state of warfare which subsists between the sexes, makes them employ those wiles, that frustrate the more open designs of force.

12.41 When, therefore, I call women slaves, I mean in a political and civil sense; for, indirectly they obtain too much power, and are debased by their exertions to obtain illicit sway.

12.42 Let an enlightened nation[3] then try what effect reason would have to bring them back to nature, and their duty; and allowing them to share the advantages of education and government with man, see whether they will become better, as they grow wiser and become free. They cannot be injured by the experiment; for it is not in the power of man to render them more insignificant than they are at present.

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knowledge. It is this lack that tears the smiling baby from the breast that ought to nourish it. Women have been left in ignorance and slavish dependence for many, very many years. And still we hear of nothing but their love of pleasure and power, their preference for rakes and soldiers, their childish attachment to trinkets, and the vanity that makes them value accomplishments above virtues.

History presents a fearful list of the crimes their cunning has produced, whenever the weak slaves have had enough skill to outwit their masters. In France, and in how many other countries, have men been the self-indulgent despots and women the crafty ministers?—Does this prove that ignorance and dependence make women domestic? Is not their folly a byword among the libertines who unwind in their company? And do not men of sense constantly complain that an excessive love of dress and dissipation keeps the mother of a family forever away from home?

Their hearts have not been corrupted by knowledge, nor their minds led astray by scientific pursuits. Yet they do not fulfill the particular duties that nature calls on them, as women, to fulfill. On the contrary, the state of war that exists between the sexes makes them use wiles that defeat the more open designs of force.

When I call women slaves, then, I mean it in a political and civil sense. Indirectly they obtain too much power, and they are degraded by their efforts to gain illegitimate influence.

Let an enlightened nation[3], then, try what effect reason would have in bringing them back to nature and to their duty. Let it allow them to share the advantages of education and government with men, and see whether they become better as they grow wiser and become free. The experiment cannot harm them, for it is not in man's power to make them more insignificant than they are at present.

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[3] France.

[3] France.

A PLAN FOR NATIONAL SCHOOLS

Free, government-run day schools would teach boys and girls, rich and poor, together.

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12.43 To render this practicable, day schools, for particular ages, should be established by government, in which boys and girls might be educated together. The school for the younger children, from five to nine years of age, ought to be absolutely free and open to all classes[4]. A sufficient number of masters should also be chosen by a select committee, in each parish, to whom any complaint of negligence, &c. might be made, if signed by six of the children's parents.

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12.44 Ushers would then be unnecessary; for I believe experience will ever prove that this kind of subordinate authority is particularly injurious to the morals of youth. What, indeed, can tend to deprave the character more than outward submission and inward contempt? Yet how can boys be expected to treat an usher with respect, when the master seems to consider him in the light of a servant, and almost to countenance the ridicule which becomes the chief amusement of the boys during the play hours.

12.45 But nothing of this kind could occur in an elementary day school, where boys and girls, the rich and poor, should meet together. And to prevent any of the distinctions of vanity, they should be dressed alike, and all obliged to submit to the same discipline, or leave the school. The school-room ought to be surrounded by a large piece of ground, in which the children might be usefully exercised, for at this age they should not be confined to any sedentary employment for more than an hour at a time.

But these relaxations might all be rendered a part of elementary education, for many things

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To make this workable, the government should set up day schools for particular age groups, in which boys and girls could be educated together. The school for the younger children, from five to nine years old, ought to be completely free and open to all classes[4]. A select committee in each parish should also choose a sufficient number of masters. Any complaint of negligence, and so on, could be made to this committee if six of the children's parents signed it.

Assistant teachers, or "ushers," would then be unnecessary. I believe experience will always show that this kind of subordinate authority is especially harmful to the morals of the young. What, indeed, could do more to corrupt the character than outward submission combined with inward contempt? Yet how can boys be expected to treat an usher with respect when the master seems to regard him as a servant? The master almost encourages the ridicule of the usher, which becomes the boys' chief amusement during playtime.

But nothing of this kind could happen in an elementary day school where boys and girls, rich and poor, would meet together. To prevent any distinctions of vanity, they should be dressed alike. All of them should be required to submit to the same discipline or leave the school. The schoolroom ought to be surrounded by a large piece of ground where the children could get useful exercise. At this age they should not be kept at any sedentary occupation for more than an hour at a time.

But these breaks could all be made part of elementary education. Many things improve and entertain the senses when introduced as a kind of show, though children would turn a deaf ear to their principles if these were laid down dryly. Bot-

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improve and amuse the senses, when introduced as a kind of show, to the principles of which, dryly laid down, children would turn a deaf ear. For instance, botany, mechanics, and astronomy. Reading, writing, arithmetic, natural history, and some simple experiments in natural philosophy, might fill up the day; but these pursuits should never encroach on gymnastic plays in the open air. The elements of religion, history, the history of man, and politics, might also be taught, by conversations, in the socratic form.

12.46 After the age of nine, girls and boys, intended for domestic employments, or mechanical trades, ought to be removed to other schools, and receive instruction, in some measure appropriated to the destination of each individual, the two sexes being still together in the morning; but in the afternoon, the girls should attend a school, where plain-work, mantua-making, millinery, &c. would be their employment.

12.47 The young people of superiour abilities, or fortune, might now be taught in another school, the dead and living languages, the elements of science, and continue the study of history and politics, on a more extensive scale, which would not exclude polite literature.

12.48 Girls and boys still together? I hear some readers ask: yes. And I should not fear any other consequence than that some early attachment might take place; which, whilst it had the best effect on the moral character of the young people, might not perfectly agree with the views of the parents, for it will be a long time, I fear, before the world is so enlightened that parents, only anxious to render their children virtuous, will let them choose companions for life themselves.

12.49 Besides, this would be a sure way to promote early marriages, and from early marriages the most salutary physical and moral effects naturally flow. What a different character does a married citizen assume from the selfish coxcomb, who lives, but for himself, and who is often afraid

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any, mechanics, and astronomy are examples. Reading, writing, arithmetic, natural history, and some simple experiments in physical science could fill up the day. But these pursuits should never cut into gymnastic games in the open air. The elements of religion, history, the history of humankind, and politics could also be taught through conversations in the Socratic manner.

After the age of nine, girls and boys intended for domestic service or manual trades ought to be moved to other schools. There they should receive instruction suited, to some degree, to each individual's future occupation. The two sexes would still be together in the morning. But in the afternoon the girls should attend a school where their work would be plain sewing, dressmaking, hatmaking, and so on.

At this stage, young people of superior ability or fortune could be taught in another school. They would learn the dead and living languages and the elements of science. They would also continue the study of history and politics on a broader scale, which would not rule out polite literature.

Girls and boys still together? I hear some readers ask. Yes. And I would fear no other consequence than that some early attachment might form. Such an attachment would have the best effect on the young people's moral character, but it might not entirely suit the parents' plans. It will be a long time, I fear, before the world is enlightened enough for parents to let their children choose their life companions for themselves, caring only to make them virtuous.

Besides, this would be a sure way to encourage early marriages, and the most healthful physical and moral effects naturally follow from early marriages. How different is the character of a married citizen from that of the selfish fop who lives only for himself, and who is often afraid to marry in

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[4] Treating this part of the subject, I have borrowed some hints from a very sensible pamphlet, written by the late bishop of Autun on Public Education.

[4] In treating this part of the subject, I have borrowed some ideas from a very sensible pamphlet on public education written by the former bishop of Autun.[9]

9 The former bishop of Autun is Talleyrand; his report on public instruction was presented to the National Assembly in 1791.

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to marry lest he should not be able to live in a certain style. Great emergencies excepted, which would rarely occur in a society of which equality was the basis, a man could only be prepared to discharge the duties of public life, by the habitual practice of those inferiour ones which form the man.

12.50 In this plan of education the constitution of boys would not be ruined by the early debaucheries, which now makes men so selfish, nor girls rendered weak and vain, by indolence, and frivolous pursuits. But, I presuppose, that such a degree of equality should be established between the sexes as would shut out gallantry and coquetry, yet allow friendship and love to temper the heart for the discharge of higher duties.

12.51 These would be schools of morality—and the happiness of man, allowed to flow from the pure springs of duty and affection, what advances might not the human mind make? Society can only be happy and free in proportion as it is virtuous; but the present distinctions, established in society, corrode all private, and blast all public virtue.

12.52 I have already inveighed against the custom of confining girls to their needle, and shutting them out from all political and civil employments; for by thus narrowing their minds they are rendered unfit to fulfil the peculiar duties which nature has assigned them.

12.53 Only employed about the little incidents of the day, they necessarily grow up cunning. My very soul has often sickened at observing the sly tricks practised by women to gain some foolish thing on which their silly hearts were set. Not allowed to dispose of money, or call any thing their own, they learn to turn the market penny; or, should a husband offend, by staying from home, or give rise to some emotions of jealousy—a new gown, or any pretty bawble, smooths Juno's angry brow.

12.54 But these *littlenesses* would not degrade their character, if women were led to respect themselves, if political and moral subjects were opened to them; and, I will venture to affirm, that

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case he cannot keep up a certain style. Great emergencies aside, which would rarely arise in a society founded on equality, a man can be prepared for the duties of public life only in one way. He must habitually practice the lesser duties that form the man.

Under this plan of education, boys' constitutions would not be ruined by the early debauchery that now makes men so selfish. Nor would girls be made weak and vain by idleness and frivolous pursuits. But I am assuming that a certain degree of equality would be established between the sexes. It would shut out gallantry and coquetry, yet allow friendship and love to temper the heart for carrying out higher duties.

These would be schools of morality. If human happiness were allowed to flow from the pure springs of duty and affection, what advances might the human mind not make? Society can only be happy and free in proportion as it is virtuous. But the present distinctions established in society corrode all private virtue and blight all public virtue.

I have already denounced the custom of confining girls to their needle and shutting them out from all political and civil employment. Narrowing their minds in this way makes them unfit to fulfill the particular duties that nature has assigned them.

Occupied only with the little incidents of the day, they inevitably grow up cunning. My very soul has often sickened at watching the sly tricks women use to get some foolish thing their silly hearts were set on. They are not allowed to handle money or to call anything their own, so they learn to skim a profit off the household marketing. Or a husband may give offense by staying away from home, or stir up some feelings of jealousy. Then a new gown, or some pretty trinket, smooths Juno's angry brow.[11]

But these *littlenesses* would not degrade their character if women were led to respect themselves and if political and moral subjects were opened to them. I will venture to say that this is the only way

11 Juno, queen of the Roman gods, was famous for her jealous rages against her unfaithful husband Jupiter.

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this is the only way to make them properly attentive to their domestic duties.—An active mind embraces the whole circle of its duties, and finds time enough for all. It is not, I assert, a bold attempt to emulate masculine virtues; it is not the enchantment of literary pursuits, or the steady investigation of scientific subjects, that lead women astray from duty. No, it is indolence and vanity—the love of pleasure and the love of sway, that will reign paramount in an empty mind.

I say empty emphatically, because the education which women now receive scarcely deserves the name. For the little knowledge that they are led to acquire, during the important years of youth, is merely relative to accomplishments; and accomplishments without a bottom, for unless the understanding be cultivated, superficial and monotonous is every grace. Like the charms of a made up face, they only strike the senses in a crowd; but at home, wanting mind, they want variety.

The consequence is obvious; in gay scenes of dissipation we meet the artificial mind and face, for those who fly from solitude dread, next to solitude, the domestic circle; not having it in their power to amuse or interest, they feel their own insignificance, or find nothing to amuse or interest themselves.

12.55 Besides, what can be more indelicate than a girl's *coming out* in the fashionable world? Which, in other words, is to bring to market a marriageable miss, whose person is taken from one public place to another, richly caparisoned. Yet, mixing in the giddy circle under restraint, these butterflies long to flutter at large, for the first affection of their souls is their own persons, to which their attention has been called with the most sedulous care whilst they were preparing for the period that decides their fate for life.

Instead of pursuing this idle routine, sighing for tasteless shew, and heartless state, with what dignity would the youths of both sexes form attachments in the schools that I have cursorily pointed out; in which, as life advanced, dancing, music, and drawing, might be admitted as relaxations, for at these schools young people of fortune ought to remain, more or less, till they were of age. Those, who were designed for

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to make them properly attentive to their domestic duties.—An active mind takes in the whole circle of its duties and finds time enough for all of them. What leads women astray from duty is not, I insist, a bold attempt to emulate masculine virtues. Nor is it the enchantment of literary pursuits, or the steady investigation of scientific subjects. No, it is idleness and vanity, the love of pleasure and the love of power, that will reign supreme in an empty mind.

I stress the word empty, because the education women now receive hardly deserves the name. The little knowledge they are led to acquire during the important years of youth relates only to accomplishments. And these are accomplishments without any foundation, for unless the understanding is cultivated, every grace is superficial and monotonous. Like the charms of a made-up face, they strike the senses only in a crowd. At home, lacking mind, they lack variety.

The result is obvious. In lively scenes of dissipation we meet the artificial mind and the artificial face. Those who flee from solitude dread the domestic circle almost as much as solitude itself. Since they have no power to amuse or interest others, they feel their own insignificance, or else find nothing to amuse or interest themselves.

Besides, what could be more indelicate than a girl's *coming out* into the fashionable world? In other words, it means bringing a marriageable young miss to market and parading her person from one public place to another, richly decked out like a horse in its trappings. Yet these butterflies move in the giddy circle under restraint, and they long to flutter freely. The first affection of their souls is their own persons. Their attention was drawn to their persons with the most painstaking care while they were being prepared for the moment that decides their fate for life.

Instead of following this idle routine, sighing for tasteless show and heartless grandeur, the young of both sexes would form attachments with dignity in the schools I have briefly sketched. As they grew older, dancing, music, and drawing could be admitted in these schools as recreations. Young people of fortune ought to stay at these schools, more or less, until they came of age. Those inten-

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particular professions, might attend, three or four mornings in the week, the schools appropriated for their immediate instruction.	ded for particular professions could spend three or four mornings a week at the schools set aside for their specific training.
12.56 I only drop these observations at present, as hints; rather, indeed, as an outline of the plan I mean, than a digested one; but I must add, that I highly approve of one regulation mentioned in the pamphlet[5] already alluded to, that of making the children and youths independent of the masters respecting punishments. They should be tried by their peers, which would be an admirable method of fixing sound principles of justice in the mind, and might have the happiest effect on the temper, which is very early soured or irritated by tyranny, till it becomes peevishly cunning, or ferociously overbearing.	For now I offer these observations only as hints, or really as an outline of the plan I have in mind rather than a worked-out one. But I must add that I strongly approve of one rule mentioned in the pamphlet[5] already referred to. It makes the children and young people independent of the masters where punishments are concerned. They should be tried by their peers. This would be an admirable way of fixing sound principles of justice in the mind. It might also have the happiest effect on the temper, which tyranny sours or irritates very early, until it becomes peevishly cunning or ferociously domineering.
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12.57 My imagination darts forward with benevolent fervour to greet these amiable and respectable groups, in spite of the sneering of cold hearts, who are at liberty to utter, with frigid self-importance, the damning epithet—romantic; the force of which I shall endeavour to blunt by repeating the words of an eloquent moralist.—'I know not whether the illusions of a truly humane heart, whose zeal renders every thing easy, is not preferable to that rough and repulsing reason, which always finds in indifference for the public good, the first obstacle to whatever would promote it.'	My imagination leaps forward with benevolent eagerness to greet these lovable and respectable groups. It does so in spite of the sneers of cold hearts, who are free to pronounce with frigid self-importance the damning word: romantic. I will try to blunt its force by repeating the words of an eloquent moralist.—"I do not know whether the illusions of a truly humane heart, whose zeal makes everything easy, are not preferable to that harsh and repellent reason which always finds in indifference to the public good the first obstacle to anything that would promote it."
12.58 I know that libertines will also exclaim, that woman would be unsexed by acquiring strength of body and mind, and that beauty, soft bewitching beauty! would no longer adorn the daughters of men! I am of a very different opinion, for I think that, on the contrary, we should then see dignified beauty, and true grace; to produce which, many powerful physical and moral causes would concur.—Not relaxed beauty, it is true, nor the graces of helplessness; but such as appears to make us respect the human body as a majestic pile fit to receive a noble inhabitant, in the relics of antiquity.	I know that libertines will also cry out that woman would be unsexed by acquiring strength of body and mind. They will say that beauty, soft bewitching beauty, would no longer adorn the daughters of men! I am of a very different opinion. On the contrary, I think we should then see dignified beauty and true grace, which many powerful physical and moral causes would combine to produce.—It would not be languid beauty, it is true, nor the graces of helplessness. It would be the kind of beauty we see in the relics of antiquity, which makes us respect the human body as a majestic building fit to receive a noble inhabitant.
12.59 I do not forget the popular opinion that the Grecian statues were not modelled after nature. I	I do not forget the popular opinion that the Greek statues were not modeled on nature. I mean that they were not modeled on the proportions of one

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mean, not according to the proportions of a particular man; but that beautiful limbs and features were selected from various bodies to form an harmonious whole. This might, in some degree, be true. The fine ideal picture of an exalted imagination might be superiour to the materials which the painter found in nature, and thus it might with propriety be termed rather the model of mankind than of a man.

It was not, however, the mechanical selection of limbs and features; but the ebullition of an heated fancy that burst forth, and the fine senses and enlarged understanding of the artist selected the solid matter, which he drew into this glowing focus.

12.60 I observed that it was not mechanical, because a whole was produced—a model of that grand simplicity, of those concurring energies, which arrest our attention and command our reverence. For only insipid lifeless beauty is produced by a servile copy of even beautiful nature. Yet, independent of these observations, I believe that the human form must have been far more beautiful than it is at present, because extreme indolence, barbarous ligatures, and many causes, which forcibly act on it, in our luxurious state of society, did not retard its expansion, or render it deformed.

Exercise and cleanliness appear to be not only the surest means of preserving health, but of promoting beauty, the physical causes only considered; yet, this is not sufficient, moral ones must concur, or beauty will be merely of that rustic kind which blooms on the innocent, wholesome, countenances of some country people, whose minds have not been exercised. To render the person perfect, physical and moral beauty ought to be attained at the same time; each lending and receiving force by the combination.

Judgment must reside on the brow, affection and fancy beam in the eye, and humanity curve the cheek, or vain is the sparkling of the finest eye or the elegantly turned finish of the fairest features: whilst in every motion that displays the active limbs and well-knit joints, grace and modesty

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particular man. Instead, beautiful limbs and features were chosen from various bodies to form a harmonious whole. This may be true to some extent. The fine ideal image of an exalted imagination might surpass the materials the painter found in nature. So it might properly be called the model of mankind rather than of a man.

It was not, however, a mechanical selection of limbs and features. It was the outpouring of an ardent imagination bursting forth. The artist's fine senses and enlarged understanding selected the solid material, which he drew into this glowing focus.

I said it was not mechanical because a whole was produced. It was a model of that grand simplicity, of those harmonizing energies, which arrest our attention and command our reverence. A slavish copy of even beautiful nature produces only insipid, lifeless beauty. Yet, quite apart from these observations, I believe the human form must once have been far more beautiful than it is now. In our luxurious state of society, extreme idleness, barbarous bindings, and many other causes act forcefully on the body, and in earlier times these did not hinder its growth or deform it.

Considering physical causes alone, exercise and cleanliness appear to be the surest means not only of preserving health but also of promoting beauty. Yet this is not enough. Moral causes must work alongside them, or beauty will be only of that rustic kind which blooms on the innocent, wholesome faces of some country people whose minds have not been exercised. To make a person perfect, physical and moral beauty ought to be attained together. Each lends strength to the other and receives strength from it through the combination.

Judgment must sit on the brow, affection and imagination must beam in the eye, and humanity must curve the cheek. Otherwise the sparkle of the finest eye and the elegant finish of the fairest features are in vain. Meanwhile, grace and modesty should appear in every movement that shows

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[5] The Bishop of Autun's.

[5] The Bishop of Autun's.

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	should appear. But this fair assemblage is not to be brought together by chance; it is the reward of exertions met to support each other; for judgment can only be acquired by reflection, affection by the discharge of duties, and humanity by the exercise of compassion to every living creature.	off the active limbs and well-knit joints. But this fine ensemble is not brought together by chance. It is the reward of efforts that support one another. Judgment can be acquired only by reflection, affection only by the performance of duties, and humanity only by the exercise of compassion toward every living creature.

HUMANITY TO ANIMALS

Cruelty to animals learned in boyhood leads to domestic tyranny, and women's sensibility toward pets is shown to be shallow.

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12.61	Humanity to animals should be particularly inculcated as a part of national education, for it is not at present one of our national virtues. Tenderness for their humble dumb domestics, amongst the lower class, is oftener to be found in a *[pre-civilized]* than a civilized state. For civilization prevents that intercourse which creates affection in the rude hut, or mud cabin, and leads uncultivated minds who are only depraved by the refinements which prevail in the society, where they are trodden under foot by the rich, to domineer over them to revenge the insults that they are obliged to bear from their superiours.	Humanity to animals should be particularly instilled as part of national education, for at present it is not one of our national virtues. Among the lower classes, tenderness toward their humble, speechless household animals is more often found in a pre-civilized state than in a civilized one. In the rough hut or mud cabin, close contact creates affection, and civilization prevents it. In civilized society the rich trample uncultivated minds underfoot, and such minds are corrupted only by the refinements that prevail there. Civilization leads them to domineer over animals, in revenge for the insults they are forced to bear from their superiors.
12.62	This habitual cruelty is first caught at school, where it is one of the rare sports of the boys to torment the miserable brutes that fall in their way. The transition, as they grow up, from barbarity to brutes to domestic tyranny over wives, children, and servants, is very easy. Justice, or even benevolence, will not be a powerful spring of action unless it be extended to the whole creation; nay, I believe that it may be delivered as an axiom, that those who can see pain, unmoved, will soon learn to inflict it.	This habitual cruelty is first picked up at school, where tormenting the miserable animals that come their way is one of the boys' favorite sports. As they grow up, the step from cruelty to animals to domestic tyranny over wives, children, and servants is a very easy one. Justice, or even benevolence, will not be a powerful motive for action unless it is extended to the whole of creation. Indeed, I believe it may be laid down as an axiom that those who can watch pain unmoved will soon learn to inflict it.
12.63	The vulgar are swayed by present feelings, and the habits which they have accidentally acquired; but on partial feelings much dependence cannot be placed, though they be just; for, when they are not invigorated by reflection, custom weakens them, till they are scarcely felt. The sympathies of our nature are strengthened by pondering cogitations, and deadened by thoughtless use. Mackbeth's heart smote him more for one murder, the first, than for a hundred subsequent ones, which were necessary to back it. But, when	The vulgar, meaning the common run of people, are swayed by present feelings and by habits they have acquired by chance. But little reliance can be placed on partial feelings, however just they may be. When they are not strengthened by reflection, custom weakens them until they are hardly felt. The sympathies of our nature are strengthened by thoughtful reflection and deadened by thoughtless habit. Macbeth's heart struck him harder for one murder, the first, than for the hundred later ones he needed to back it up. But when I used the word

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	I used the epithet vulgar, I did not mean to confine my remark to the poor, for partial humanity, founded on present sensations, or whim, is quite as conspicuous, if not more so, amongst the rich.	"vulgar," I did not mean to restrict my remark to the poor. Partial humanity, based on present sensations or whim, is just as conspicuous among the rich, if not more so.
12.64	The lady who sheds tears for the bird starved in a snare, and execrates the devils in the shape of men, who goad to madness the poor ox, or whip the patient ass, tottering under a burden above its strength, will, nevertheless, keep her coachman and horses whole hours waiting for her, when the sharp frost bites, or the rain beats against the well-closed windows which do not admit a breath of air to tell her how roughly the wind blows without. And she who takes her dogs to bed, and nurses them, with a parade of sensibility, when sick, will suffer her babes to grow up crooked in a nursery. This illustration of my argument is drawn from a matter of fact.	Take the lady who weeps for the bird starved in a trap, and who curses the devils in human shape who goad the poor ox to madness or whip the patient donkey staggering under a load beyond its strength. She will nonetheless keep her coachman and horses waiting for her for hours on end in a biting frost. Or she will keep them waiting while the rain beats against her tightly closed windows, which do not let in a breath of air to tell her how roughly the wind is blowing outside. And she who takes her dogs to bed, and nurses them with a great show of sensibility when they are sick, will let her babies grow up crooked in a nursery. This illustration of my argument is drawn from fact.
	The woman whom I allude to was handsome, reckoned very handsome, by those who do not miss the mind when the face is plump and fair; but her understanding had not been led from female duties by literature, nor her innocence debauched by knowledge. No, she was quite feminine, according to the masculine acceptation of the word; and, so far from loving these spoiled brutes that filled the place which her children ought to have occupied, she only lisped out a pretty mixture of French and English nonsense, to please the men who flocked round her. The wife, mother, and human creature, were all swallowed up by the factitious character which an improper education and the selfish vanity of beauty had produced.	The woman I am thinking of was handsome. Those who do not miss the mind when the face is plump and fair considered her very handsome. But literature had not led her understanding away from female duties, nor had knowledge corrupted her innocence. No, she was entirely feminine, in the masculine sense of the word. Far from loving these spoiled animals that filled the place her children ought to have occupied, she merely lisped out a pretty mixture of French and English nonsense to please the men who flocked around her. The wife, the mother, and the human being were all swallowed up by an artificial character, produced by an improper education and the selfish vanity of beauty.
12.65	I do not like to make a distinction without a difference, and I own that I have been as much disgusted by the fine lady who took her lap-dog to her bosom instead of her child; as by the ferocity of a man, who, beating his horse, declared, that he knew as well when he did wrong, as a Christian.	I do not like to make a distinction where there is no difference. I confess I have been as disgusted by the fine lady who held her lapdog to her bosom instead of her child as by the ferocity of a man beating his horse, who declared that the horse knew as well as a Christian when it did wrong.
12.66	This brood of folly shews how mistaken they are who, if they allow women to leave their harams, do not cultivate their understandings, in order to plant virtues in their hearts. For had they sense, they might acquire that domestic taste which would lead them to love with reasonable	This brood of folly shows how mistaken some people are. They allow women to leave their harems, yet they do not cultivate women's understanding so as to plant virtues in their hearts. If women had sense, they might acquire the domestic taste that would lead them to love their whole

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subordination their whole family, from their husband to the house-dog; nor would they ever insult humanity in the person of the most menial servant by paying more attention to the comfort of a brute, than to that of a fellow-creature.

12.67 My observations on national education are obviously hints; but I principally wish to enforce the necessity of educating the sexes together to perfect both, and of making children sleep at home that they may learn to love home; yet to make private support, instead of smothering, public affections, they should be sent to school to mix with a number of equals, for only by the jostlings of equality can we form a just opinion of ourselves.

12.68 To render mankind more virtuous, and happier of course, both sexes must act from the same principle; but how can that be expected when only one is allowed to see the reasonableness of it? To render also the social compact truly equitable, and in order to spread those enlightening principles, which alone can meliorate the fate of man, women must be allowed to found their virtue on knowledge, which is scarcely possible unless they are educated by the same pursuits as men. For they are now made so inferiour by ignorance and low desires, as not to deserve to be ranked with them; or, by the serpentine wrigglings of cunning they mount the tree of knowledge, and only acquire sufficient to lead men astray.

12.69 It is plain from the history of all nations, that women cannot be confined to merely domestic pursuits, for they will not fulfil family duties, unless their minds take a wider range, and whilst they are kept in ignorance they become in the same proportion the slaves of pleasure as they are the slaves of man. Nor can they be shut out of great enterprises, though the narrowness of their minds often make them mar, what they are unable to comprehend.

12.70 The libertinism, and even the virtues of superiour men, will always give women, of some description, great power over them; and these weak women, under the influence of childish passions and selfish vanity, will throw a false light over the objects which the very men view with their eyes, who ought to enlighten their

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family with reasonable subordination, from their husband down to the house dog. Nor would they ever insult humanity in the person of the lowliest servant by paying more attention to the comfort of an animal than to that of a fellow creature.

My remarks on national education are obviously only hints. My main aim is to press two needs: to educate the sexes together, so as to perfect both, and to have children sleep at home, so that they learn to love home. Yet, so that private affections support public ones instead of smothering them, children should be sent to school to mix with a number of equals. Only through the jostling of equality can we form a fair opinion of ourselves.

To make humanity more virtuous, and therefore happier, both sexes must act from the same principle. But how can that be expected when only one of them is allowed to see why it is reasonable? Again, to make the social compact truly fair, and to spread the enlightening principles that alone can improve the human lot, women must be allowed to found their virtue on knowledge. That is scarcely possible unless they are educated through the same pursuits as men. As things are, ignorance and low desires make them so inferior that they do not deserve to be ranked with men. Or else they climb the tree of knowledge by the serpentine wrigglings of cunning, and gain only enough to lead men astray.

The history of every nation makes it plain that women cannot be confined to purely domestic pursuits. They will not fulfill their family duties unless their minds range more widely. As long as they are kept in ignorance, they become slaves of pleasure in exactly the measure that they are slaves of men. Nor can they be shut out of great enterprises, though the narrowness of their minds often leads them to spoil what they cannot understand.

The libertinism, and even the virtues, of superior men will always give women of a certain kind great power over them. These weak women, driven by childish passions and selfish vanity, will cast a false light over the very things these men see through their eyes, when the men ought to be enlightening the women's judgment. Men of ima-

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judgment. Men of fancy, and those sanguine characters who mostly hold the helm of human affairs, in general, relax in the society of women; and surely I need not cite to the most superficial reader of history the numerous examples of vice and oppression which the private intrigues of female favourites have produced; not to dwell on the mischief that naturally arises from the blundering interposition of well-meaning folly.

For in the transactions of business it is much better to have to deal with a knave than a fool, because a knave adheres to some plan; and any plan of reason may be seen through much sooner than a sudden flight of folly. The power which vile and foolish women have had over wise men, who possessed sensibility, is notorious; I shall only mention one instance.

12.71 Who ever drew a more exalted female character than Rousseau? though in the lump he constantly endeavoured to degrade the sex. And why was he thus anxious? Truly to justify to himself the affection which weakness and virtue had made him cherish for that fool Theresa. He could not raise her to the common level of her sex; and therefore he laboured to bring woman down to her's. He found her a convenient humble companion, and pride made him determine to find some superiour virtues in the being whom he chose to live with; but did not her conduct during his life, and after his death, clearly shew how grossly he was mistaken who called her a celestial innocent.

Nay, in the bitterness of his heart, he himself laments, that when his bodily infirmities made him no longer treat her like a woman, she ceased to have an affection for him. And it was very natural that she should, for having so few sentiments in common, when the sexual tie was broken, what was to hold her? To hold her affection whose sensibility was confined to one sex, nay, to one man, it requires sense to turn sensibility into the broad channel of humanity; many women have not mind enough to have an affection for a woman, or a friendship for a man.

But the sexual weakness that makes woman depend on man for a subsistence, produces a kind of cattish affection which leads a wife to purr

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gination, and the ardent types who mostly steer human affairs, generally relax in the company of women. Surely I need not point out, even to the most superficial reader of history, the many examples of vice and oppression produced by the private intrigues of female favorites. I will not dwell on the harm that naturally follows from the blundering interference of well-meaning folly.

In business it is far better to deal with a rogue than with a fool, because a rogue sticks to some plan, and any rational plan can be seen through much sooner than a sudden flight of folly. The power that vile and foolish women have had over wise men of sensibility is notorious. I will mention only one instance.

Who ever drew a more exalted female character than Rousseau? And yet, when he spoke of women as a whole, he constantly tried to degrade them. Why was he so anxious to do it? Really, to justify to himself the affection that weakness and virtue had led him to cherish for that fool Thérèse. He could not raise her to the ordinary level of her sex, so he labored to bring woman down to hers. He found her a convenient, humble companion, and pride made him determined to find some superior virtues in the person he had chosen to live with. But did her conduct, during his life and after his death, not show clearly how grossly mistaken he was to call her a heavenly innocent?[13]

Indeed, in the bitterness of his heart, he himself laments that she stopped caring for him once his bodily infirmities kept him from treating her as a woman. And it was only natural that she should. They had so few feelings in common that, once the sexual tie was broken, what was left to hold her? To hold the affection of someone whose sensibility is confined to one sex, or even to one man, takes the good sense to turn sensibility into the broad channel of humanity. Many women do not have mind enough to feel affection for a woman, or friendship for a man.

But the sexual weakness that makes a woman depend on a man for her living produces a kind of cattish affection. It leads a wife to purr around her

13 Thérèse Levasseur (1721–1801), a former inn servant, was Rousseau's companion for over thirty years and eventually his wife.

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	about her husband as she would about any man who fed and caressed her.	husband as she would around any man who fed and petted her.
12.72	Men are, however, often gratified by this kind of fondness, which is confined in a beastly manner to themselves; but should they ever become more virtuous, they will wish to converse at their fireside with a friend, after they cease to play with a mistress.	Men, however, are often gratified by this kind of fondness, which is confined to themselves in an animal way. But if they ever become more virtuous, they will want to talk with a friend at their fireside once they stop playing with a mistress.
12.73	Besides, understanding is necessary to give variety and interest to sensual enjoyments, for low, indeed, in the intellectual scale, is the mind that can continue to love when neither virtue nor sense give a human appearance to an animal appetite. But sense will always preponderate; and if women are not, in general, brought more on a level with men, some superiour women, like the Greek courtezans, will assemble the men of abilities around them, and draw from their families many citizens, who would have stayed at home had their wives had more sense, or the graces which result from the exercise of the understanding and fancy, the legitimate parents of taste.	Besides, understanding is needed to give variety and interest even to sensual pleasures. Low indeed on the intellectual scale is the mind that can go on loving when neither virtue nor sense gives a human face to an animal appetite. But sense will always win out. If women are not, in general, brought more nearly level with men, some superior women, like the Greek courtesans, will gather men of ability around them. They will draw away from their families many citizens who would have stayed home if their wives had had more sense, or had the graces that come from exercising the understanding and the imagination, the legitimate parents of taste.[14]
	A woman of talents, if she be not absolutely ugly, will always obtain great power, raised by the weakness of her sex; and in proportion as men acquire virtue and delicacy, by the exertion of reason, they will look for both in women, but they can only acquire them in the same way that men do.	A woman of talent, unless she is absolutely ugly, will always gain great power, and the weakness of her sex makes that power greater. As men acquire virtue and delicacy through the exercise of reason, they will look for both in women. But women can acquire them only in the same way men do.
12.74	In France or Italy, have the women confined themselves to domestic life? though they have not hitherto had a political existence, yet, have they not illicitly had great sway? corrupting themselves and the men with whose passions they played. In short, in whatever light I view the subject, reason and experience convince me that the only method of leading women to fulfil their peculiar duties, is to free them from all restraint by allowing them to participate the inherent rights of mankind.	In France or Italy, have women confined themselves to domestic life? Though they have not so far had any political existence, have they not held great sway illicitly, corrupting themselves and the men whose passions they played on? In short, however I look at the subject, reason and experience convince me that there is only one way to lead women to fulfill their particular duties. That way is to free them from all restraint by allowing them to share the inherent rights of humanity.
12.75	Make them free, and they will quickly become wise and virtuous, as men become more so; for the improvement must be mutual, or the injustice which one half of the human race are obliged to	Make them free, and they will quickly become wise and virtuous, as men become more so. The improvement must be mutual. Otherwise the injustice that one half of the human race is forced to

14 Educated courtesans (hetairai) such as Aspasia, companion of Pericles, were famous for the men of talent they drew around them.

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	submit to, retorting on their oppressors, the virtue of man will be worm-eaten by the insect whom he keeps under his feet.	submit to will recoil on its oppressors, and the virtue of man will be worm-eaten by the insect he keeps under his feet.
12.76	Let men take their choice, man and woman were made for each other, though not to become one being; and if they will not improve women, they will deprave them!	Let men take their choice. Man and woman were made for each other, though not to become one being. And if men will not improve women, they will deprave them!
12.77	I speak of the improvement and emancipation of the whole sex, for I know that the behaviour of a few women, who, by accident, or following a strong bent of nature, have acquired a portion of knowledge superiour to that of the rest of their sex, has often been overbearing; but there have been instances of women who, attaining knowledge, have not discarded modesty, nor have they always pedantically appeared to despise the ignorance which they laboured to disperse in their own minds. The exclamations then which any advice respecting female learning, commonly produces, especially from pretty women, often arise from envy.	I am speaking of the improvement and emancipation of the whole sex. I know that a few women have gained more knowledge than the rest of their sex, by accident or by following a strong natural bent, and that their behavior has often been overbearing. But there have been women who acquired knowledge without discarding modesty. Nor did they always pedantically affect to despise the ignorance they had labored to clear from their own minds. So the outcries that any advice about female learning usually provokes, especially from pretty women, often spring from envy.
	When they chance to see that even the lustre of their eyes, and the flippant sportiveness of refined coquetry will not always secure them attention, during a whole evening, should a woman of a more cultivated understanding endeavour to give a rational turn to the conversation, the common source of consolation is, that such women seldom get husbands. What arts have I not seen silly women use to interrupt by *flirtation*, a very significant word to describe such a manœuvre, a rational conversation which made the men forget that they were pretty women.	Sometimes they see that even the luster of their eyes and the flippant playfulness of refined coquetry will not always hold attention for a whole evening, because a woman of more cultivated understanding is trying to give the conversation a rational turn. Their usual consolation then is that such women seldom get husbands. What tricks have I not seen silly women use to break up, by *flirtation* (a very telling word for such a maneuver), a rational conversation that had made the men forget they were pretty women!
12.78	But, allowing what is very natural to man, that the possession of rare abilities is really calculated to excite over-weening pride, disgusting in both men and women—in what a state of inferiority must the female faculties have rusted when such a small portion of knowledge as those women attained, who have sneeringly been termed learned women, could be singular?—Sufficiently so to puff up the possessor, and excite envy in her contemporaries, and some of the other sex. Nay, has not a little rationality exposed many women to the severest censure?	But let us grant what comes very naturally to humankind: that rare abilities really do tend to excite overweening pride, which is disgusting in men and women alike. Even so, in what a state of inferiority must women's faculties have rusted, when the small amount of knowledge attained by the women sneeringly called learned women could be remarkable?—Remarkable enough to puff up its owner, and to excite envy in her contemporaries and in some of the other sex. Indeed, has not a little rationality exposed many women to the harshest censure?
	I advert to well known facts, for I have frequently heard women ridiculed, and every little weakness	I am referring to well-known facts. I have often heard women ridiculed, and their every little

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exposed, only because they adopted the advice of some medical men, and deviated from the beaten track in their mode of treating their infants. I have actually heard this barbarous aversion to innovation carried still further, and a sensible woman stigmatized as an unnatural mother, who has thus been wisely solicitous to preserve the health of her children, when in the midst of her care she has lost one by some of the casualties of infancy, which no prudence can ward off. Her acquaintance have observed, that this was the consequence of new-fangled notions—the new-fangled notions of ease and cleanliness.

And those who pretending to experience, though they have long adhered to prejudices that have, according to the opinion of the most sagacious physicians, thinned the human race, almost rejoiced at the disaster that gave a kind of sanction to prescription.

12.79 Indeed, if it were only on this account, the national education of women is of the utmost consequence, for what a number of human sacrifices are made to that moloch prejudice! And in how many ways are children destroyed by the lasciviousness of man? The want of natural affection, in many women, who are drawn from their duty by the admiration of men, and the ignorance of others, render the infancy of man a much more perilous state than that of brutes; yet men are unwilling to place women in situations proper to enable them to acquire sufficient understanding to know how even to nurse their babes.

12.80 So forcibly does this truth strike me, that I would rest the whole tendency of my reasoning upon it, for whatever tends to incapacitate the maternal character, takes woman out of her sphere.

12.81 But it is vain to expect the present race of weak mothers either to take that reasonable care of a child's body, which is necessary to lay the foundation of a good constitution, supposing that it do not suffer for the sins of its father; or, to manage its temper so judiciously that the child will not have, as it grows up, to throw off all that its mother, its first instructor, directly or indirectly taught; and unless the mind has

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weakness exposed, simply because they followed the advice of certain doctors and left the beaten track in the way they treated their infants. I have actually heard this barbarous aversion to innovation carried further still. A sensible woman had wisely taken these pains to preserve her children's health. Then, in the midst of all her care, she lost one of them to one of those accidents of infancy that no prudence can prevent, and she was branded an unnatural mother. Her acquaintances remarked that this was the result of newfangled notions—the newfangled notions of comfort and cleanliness.

And those who claimed experience all but rejoiced at the disaster, which seemed to give a kind of sanction to established custom. Yet for years they had clung to prejudices that, in the opinion of the wisest physicians, have thinned the human race.

Indeed, if only for this reason, the national education of women is of the utmost importance. How many human sacrifices are made to that Moloch, prejudice! And in how many ways are children destroyed by men's lust? Many women lack natural affection because the admiration of men draws them from their duty, and many others are ignorant. Between them, they make human infancy a far more perilous state than the infancy of animals. Yet men are unwilling to place women where they could acquire enough understanding to know even how to nurse their babies.[15]

This truth strikes me so forcibly that I would rest the whole drift of my argument on it. Whatever tends to unfit a woman for motherhood takes her out of her sphere.

But it is vain to expect the present generation of weak mothers to take reasonable care of a child's body, as they must to lay the foundation of a good constitution (assuming the child does not suffer for the sins of its father). It is just as vain to expect them to manage its temper so wisely that, as it grows up, the child will not have to throw off everything its mother, its first teacher, taught it directly or indirectly. Unless the mind has uncom-

15 Moloch: a Canaanite god to whom, according to the Bible, children were sacrificed.

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uncommon vigour, womanish follies will stick to the character throughout life. The weakness of the mother will be visited on the children!

And whilst women are educated to rely on their husbands for judgment, this must ever be the consequence, for there is no improving an understanding by halves, nor can any being act wisely from imitation, because in every circumstance of life there is a kind of individuality, which requires an exertion of judgment to modify general rules. The being who can think justly in one track, will soon extend its intellectual empire; and she who has sufficient judgment to manage her children, will not submit, right or wrong, to her husband, or patiently to the social laws which make a nonentity of a wife.

12.82 In public schools women, to guard against the errors of ignorance, should be taught the elements of anatomy and medicine, not only to enable them to take proper care of their own health, but to make them rational nurses of their infants, parents, and husbands; for the bills of mortality are swelled by the blunders of self-willed old women, who give nostrums of their own without knowing any thing of the human frame.

It is likewise proper, only in a domestic view, to make women acquainted with the anatomy of the mind, by allowing the sexes to associate together in every pursuit; and by leading them to observe the progress of the human understanding in the improvement of the sciences and arts; never forgetting the science of morality, nor the study of the political history of mankind.

12.83 A man has been termed a microcosm; and every family might also be called a state. States, it is true, have mostly been governed by arts that disgrace the character of man; and the want of a just constitution, and equal laws, have so perplexed the notions of the worldly wise, that they more than question the reasonableness of contending for the rights of humanity. Thus morality, polluted in the national reservoir, sends off streams of vice to corrupt the constituent parts of the body politic; but should more noble, or rather, more just principles regulate the laws, which ought to be the government of society, and

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mon vigor, the follies taught to women will cling to the character throughout life. The weakness of the mother will be visited on the children!

And as long as women are brought up to rely on their husbands' judgment, this must always be the result. There is no improving an understanding by halves. Nor can any being act wisely by imitation, since every circumstance of life has a kind of individuality that calls for judgment to adapt general rules. A being who can think soundly along one line will soon extend its intellectual empire. And a woman with enough judgment to manage her children will not submit, right or wrong, to her husband, or patiently accept the social laws that make a wife a nonentity.

In the public schools, to guard against the errors of ignorance, girls should be taught the elements of anatomy and medicine. This would enable them to take proper care of their own health, and would also make them rational nurses of their infants, parents, and husbands. The death rolls are swelled by the blunders of headstrong old women who hand out remedies of their own without knowing anything about the human body.

It is likewise proper, even from a purely domestic point of view, to acquaint women with the anatomy of the mind. This can be done by letting the sexes associate in every pursuit, and by leading them to observe how the human understanding has progressed through the improvement of the sciences and arts. The science of morality must never be forgotten, nor the study of the political history of humanity.

A human being has been called a microcosm, and every family might likewise be called a state. States, it is true, have mostly been governed by arts that disgrace human character. The lack of a just constitution and equal laws has so confused the ideas of the worldly-wise that they more than doubt whether it is reasonable to fight for the rights of humanity. So morality, polluted in the national reservoir, sends off streams of vice to corrupt the component parts of the body politic. But suppose nobler, or rather more just, principles governed the laws, and it was the laws that gov-

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	not those who execute them, duty might become the rule of private conduct.	erned society, as they should, and not those who carry them out. Then duty might become the rule of private conduct.
12.84	Besides, by the exercise of their bodies and minds women would acquire that mental activity so necessary in the maternal character, united with the fortitude that distinguishes steadiness of conduct from the obstinate perverseness of weakness. For it is dangerous to advise the indolent to be steady, because they instantly become rigorous, and to save themselves trouble, punish with severity faults that the patient fortitude of reason might have prevented.	Besides, by exercising their bodies and minds, women would acquire the mental activity so necessary to a mother. They would gain with it the fortitude that distinguishes steadiness of conduct from the obstinate perversity of weakness. It is dangerous to advise the indolent to be firm. They instantly become rigid, and to save themselves trouble they severely punish faults that the patient fortitude of reason might have prevented.
12.85	But fortitude presupposes strength of mind; and is strength of mind to be acquired by indolent acquiescence? by asking advice instead of exerting the judgment? by obeying through fear, instead of practising the forbearance, which we all stand in need of ourselves?—The conclusion which I wish to draw, is obvious; make women rational creatures, and free citizens, and they will quickly become good wives, and mothers; that is —if men do not neglect the duties of husbands and fathers.	But fortitude presupposes strength of mind. And is strength of mind to be acquired by lazy acquiescence? By asking advice instead of using one's judgment? By obeying out of fear, instead of practicing the forbearance we all need ourselves?—The conclusion I want to draw is obvious. Make women rational creatures and free citizens, and they will quickly become good wives and mothers—that is, if men do not neglect the duties of husbands and fathers.
12.86	Discussing the advantages which a public and private education combined, as I have sketched, might rationally be expected to produce, I have dwelt most on such as are particularly relative to the female world, because I think the female world oppressed; yet the gangrene, which the vices engendered by oppression have produced, is not confined to the morbid part, but pervades society at large: so that when I wish to see my sex become more like moral agents, my heart bounds with the anticipation of the general diffusion of that sublime contentment which only morality can diffuse.	In discussing the benefits we might reasonably expect from combining public and private education as I have sketched it, I have dwelt most on those that particularly concern women, because I think women are oppressed. Yet oppression breeds vices, and the gangrene they produce is not confined to the diseased part but spreads through society at large. So when I long to see my sex become more like moral agents, my heart leaps at the prospect of a general spread of that sublime contentment which only morality can spread.

Chapter XIII: Some Instances of the Folly Which the Ignorance of Women Generates; with Concluding Reflections on the Moral Improvement That a Revolution in Female Manners May Naturally Be Expected to Produce

Fortune-tellers, novels, fashion and false sensibility; a closing plea that justice to women will make them better wives, mothers and citizens.

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13.1	There are many follies, in some degree, peculiar to women: sins against reason of commission as well as of omission; but all flowing from ignorance or prejudice, I shall only point out such as appear to be particularly injurious to their moral character. And in animadverting on them, I wish especially to prove, that the weakness of mind and body, which men have endeavoured, impelled by various motives, to perpetuate, prevents their discharging the peculiar duty of their sex: for when weakness of body will not permit them to suckle their children, and weakness of mind makes them spoil their tempers—is woman in a natural state?	There are many follies that are to some degree peculiar to women: sins against reason, of commission as well as omission. But since they all flow from ignorance or prejudice, I will point out only those that seem particularly harmful to women's moral character. In criticizing them, I especially want to prove one thing. Men, for various motives, have tried to perpetuate weakness of mind and body in women, and this weakness prevents women from carrying out the particular duty of their sex. When weakness of body will not let them nurse their children, and weakness of mind makes them spoil their children's tempers—is woman in a natural state?

FORTUNE-TELLERS

Fashionable women who consult fortune-tellers and magnetizers are shown to insult both reason and religion.

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13.2	One glaring instance of the weakness which proceeds from ignorance, first claims attention, and calls for severe reproof.	One glaring example of the weakness that comes from ignorance claims attention first, and calls for severe rebuke.
13.3	In this metropolis a number of lurking leeches infamously gain a subsistence by practising on the credulity of women, pretending to cast nativities, to use the technical word; and many females who, proud of their rank and fortune, look down on the vulgar with sovereign contempt, shew by this credulity, that the distinction is arbitrary, and that they have not sufficiently cultivated their minds to rise above vulgar prejudices.	In this capital a number of lurking leeches make an infamous living by working on women's credulity, pretending to "cast nativities," to use the technical term. Many women are proud of their rank and fortune and look down on the common people with sovereign contempt. Yet by this credulity they show that the distinction is arbitrary, and that they have not cultivated their minds enough to rise above vulgar prejudices.[1]

1 To "cast a nativity" was to draw up a horoscope from the positions of the stars at a person's birth.

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Women, because they have not been led to consider the knowledge of their duty as the one thing necessary to know, or, to live in the present moment by the discharge of it, are very anxious to peep into futurity, to learn what they have to expect to render life interesting, and to break the vacuum of ignorance.

13.4 I must be allowed to expostulate seriously with the ladies who follow these idle inventions; for ladies, mistresses of families, are not ashamed to drive in their own carriages to the door of the cunning man[1]. And if any of them should peruse this work, I entreat them to answer to their own hearts the following questions, not forgetting that they are in the presence of God.

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13.5 Do you believe that there is but one God, and that he is powerful, wise, and good?

13.6 Do you believe that all things were created by him, and that all beings are dependent on him?

13.7 Do you rely on his wisdom, so conspicuous in his works, and in your own frame, and are you convinced that he has ordered all things which do not come under the cognizance of your senses, in the same perfect harmony, to fulfil his designs?

13.8 Do you acknowledge that the power of looking into futurity, and seeing things that are not, as if they were, is an attribute of the Creator? And should he, by an impression on the minds of his creatures, think fit to impart to them some event hid in the shades of time yet unborn, to whom would the secret be revealed by immediate inspiration? The opinion of ages will answer this question—to reverend old men, to people distinguished for eminent piety.

13.9 The oracles of old were thus delivered by priests dedicated to the service of the God who was supposed to inspire them. The glare of worldly pomp which surrounded these impostors, and the respect paid to them by artful politicians, who knew how to avail themselves of this useful

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Women have not been taught to regard knowledge of their duty as the one thing necessary, or to live in the present moment by doing it. So they are very anxious to peep into the future, to find out what they have to look forward to that might make life interesting, and to break the emptiness of ignorance.

I must be allowed to remonstrate seriously with the ladies who chase these idle inventions. Ladies who are mistresses of households are not ashamed to drive in their own carriages to the door of the cunning man, the fortune-teller[1]. If any of them should read this work, I beg them to answer the following questions in their own hearts, not forgetting that they are in the presence of God.

Do you believe that there is only one God, and that he is powerful, wise, and good?

Do you believe that all things were created by him, and that all beings depend on him?

Do you rely on his wisdom, so plainly visible in his works and in your own body? And are you convinced that he has arranged all the things beyond the reach of your senses in the same perfect harmony, to fulfill his purposes?

Do you acknowledge that the power to look into the future, and to see things that are not as if they were, belongs to the Creator? And if he saw fit, by an impression on the minds of his creatures, to reveal to them some event hidden in the shadows of a time not yet born, to whom would the secret be disclosed by direct inspiration? The opinion of the ages answers this question—to venerable old men, to people distinguished by eminent piety.

The oracles of old were delivered in just this way, by priests dedicated to the service of the god who was supposed to inspire them. These impostors were surrounded by the glare of worldly pomp. They were respected by crafty politicians, who knew how to use this handy device to bend the

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[1] I once lived in the neighbourhood of one of these men, a *handsome* man, and saw with surprise and indignation, women, whose appearance and attendance bespoke that rank in which females are supposed to receive a superiour education, flock to his door.

[1] I once lived near one of these men, a *handsome* man. With surprise and indignation, I watched women flock to his door whose appearance and servants showed that they belonged to the rank in which women are supposed to receive a superior education.

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engine to bend the necks of the strong under the dominion of the cunning, spread a sacred mysterious veil of sanctity over their lies and abominations.

Impressed by such solemn devotional parade, a Greek, or Roman lady might be excused, if she enquired of the oracle, when she was anxious to pry into futurity, or enquire about some dubious event: and her enquiries, however contrary to reason, could not be reckoned impious.—But, can the professors of Christianity ward off that imputation? Can a Christian suppose that the favourites of the most High, the highly favoured, would be obliged to lurk in disguise, and practise the most dishonest tricks to cheat silly women out of the money—which the poor cry for in vain?

13.10 Say not that such questions are an insult to common sense—for it is your own conduct, O ye foolish women! which throws an odium on your sex! And these reflexions should make you shudder at your thoughtlessness, and irrational devotion.—For I do not suppose that all of you laid aside your religion, such as it is, when you entered those mysterious dwellings. Yet, as I have throughout supposed myself talking to ignorant women, for ignorant ye are in the most emphatical sense of the word, it would be absurd to reason with you on the egregious folly of desiring to know what the Supreme Wisdom has concealed.

13.11 Probably you would not understand me, were I to attempt to shew you that it would be absolutely inconsistent with the grand purpose of life, that of rendering human creatures wise and virtuous: and that, were it sanctioned by God, it would disturb the order established in creation; and if it be not sanctioned by God, do you expect to hear truth? Can events be foretold, events which have not yet assumed a body to become subject to mortal inspection, can they be foreseen by a vicious worldling, who pampers his appetites by preying on the foolish ones?

13.12 Perhaps, however, you devoutly believe in the devil, and imagine, to shift the question, that he may assist his votaries; but, if really respecting the power of such a being, an enemy to goodness and to God, can you go to church after having been under such an obligation to him?

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necks of the strong under the rule of the cunning. The pomp and the respect together spread a sacred, mysterious veil of holiness over their lies and abominations.

Impressed by such solemn religious display, a Greek or Roman lady might be excused for consulting the oracle when she was anxious to pry into the future or to ask about some uncertain event. Her inquiries, however contrary to reason, could not be counted impious.—But can those who profess Christianity escape that charge? Can a Christian suppose that the favorites of the Most High, the highly favored, would have to lurk in disguise and practice the most dishonest tricks to cheat silly women out of money—money the poor cry out for in vain?

Do not say that such questions insult common sense. It is your own conduct—O you foolish women!—that brings disgrace on your sex! These reflections should make you shudder at your thoughtlessness and irrational devotion.—For I do not suppose that all of you set aside your religion, such as it is, when you entered those mysterious dwellings. Yet I have all along imagined myself speaking to ignorant women, and ignorant you are, in the most emphatic sense of the word. So it would be absurd to reason with you about the egregious folly of wanting to know what the Supreme Wisdom has concealed.

You probably would not understand me if I tried to show you that prying into the future would be utterly inconsistent with the great purpose of life, which is to make human beings wise and virtuous. If God sanctioned it, it would disturb the order established in creation. And if God does not sanction it, do you expect to hear the truth? Can events be foretold, events that have not yet taken bodily form so as to come under mortal inspection? Can they be foreseen by a vicious man of the world, who pampers his appetites by preying on foolish women?

Perhaps, however, you devoutly believe in the devil, and imagine, to shift the question, that he may assist his followers. But if you really respect the power of such a being, an enemy of goodness and of God, can you go to church after putting yourself under such an obligation to him?

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13.13	From these delusions to those still more fashionable deceptions, practised by the whole tribe of magnetisers, the transition is very natural. With respect to them, it is equally proper to ask women a few questions.	From these delusions it is a very natural step to the still more fashionable deceptions practiced by the whole tribe of magnetizers. It is equally fitting to ask women a few questions about them.[3]
13.14	Do you know any thing of the construction of the human frame? If not, it is proper that you should be told what every child ought to know, that when its admirable economy has been disturbed by intemperance or indolence, I speak not of violent disorders, but of chronical diseases, it must be brought into a healthy state again, by slow degrees, and if the functions of life have not been materially injured, regimen, another word for temperance, air, exercise, and a few medicines prescribed by persons who have studied the human body, are the only human means, yet discovered, of recovering that inestimable blessing, health, that will bear investigation.	Do you know anything about how the human body is constructed? If not, you ought to be told what every child should know. The body is an admirable system, and excess or idleness can disturb it. When that happens (I am speaking not of violent illnesses but of chronic ones), it must be brought back to health by slow degrees. If the vital functions have not been seriously damaged, a few means can recover that priceless blessing, health: regimen (another word for moderation), air, exercise, and a few medicines prescribed by people who have studied the human body. These are the only human means yet discovered that will bear investigation.
13.15	Do you then believe that these magnetisers, who, by hocus pocus tricks, pretend to work a miracle, are delegated by God, or assisted by the solver of all these kinds of difficulties—the devil.	Do you, then, believe that these magnetizers, who pretend to work miracles with hocus-pocus tricks, are sent by God? Or are they assisted by the one who solves all difficulties of this kind—the devil?
13.16	Do they, when they put to flight, as it is said, disorders that have baffled the powers of medicine, work in conformity to the light of reason? or, do they effect these wonderful cures by supernatural aid?	It is said that they put to flight illnesses that have defeated the powers of medicine. When they do so, do they work in accordance with the light of reason? Or do they bring about these wonderful cures with supernatural help?
13.17	By a communication, an adept may answer, with the world of spirits. A noble privilege, it must be allowed. Some of the ancients mention familiar dæmons, who guarded them from danger by kindly intimating, we cannot guess in what manner, when any danger was nigh; or, pointed out what they ought to undertake. Yet the men who laid claim to this privilege, out of the order of nature, insisted that it was the reward, or consequence, of superiour temperance and piety. But the present workers of wonders are not raised above their fellows by superiour temperance or sanctity. They do not cure for the love of God, but money.	An adept may answer that they do it by communicating with the world of spirits. A noble privilege, it must be admitted. Some of the ancients mention familiar spirits that guarded them from danger. The spirits kindly hinted when any danger was near (in what way, we cannot guess), or pointed out what they ought to undertake. Yet the men who claimed this privilege, which lay outside the order of nature, insisted that it was the reward, or the result, of superior temperance and piety. But today's workers of wonders are not raised above their fellows by superior temperance or holiness. They do not heal for the love of God, but for money.
	These are the priests of quackery, though it be true they have not the convenient expedient of	These are the priests of quackery. It is true that they lack the convenient device of selling masses

3 "Animal magnetism," the healing method of Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815), was a fashionable craze in Paris and London in the 1780s.

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	selling masses for souls in purgatory, nor churches where they can display crutches, and models of limbs made sound by a touch or a word.	for souls in purgatory. Nor do they have churches in which to display crutches, and models of limbs made sound by a touch or a word.
13.18	I am not conversant with the technical terms, nor initiated into the arcana, therefore, I may speak improperly; but it is clear that men who will not conform to the law of reason, and earn a subsistence in an honest way, by degrees, are very fortunate in becoming acquainted with such obliging spirits. We cannot, indeed, give them credit for either great sagacity or goodness, else they would have chosen more noble instruments, when they wished to shew themselves the benevolent friends of man.	I am not familiar with the technical terms, nor initiated into the mysteries, so I may be speaking loosely. But it is clear that some men will not submit to the law of reason and earn a living honestly, little by little, and these men are very lucky to become acquainted with such obliging spirits. We cannot, indeed, credit those spirits with much wisdom or goodness. Otherwise they would have chosen nobler instruments when they wanted to show themselves the benevolent friends of mankind.
13.19	It is, however, little short of blasphemy to pretend to such powers!	It is, however, little short of blasphemy to claim such powers!
13.20	From the whole tenor of the dispensations of Providence, it appears evident to sober reason, that certain vices produce certain effects; and can any one so grossly insult the wisdom of God, as to suppose that a miracle will be allowed to disturb his general laws, to restore to health the intemperate and vicious, merely to enable them to pursue the same course with impunity? Be whole, and sin no more, said Jesus. And, are greater miracles to be performed by those who do not follow his footsteps, who healed the body to reach the mind?	The whole tenor of Providence's dealings makes it plain to sober reason that certain vices produce certain effects. Can anyone insult God's wisdom so grossly as to suppose that he will allow a miracle to disturb his general laws? Would he restore the intemperate and vicious to health merely so that they can go on in the same course with impunity? "Be whole, and sin no more," said Jesus. He healed the body in order to reach the mind. Are greater miracles to be worked by those who do not follow in his footsteps?[4]
13.21	The mentioning of the name of Christ, after such vile impostors, may displease some of my readers —I respect their warmth; but let them not forget that the followers of these delusions bear his name, and profess to be the disciples of him, who said, by their works we should know who were the children of God or the servants of sin. I allow that it is easier to touch the body of a saint, or to be magnetised, than to restrain our appetites or govern our passions; but health of body or mind can only be recovered by these means, or we make the Supreme Judge partial and revengeful.	Mentioning the name of Christ right after such vile impostors may displease some of my readers. I respect their warmth. But let them not forget that the followers of these delusions bear his name and profess to be disciples of the one who said that by their works we should know who were the children of God and who the servants of sin. I grant that it is easier to touch the body of a saint, or to be magnetized, than to restrain our appetites or govern our passions. But health of body or mind can be recovered only by these means. Otherwise we make the Supreme Judge partial and vengeful.
13.22	Is he a man that he should change, or punish out of resentment? He—the common father, wounds but to heal, says reason, and our irregularities producing certain consequences, we are forcibly	Is he a man, that he should change, or punish out of resentment? He, the common father, wounds only to heal, says reason. Our excesses produce certain consequences, and so we are forcibly

4 The words combine Jesus' sayings to the healed in Mark 5:34 ("be whole") and John 5:14 ("sin no more").

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shewn the nature of vice; that thus learning to know good from evil, by experience, we may hate one and love the other, in proportion to the wisdom which we attain. The poison contains the antidote; and we either reform our evil habits and cease to sin against our own bodies, to use the forcible language of scripture, or a premature death, the punishment of sin, snaps the thread of life.

13.23 Here an awful stop is put to our enquiries.—But, why should I conceal my sentiments? Considering the attributes of God, I believe that whatever punishment may follow, will tend, like the anguish of disease, to shew the malignity of vice, for the purpose of reformation. Positive punishment appears so contrary to the nature of God, discoverable in all his works, and in our own reason, that I could sooner believe that the Deity paid no attention to the conduct of men, than that he punished without the benevolent design of reforming.

13.24 To suppose only that an all-wise and powerful Being, as good as he is great, should create a being foreseeing, that after fifty or sixty years of feverish existence, it would be plunged into never ending woe—is blasphemy. On what will the worm feed that is never to die?—On folly, on ignorance, say ye—I should blush indignantly at drawing the natural conclusion, could I insert it, and wish to withdraw myself from the wing of my God!—On such a supposition, I speak with reverence, he would be a consuming fire. We should wish, though vainly, to fly from his presence when fear absorbed love, and darkness involved all his counsels!

13.25 I know that many devout people boast of submitting to the Will of God blindly, as to an arbitrary sceptre or rod, on the same principle as the Indians worship the devil. In other words, like people in the common concerns of life, they do homage to power, and cringe under the foot that can crush them. Rational religion, on the contrary, is a submission to the will of a being so perfectly wise, that all he wills must be directed by the proper motive—must be reasonable.

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shown the nature of vice. That way we learn by experience to tell good from evil, and so we may hate the one and love the other in proportion to the wisdom we attain. The poison contains its antidote. Either we reform our bad habits and stop sinning against our own bodies, to use the forceful language of scripture, or a premature death, the punishment of sin, snaps the thread of life.

Here an awful halt is put to our inquiries.—But why should I hide my views? Considering the attributes of God, I believe that whatever punishment may follow will serve, like the anguish of disease, to show the malignity of vice so that we reform. Arbitrarily imposed punishment seems so contrary to the nature of God, as we can discover it in all his works and in our own reason, that I would sooner believe the Deity paid no attention to human conduct than that he punished without the benevolent aim of reforming us.

Consider an all-wise and all-powerful Being, as good as he is great. Merely to suppose that he would create a being while foreseeing that after fifty or sixty years of feverish existence it would be plunged into never-ending woe—is blasphemy. On what will the worm feed that is never to die?—On folly, on ignorance, you say. If I could bring myself to write the natural conclusion down, I would blush with indignation at drawing it, and would wish to withdraw from under the wing of my God!—On such a supposition, I say it with reverence, he would be a consuming fire. We would wish, though in vain, to flee from his presence, when fear had swallowed up love and darkness shrouded all his counsels!

I know that many devout people boast of submitting blindly to the Will of God, as to an arbitrary scepter or rod. They do it on the same principle on which the Indians worship the devil. In other words, just as people do in the ordinary affairs of life, they pay homage to power and cringe under the foot that can crush them. Rational religion, on the contrary, is submission to the will of a being so perfectly wise that everything he wills must be directed by the proper motive—must be reasonable.

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And, if thus we respect God, can we give credit to the mysterious insinuations, which insult his laws? can we believe, though it should stare us in the face, that he would work a miracle to authorise confusion by sanctioning an error? Yet we must either allow these impious conclusions, or treat with contempt every promise to restore health to a diseased body by supernatural means, or to foretell the incidents that can only be foreseen by God.	And if we respect God in this way, can we believe the mysterious insinuations that insult his laws? Even if it stared us in the face, could we believe that he would work a miracle to authorize confusion by sanctioning an error? Yet we must either accept these impious conclusions, or treat with contempt every promise to heal a diseased body by supernatural means, and every promise to foretell events that only God can foresee.

NOVELS AND SENTIMENTALITY

Ignorance makes women dependent on sentimental novels, which can best be cured by ridicule and better reading.

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13.27 Another instance of that feminine weakness of character, often produced by a confined education, is a romantic twist of the mind, which has been very properly termed *sentimental*.	Another example of the feminine weakness of character that a narrow education often produces is a romantic twist of mind, which has very properly been called *sentimental*.
13.28 Women subjected by ignorance to their sensations, and only taught to look for happiness in love, refine on sensual feelings, and adopt metaphysical notions respecting that passion, which lead them shamefully to neglect the duties of life, and frequently in the midst of these sublime refinements they plump into actual vice.	Ignorance makes women subject to their sensations, and they are taught to look for happiness only in love. So they refine upon their sensual feelings and adopt metaphysical notions about that passion, which lead them shamefully to neglect the duties of life. Often, in the midst of these sublime refinements, they plump straight into actual vice.
13.29 These are the women who are amused by the reveries of the stupid novelists, who, knowing little of human nature, work up stale tales, and describe meretricious scenes, all retailed in a sentimental jargon, which equally tend to corrupt the taste, and draw the heart aside from its daily duties, I do not mention the understanding, because never having been exercised, its slumbering energies rest inactive, like the lurking particles of fire which are supposed universally to pervade matter.	These are the women who are entertained by the reveries of stupid novelists. Knowing little of human nature, these writers work up stale tales and describe meretricious scenes, all retailed in a sentimental jargon. All of it tends equally to corrupt the taste and to draw the heart away from its daily duties. I do not mention the understanding, because it has never been exercised. Its slumbering energies lie inactive, like the hidden particles of fire that are supposed to pervade all matter.
13.30 Females, in fact, denied all political privileges, and not allowed, as married women, excepting in criminal cases, a civil existence, have their attention naturally drawn from the interest of the whole community to that of the minute parts, though the private duty of any member of society must be very imperfectly performed when not connected with the general good. The mighty business of female life is to please, and restrained from entering into more important concerns by	Women, in fact, are denied all political privileges, and as married women they are allowed no civil existence except in criminal cases. So their attention is naturally drawn away from the interest of the whole community to that of its tiny parts. Yet any member of society will perform private duty very imperfectly when it is not connected with the general good. The great business of a woman's life is to please. Political and civil oppression keeps women from entering into more important con-

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political and civil oppression, sentiments become events, and reflection deepens what it should, and would have effaced, if the understanding had been allowed to take a wider range.

13.31 But, confined to trifling employments, they naturally imbibe opinions which the only kind of reading calculated to interest an innocent frivolous mind, inspires. Unable to grasp any thing great, is it surprising that they find the reading of history a very dry task, and disquisitions addressed to the understanding intollerably tedious, and almost unintelligible? Thus are they necessarily dependent on the novelist for amusement.

Yet, when I exclaim against novels, I mean when contrasted with those works which exercise the understanding and regulate the imagination.—For any kind of reading I think better than leaving a blank still a blank, because the mind must receive a degree of enlargement and obtain a little strength by a slight exertion of its thinking powers; besides even the productions that are only addressed to the imagination, raise the reader a little above the gross gratification of appetites, to which the mind has not given a shade of delicacy.

13.32 This observation is the result of experience; for I have known several notable women, and one in particular, who was a very good woman—as good as such a narrow mind would allow her to be, who took care that her daughters (three in number) should never see a novel. As she was a woman of fortune and fashion, they had various masters to attend them, and a sort of menial governess to watch their footsteps. From their masters they learned how tables, chairs, &c.

were called in French and Italian; but as the few books thrown in their way were far above their capacities, or devotional, they neither acquired ideas nor sentiments, and passed their time when not compelled to repeat *words*, in dressing, quarrelling with each other, or conversing with their maids by stealth, till they were brought into company as marriageable.

13.33 Their mother, a widow, was busy in the mean time in keeping up her connections, as she termed a numerous acquaintance, lest her girls should want a proper introduction into the great

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cerns, so feelings become events. Then reflection deepens what it should have erased, and would have erased if the understanding had been allowed a wider range.

But since they are confined to trivial occupations, they naturally absorb the opinions inspired by the only kind of reading likely to interest an innocent, frivolous mind. Unable to grasp anything great, is it any wonder they find reading history a very dry task? Is it any wonder that discussions addressed to the understanding seem intolerably tedious and almost unintelligible? So they necessarily depend on the novelist for their amusement.

Yet when I cry out against novels, I mean them in contrast with works that exercise the understanding and regulate the imagination.—For I think any kind of reading is better than leaving a blank still blank. Even a slight exercise of its thinking powers must enlarge the mind somewhat and give it a little strength. Besides, even works addressed only to the imagination raise the reader a little above the gross gratification of appetites to which the mind has not lent a shade of delicacy.

This observation comes from experience. I have known several capable, managing women, and one in particular who was a very good woman, as good as so narrow a mind would let her be. She made sure that her daughters (three of them) never saw a novel. As she was a woman of fortune and fashion, they had various masters to teach them, and a sort of servant-governess to watch their every step. From their masters they learned what tables, chairs, and so on

were called in French and Italian. But the few books put in their way were either far above their capacities or devotional, so they acquired neither ideas nor feelings. When they were not made to repeat *words*, they spent their time dressing, quarreling with one another, or chatting with their maids on the sly. So it went until they were brought out into society as marriageable.

Meanwhile their mother, a widow, was busy keeping up her “connections,” as she called a large circle of acquaintances, so that her girls would not lack a proper introduction into high society. These

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world. And these young ladies, with minds vulgar in every sense of the word, and spoiled tempers, entered life puffed up with notions of their own consequence, and looking down with contempt on those who could not vie with them in dress and parade.

13.34 With respect to love, nature, or their nurses, had taken care to teach them the physical meaning of the word; and, as they had few topics of conversation, and fewer refinements of sentiment, they expressed their gross wishes not in very delicate phrases, when they spoke freely, talking of matrimony.

13.35 Could these girls have been injured by the perusal of novels? I almost forgot a shade in the character of one of them; she affected a simplicity bordering on folly, and with a simper would utter the most immodest remarks and questions, the full meaning of which she had learned whilst secluded from the world, and afraid to speak in her mother's presence, who governed with a high hand: they were all educated, as she prided herself, in a most exemplary manner; and read their chapters and psalms before breakfast, never touching a silly novel.

13.36 This is only one instance; but I recollect many other women who, not led by degrees to proper studies, and not permitted to choose for themselves, have indeed been overgrown children; or have obtained, by mixing in the world, a little of what is termed common sense; that is a distinct manner of seeing common occurrences, as they stand detached: but what deserves the name of intellect, the power of gaining general or abstract ideas, or even intermediate ones, was out of the question. Their minds were quiescent, and when they were not roused by sensible objects and employments of that kind, they were low-spirited, would cry, or go to sleep.

13.37 When, therefore, I advise my sex not to read such flimsy works, it is to induce them to read something superiour; for I coincide in opinion with a sagacious man, who, having a daughter and niece under his care, pursued a very different plan with each.

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young ladies had minds vulgar in every sense of the word, and spoiled tempers. They entered life puffed up with notions of their own importance, and looked down with contempt on anyone who could not compete with them in dress and display.

As for love, nature, or their nurses, had taken care to teach them the physical meaning of the word. They had few topics of conversation and fewer refinements of feeling. So when they spoke freely, talking of marriage, they expressed their gross wishes in not very delicate phrases.

Could these girls have been harmed by reading novels? I almost forgot one shade in the character of one of them. She affected a simplicity bordering on foolishness, and with a simper she would come out with the most immodest remarks and questions. She had learned their full meaning while shut away from the world and afraid to speak in front of her mother, who ruled with a high hand. The mother prided herself that they had all been educated in the most exemplary manner. They read their chapters and psalms before breakfast, and never touched a silly novel.

This is only one instance. But I remember many other women who were not led step by step to proper studies and not allowed to choose for themselves. Some of them have indeed remained overgrown children. Others have picked up, by mixing in the world, a little of what is called common sense: that is, a distinct way of seeing ordinary events as isolated occurrences. But anything deserving the name of intellect, the power of forming general or abstract ideas, or even intermediate ones, was out of the question. Their minds were inert. When they were not roused by objects of the senses and occupations of that kind, they were low-spirited, and would cry or go to sleep.

So when I advise my sex not to read such flimsy works, it is to lead them to read something better. I agree with a shrewd man who had a daughter and a niece in his care and followed a very different plan with each.

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The niece, who had considerable abilities, had, before she was left to his guardianship, been indulged in desultory reading. Her he endeavoured to lead, and did lead to history and moral essays; but his daughter, whom a fond, weak mother had indulged, and who consequently was averse to every thing like application, he allowed to read novels: and used to justify his conduct by saying, that if she ever attained a relish for reading them, he should have some foundation to work upon; and that erroneous opinions were better than none at all.

13.39 In fact the female mind has been so totally neglected, that knowledge was only to be acquired from this muddy source, till from reading novels some women of superiour talents learned to despise them.

13.40 The best method, I believe, that can be adopted to correct a fondness for novels is to ridicule them: not indiscriminately, for then it would have little effect; but, if a judicious person, with some turn for humour, would read several to a young girl, and point out both by tones, and apt comparisons with pathetic incidents and heroic characters in history, how foolishly and ridiculously they caricatured human nature, just opinions might be substituted instead of romantic sentiments.

13.41 In one respect, however, the majority of both sexes resemble, and equally shew a want of taste and modesty. Ignorant women, forced to be chaste to preserve their reputation, allow their imagination to revel in the unnatural and meretricious scenes sketched by the novel writers of the day, slighting as insipid the sober dignity and matronly graces of history[2], whilst men carry the same vitiated taste into life, and fly for amusement to the wanton, from the unsophisticated charms of virtue, and the grave respectability of sense.

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13.42 Besides, the reading of novels makes women, and particularly ladies of fashion, very fond of using

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The niece had considerable ability, and before she was left in his guardianship she had been indulged in random reading. Her he tried to lead to history and moral essays, and he succeeded. But his daughter had been indulged by a fond, weak mother, and so she disliked anything like application. He allowed her to read novels. He used to justify this by saying that if she ever acquired a taste for reading them, he would have some foundation to work on, and that mistaken opinions were better than none at all.

In fact, the female mind has been so completely neglected that knowledge could be obtained only from this muddy source. It stayed so until some women of superior talent learned, from reading novels, to despise them.

The best way, I think, to cure a fondness for novels is to ridicule them. This should not be done indiscriminately, for then it would have little effect. But a sensible person with some gift for humor could read several of them to a young girl. By tone of voice, and by apt comparisons with moving incidents and heroic characters in history, that person could show her how foolishly and absurdly novels caricature human nature. Then sound opinions might take the place of romantic sentiments.

In one respect, however, most people of both sexes are alike, and show an equal lack of taste and modesty. Ignorant women, forced to be chaste to preserve their reputations, let their imaginations revel in the unnatural and meretricious scenes sketched by the novelists of the day. They scorn as insipid the sober dignity and matronly graces of history[2]. Meanwhile men carry the same corrupted taste into life. They fly from the unaffected charms of virtue and the grave respectability of sense to seek amusement with loose women.

Besides, reading novels makes women, and particularly ladies of fashion, very fond of using strong

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[2] I am not now alluding to that superiority of mind which leads to the creation of ideal beauty, when life, surveyed with a penetrating eye, appears a tragi-comedy, in which little can be seen to satisfy the heart without the help of fancy.

[2] I am not referring here to the superiority of mind that leads to the creation of ideal beauty. To such a mind, life surveyed with a penetrating eye appears a tragicomedy in which little can be seen to satisfy the heart without the help of imagination.

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	strong expressions and superlatives in conversation; and, though the dissipated artificial life which they lead prevents their cherishing any strong legitimate passion, the language of passion in affected tones slips forever from their glib tongues, and every trifle produces those phosphoric bursts which only mimick in the dark the flame of passion.	expressions and superlatives in conversation. The dissipated, artificial life they lead keeps them from cherishing any strong, genuine passion. Yet the language of passion, in affected tones, slips endlessly from their glib tongues. Every trifle produces those phosphorescent bursts that only mimic, in the dark, the flame of passion.

THE LOVE OF DRESS

Fondness for dress comes from an uncultivated mind, as in any person or people denied education.

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13.43	Ignorance and the mistaken cunning that nature sharpens in weak heads as a principle of self-preservation, render women very fond of dress, and produce all the vanity which such a fondness may naturally be expected to generate, to the exclusion of emulation and magnanimity.	Ignorance makes women very fond of dress, and so does the misguided cunning that nature sharpens in weak heads as a means of self-preservation. This fondness produces all the vanity it can naturally be expected to breed, and shuts out emulation and magnanimity.
13.44	I agree with Rousseau that the physical part of the art of pleasing consists in ornaments, and for that very reason I should guard girls against the contagious fondness for dress so common to weak women, that they may not rest in the physical part. Yet, weak are the women who imagine that they can long please without the aid of the mind, or, in other words, without the moral art of pleasing. But the moral art, if it be not a profanation to use the word art, when alluding to the grace which is an effect of virtue, and not the motive of action, is never to be found with ignorance; the sportiveness of innocence, so pleasing to refined libertines of both sexes, is widely different in its essence from this superiour gracefulness.	I agree with Rousseau that the physical part of the art of pleasing consists in ornaments. For that very reason I would guard girls against the contagious fondness for dress so common among weak women, so that they do not stop at the physical part. Yet weak are the women who imagine they can please for long without the help of the mind, or, in other words, without the moral art of pleasing. But the moral art is never found together with ignorance—if it is not a profanation to use the word art for a grace that is an effect of virtue, and not the motive of action. The playfulness of innocence, so pleasing to refined libertines of both sexes, is in its essence very different from this superior gracefulness.
13.45	A strong inclination for external ornaments ever appears in *[pre-civilized]* states, only the men not the women adorn themselves; for where women are allowed to be so far on a level with men, society has advanced, at least, one step in civilization.	A strong taste for external ornaments always appears in pre-civilized societies, though there it is the men, not the women, who adorn themselves. Where women are allowed to be even that far on a level with men, society has advanced at least one step toward civilization.
13.46	The attention to dress, therefore, which has been thought a sexual propensity, I think natural to mankind. But I ought to express myself with more precision. When the mind is not sufficiently opened to take pleasure in reflection, the body	The attention to dress that has been thought a trait of one sex is therefore, I think, natural to humanity in general. But I should put this more precisely. When the mind is not open enough to take pleasure in reflection, the body will be adorned with

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	will be adorned with sedulous care; and ambition will appear in tattooing or painting it.	painstaking care, and ambition will show itself in tattooing or painting it.
13.47	So far is the first inclination carried, that even the hellish yoke of slavery cannot stifle the *[untamed]* desire of admiration which the black heroes inherit from both their parents, for all the hardly earned savings of a slave are commonly expended in a little tawdry finery. And I have seldom known a good male or female servant that was not particularly fond of dress. Their clothes were their riches; and, I argue from analogy, that the fondness for dress, so extravagant in females, arises from the same cause—want of cultivation of mind.	This first inclination is carried so far that even the hellish yoke of slavery cannot stifle the untamed desire for admiration that the Black heroes inherit from both their parents: all of a slave's hard-earned savings are usually spent on a little tawdry finery. And I have seldom known a good servant, male or female, who was not especially fond of dress. Their clothes were their wealth. Arguing by analogy, I conclude that women's fondness for dress, so extravagant, arises from the same cause: an uncultivated mind.
	When men meet they converse about business, politics, or literature; but, says Swift, 'how naturally do women apply their hands to each others lappets and ruffles.' And very natural is it—for they have not any business to interest them, have not a taste for literature, and they find politics dry, because they have not acquired a love for mankind by turning their thoughts to the grand pursuits that exalt the human race, and promote general happiness.	When men meet, they talk about business, politics, or literature; but, as Swift says, "how naturally do women apply their hands to each other's lappets and ruffles." And very natural it is. They have no business to interest them and no taste for literature, and they find politics dry, because they have never acquired a love for humanity by turning their thoughts to the great pursuits that elevate the human race and promote general happiness.[6]
13.48	Besides, various are the paths to power and fame which by accident or choice men pursue, and though they jostle against each other, for men of the same profession are seldom friends, yet there is a much greater number of their fellow-creatures with whom they never clash. But women are very differently situated with respect to each other—for they are all rivals.	Besides, men pursue many different paths to power and fame, by accident or by choice. They jostle one another, for men of the same profession are seldom friends, but there is a far greater number of their fellow creatures with whom they never clash. Women stand in a very different position toward one another: they are all rivals.
13.49	Before marriage it is their business to please men; and after, with a few exceptions, they follow the same scent with all the persevering pertinacity of instinct. Even virtuous women never forget their sex in company, for they are forever trying to make themselves *agreeable*. A female beauty, and a male wit appear to be equally anxious to draw the attention of the company to themselves; and the animosity of contemporary wits is proverbial.	Before marriage their business is to please men, and afterward, with a few exceptions, they follow the same scent with all the dogged persistence of instinct. Even virtuous women never forget their sex in company, for they are forever trying to make themselves *agreeable*. A female beauty and a male wit seem equally anxious to draw the company's attention to themselves, and the hostility between rival wits of the same day is proverbial.
13.50	Is it then surprising that when the sole ambition of woman centres in beauty, and interest gives vanity additional force, perpetual rivalships should ensue? They are all running the same race, and would rise above the virtue of mortals, if they	Is it surprising, then, that endless rivalries should follow when a woman's sole ambition centers on beauty, and self-interest gives vanity extra force? They are all running the same race, and they

6 Lappets were the lace streamers hanging from a woman's cap.

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did not view each other with a suspicious and even envious eye.	would rise above the virtue of mortals if they did not eye one another with suspicion and even envy.
13.51 An immoderate fondness for dress, for pleasure, and for sway, are the passions of *[pre-civilized peoples]*; the passions that occupy those uncivilized beings who have not yet extended the dominion of the mind, or even learned to think with the energy necessary to concatenate that abstract train of thought which produces principles. And that women from their education and the present state of civilized life, are in the same condition, cannot, I think, be controverted.	An immoderate fondness for dress, for pleasure, and for power: these are the passions of pre-civilized peoples. They occupy those uncivilized beings who have not yet extended the rule of the mind, or even learned to think with the energy needed to link together the abstract chain of thought that produces principles. And I do not think anyone can deny that women, because of their education and the present state of civilized life, are in the same condition.
To laugh at them then, or satirize the follies of a being who is never to be allowed to act freely from the light of her own reason, is as absurd as cruel; for, that they who are taught blindly to obey authority, will endeavour cunningly to elude it, is most natural and certain.	To laugh at them, then, or to satirize the follies of a being who is never allowed to act freely by the light of her own reason, is as absurd as it is cruel. It is perfectly natural and certain that those who are taught to obey authority blindly will try to evade it by cunning.
13.52 Yet let it be proved that they ought to obey man implicitly, and I shall immediately agree that it is woman's duty to cultivate a fondness for dress, and in order to please, and a propensity to cunning for her own preservation.	Yet let it be proved that they ought to obey man without question, and I will at once agree that it is a woman's duty to cultivate a fondness for dress in order to please, and a knack for cunning for her own protection.
13.53 The virtues, however, which are supported by ignorance, must ever be wavering—the house built on sand could not endure a storm. It is almost unnecessary to draw the inference.—If women are to be made virtuous by authority, which is a contradiction in terms, let them be immured in seraglios and watched with a jealous eye.—Fear not that the iron will enter into their souls—for the souls that can bear such treatment are made of yielding materials, just animated enough to give life to the body.	The virtues that are propped up by ignorance, however, must always waver. The house built on sand could not withstand a storm. The conclusion hardly needs drawing. If women are to be made virtuous by authority, which is a contradiction in terms, let them be shut up in harems and watched with a jealous eye. Do not fear that the iron will enter into their souls, for souls that can bear such treatment are made of yielding stuff, just animated enough to give life to the body.
13.54 'Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear, / And best distinguish'd by black, brown, or fair.'	"Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear, / And best distinguished by black, brown, or fair."[7]
13.55 The most cruel wounds will of course soon heal, and they may still people the world, and dress to please man—all the purposes which certain celebrated writers have allowed that they were created to fulfil.	Even the cruelest wounds will naturally heal soon enough, and they can still populate the world and dress to please man. Those are all the purposes that certain celebrated writers have granted they were created to fulfill.

7 From Pope's *Epistle to a Lady*, on women who supposedly have no lasting character at all.

SENSIBILITY AND HUMANITY

Women's narrow, exclusive affections are the result of their confinement, not proof of their inferiority.

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13.56	Women are supposed to possess more sensibility, and even humanity, than men, and their strong attachments and instantaneous emotions of compassion are given as proofs; but the clinging affection of ignorance has seldom any thing noble in it, and may mostly be resolved into selfishness, as well as the affection of children and brutes. I have known many weak women whose sensibility was entirely engrossed by their husbands; and as for their humanity, it was very faint indeed, or rather it was only a transient emotion of compassion. Humanity does not consist 'in a squeamish ear,' says an eminent orator. 'It belongs to the mind as well as the nerves.'	Women are supposed to have more sensibility, and even more humanity, than men, and their strong attachments and instant surges of compassion are offered as proof. But the clinging affection of ignorance seldom has anything noble in it. Like the affection of children and animals, it can mostly be reduced to selfishness. I have known many weak women whose sensibility was entirely taken up by their husbands. As for their humanity, it was very faint indeed; or rather, it was only a passing emotion of compassion. Humanity does not consist "in a squeamish ear," says an eminent orator. "It belongs to the mind as well as the nerves."
13.57	But this kind of exclusive affection, though it degrades the individual, should not be brought forward as a proof of the inferiority of the sex, because it is the natural consequence of confined views: for even women of superiour sense, having their attention turned to little employments, and private plans, rarely rise to heroism, unless when spurred on by love; and love, as an heroic passion, like genius, appears but once in an age. I therefore agree with the moralist who asserts, 'that women have seldom so much generosity as men;' and that their narrow affections, to which justice and humanity are often sacrificed, render the sex apparently inferiour, especially, as they are commonly inspired by men; but I contend that the heart would expand as the understanding gained strength, if women were not depressed from their cradles.	But this kind of exclusive affection, though it degrades the individual, should not be put forward as proof that women are inferior, because it is the natural result of narrow horizons. Even women of superior sense, whose attention is directed to small tasks and private plans, rarely rise to heroism unless love spurs them on. And love as a heroic passion, like genius, appears only once in an age. I therefore agree with the moralist who says "that women have seldom so much generosity as men." I also agree that their narrow affections, to which justice and humanity are often sacrificed, make women seem inferior, especially since those affections are usually inspired by men. But I maintain that the heart would expand as the understanding grew stronger, if women were not kept down from the cradle.[8]
13.58	I know that a little sensibility, and great weakness, will produce a strong sexual attachment, and that reason must cement friendship; consequently, I allow that more friendship is to be found in the male than the female world, and that men have a higher sense of justice. The exclusive affections of women seem indeed to resemble Cato's most unjust love for his country. He wished to crush Carthage, not to save Rome, but to promote its vain-glory; and, in general, it is to similar principles that	I know that a little sensibility combined with great weakness will produce a strong attachment to the other sex, and that it takes reason to cement friendship. I therefore grant that more friendship is found among men than among women, and that men have a higher sense of justice. Women's exclusive affections do seem to resemble Cato's utterly unjust love for his country. He wanted to crush Carthage, not to save Rome but to feed its vainglory. In general it is to principles like these

8 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*: "Humanity is the virtue of a woman, generosity of a man."

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	humanity is sacrificed, for genuine duties support each other.	that humanity is sacrificed, for genuine duties support one another.[9]
13.59	Besides, how can women be just or generous, when they are the slaves of injustice?	Besides, how can women be just or generous when they are the slaves of injustice?

MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

Women's ignorance harms children's bodies and tempers, while their exclusive fondness spoils them.

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13.60	As the rearing of children, that is, the laying a foundation of sound health both of body and mind in the rising generation, has justly been insisted on as the peculiar destination of woman, the ignorance that incapacitates them must be contrary to the order of things. And I contend that their minds can take in much more, and ought to do so, or they will never become sensible mothers. Many men attend to the breeding of horses, and overlook the management of the stable, who would, strange want of sense and feeling! think themselves degraded by paying any attention to the nursery; yet, how many children are absolutely murdered by the ignorance of women!	Raising children has rightly been insisted on as woman's special calling, and that means laying a foundation of sound health, in body and mind, for the rising generation. The ignorance that unfits women for this task must therefore be contrary to the order of things. And I maintain that their minds can take in much more, and ought to, or they will never become sensible mothers. Many men attend to the breeding of horses and oversee the running of the stable, yet would think themselves degraded by paying any attention to the nursery. What a strange lack of sense and feeling! Yet how many children are downright killed by women's ignorance!
	But when they escape, and are neither destroyed by unnatural negligence nor blind fondness, how few are managed properly with respect to the infant mind! So that to break the spirit, allowed to become vicious at home, a child is sent to school; and the methods taken there, which must be taken to keep a number of children in order, scatter the seeds of almost every vice in the soil thus forcibly torn up.	And even when children survive, destroyed neither by unnatural neglect nor by blind indulgence, how few are handled properly where the infant mind is concerned! A child whose spirit was allowed to go bad at home is sent to school to have it broken. The methods used there, which must be used to keep a number of children in order, scatter the seeds of almost every vice in soil that has been so violently torn up.
13.61	I have sometimes compared the struggles of these poor children who ought never, to have felt restraint, nor would, had they been always held in with an even hand, to the despairing plunges of a spirited filly, which I have seen breaking on a strand: its feet sinking deeper and deeper in the sand every time it endeavoured to throw its rider, till at last it sullenly submitted.	These poor children should never have felt restraint, and never would have if they had always been guided with an even hand. I have sometimes compared their struggles to the desperate plunges of a spirited filly I once saw being broken on a beach. Its hooves sank deeper and deeper into the sand each time it tried to throw its rider, until at last it sullenly gave in.
13.62	I have always found horses, an animal I am attached to, very tractable when treated with humanity and steadiness, so that I doubt whether the violent methods taken to break them, do not essentially injure them; I am, however, certain	I am fond of horses, and I have always found them very manageable when they are treated humanely and steadily. So I doubt whether the violent methods used to break them do not do them real harm.

9 Cato the Elder (234–149 BC), Roman statesman famous for ending his speeches with the demand that Carthage be destroyed.

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that a child should never be thus forcibly tamed after it has injudiciously been allowed to run wild; for every violation of justice and reason, in the treatment of children, weakens their reason. And, so early do they catch a character, that the base of the moral character, experience leads me to infer, is fixed before their seventh year, the period during which women are allowed the sole management of children.

Afterwards it too often happens that half the business of education is to correct, and very imperfectly is it done, if done hastily, the faults, which they would never have acquired if their mothers had had more understanding.

13.63 One striking instance of the folly of women must not be omitted.—The manner in which they treat servants in the presence of children, permitting them to suppose that they ought to wait on them, and bear their humours. A child should always be made to receive assistance from a man or woman as a favour; and, as the first lesson of independence, they should practically be taught, by the example of their mother, not to require that personal attendance, which it is an insult to humanity to require, when in health; and instead of being led to assume airs of consequence, a sense of their own weakness should first make them feel the natural equality of man.

Yet, how frequently have I indignantly heard servants imperiously called to put children to bed, and sent away again and again, because master or miss hung about mamma, to stay a little longer. Thus made slavishly to attend the little idol, all those most disgusting humours were exhibited which characterize a spoiled child.

13.64 In short, speaking of the majority of mothers, they leave their children entirely to the care of servants; or, because they are their children treat them as if they were little demi-gods, though I have always observed, that the women who thus idolize their children, seldom shew common humanity to servants, or feel the least tenderness for any children but their own.

13.65 It is, however, these exclusive affections, and an individual manner of seeing things produced by ignorance, which keep women for ever at a stand,

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I am certain, however, that a child should never be tamed by force like this after being foolishly allowed to run wild, for every violation of justice and reason in the treatment of children weakens their reason. And children take on a character so early that, as experience leads me to conclude, the foundation of moral character is fixed before the age of seven. That is precisely the period during which women are given sole charge of children.

Afterward, too often, half the business of education is to correct faults that children would never have acquired if their mothers had had more understanding, and if the correcting is done in haste, it is done very imperfectly.

One striking example of women's folly must not be left out: the way they treat servants in front of children, letting the children suppose that servants ought to wait on them and put up with their moods. A child should always be made to receive help from any man or woman as a favor. As their first lesson in independence, children should be taught in practice, by their mother's example, not to demand the personal attendance that it is an insult to humanity to demand when one is in good health. Instead of being encouraged to put on airs of importance, they should first be brought, through a sense of their own weakness, to feel the natural equality of human beings.

Yet how often, to my indignation, I have heard servants imperiously summoned to put children to bed and then sent away again and again, because master or miss clung to mamma to stay up a little longer. With the servants thus made to wait slavishly on the little idol, all the most disgusting tantrums that mark a spoiled child were put on display.

In short, to speak of most mothers: they either leave their children entirely to the care of servants, or else, because these are their children, treat them like little demigods. Yet I have always noticed that the women who idolize their children in this way rarely show ordinary humanity to servants, or feel the least tenderness for any children but their own.

These exclusive affections, however, and the narrowly personal way of seeing things that ignorance produces, are what keep women forever at a

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with respect to improvement, and make many of them dedicate their lives to their children only to weaken their bodies and spoil their tempers, frustrating also any plan of education that a more rational father may adopt; for unless a mother concurs, the father who restrains will ever be considered as a tyrant.

13.66 But, fulfilling the duties of a mother, a woman with a sound constitution, may still keep her person scrupulously neat, and assist to maintain her family, if necessary, or by reading and conversations with both sexes, indiscriminately, improve her mind. For nature has so wisely ordered things, that did women suckle their children, they would preserve their own health, and there would be such an interval between the birth of each child, that we should seldom see a houseful of babes.

And did they pursue a plan of conduct, and not waste their time in following the fashionable vagaries of dress, the management of their household and children need not shut them out from literature, nor prevent their attaching themselves to a science with that steady eye which strengthens the mind, or practising one of the fine arts that cultivate the taste.

13.67 But, visiting to display finery, card-playing, and balls, not to mention the idle bustle of morning trifling, draw women from their duty to render them insignificant, to render them pleasing, according to the present acceptation of the word, to every man, but their husband. For a round of pleasures in which the affections are not exercised, cannot be said to improve the understanding, though it be erroneously called seeing the world; yet the heart is rendered cold and averse to duty, by such a senseless intercourse, which becomes necessary from habit even when it has ceased to amuse.

13.68 But, till more equality be established in society, till ranks are confounded and women freed, we shall not see that dignified domestic happiness, the simple grandeur of which cannot be relished by ignorant or vitiated minds; nor will the important task of education ever be properly begun till the person of a woman is no longer preferred to her mind. For it would be as wise to

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standstill in their improvement. They lead many women to devote their lives to their children, only to weaken the children's bodies and spoil their tempers. They also lead them to frustrate any plan of education that a more rational father may adopt, for unless the mother goes along with it, the father who imposes restraint will always be regarded as a tyrant.

Yet a woman with a healthy constitution can fulfill the duties of a mother and still keep her person scrupulously neat. She can help support her family if necessary, or she can improve her mind by reading and by conversation with men and women alike. Nature has arranged things so wisely that if women nursed their own children, they would preserve their own health, and there would be such an interval between births that we would seldom see a house full of babies.

And if they followed a plan of conduct, instead of wasting their time chasing the fashionable whims of dress, managing their household and children need not shut them out from literature. Nor need it keep them from devoting themselves to a science with the steady attention that strengthens the mind, or from practicing one of the fine arts that cultivate taste.

But paying visits to show off finery, playing cards, and going to balls, not to mention the idle bustle of morning trivialities, draw women away from their duty. These things make them insignificant, and make them pleasing, in the current sense of the word, to every man but their husband. A round of pleasures in which the affections are never exercised cannot be said to improve the understanding, though it is mistakenly called seeing the world. Meanwhile such senseless socializing makes the heart cold and averse to duty, and habit makes it necessary even after it has stopped amusing.

But until more equality is established in society, until ranks are mixed together and women are freed, we will not see that dignified domestic happiness whose simple grandeur cannot be appreciated by ignorant or corrupted minds. Nor will the important work of education ever be properly begun until a woman's body is no longer valued above her mind. It would be as sensible to expect

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expect corn from tares, or figs from thistles, as that a foolish ignorant woman should be a good mother.	wheat from weeds, or figs from thistles, as to expect a foolish, ignorant woman to be a good mother.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

Virtue needs liberty: freed and educated, women will become better wives, mothers and citizens.

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13.69 It is not necessary to inform the sagacious reader, now I enter on my concluding reflections, that the discussion of this subject merely consists in opening a few simple principles, and clearing away the rubbish which obscured them. But, as all readers are not sagacious, I must be allowed to add some explanatory remarks to bring the subject home to reason—to that sluggish reason, which supinely takes opinions on trust, and obstinately supports them to spare itself the labour of thinking.	As I begin my concluding reflections, there is no need to tell the shrewd reader that my discussion of this subject consists merely in laying out a few simple principles and clearing away the rubbish that obscured them. But since not all readers are shrewd, I must be allowed to add some explanatory remarks to bring the subject home to reason. I mean that sluggish reason which lazily takes its opinions on trust and stubbornly defends them to spare itself the labor of thinking.
13.70 Moralists have unanimously agreed, that unless virtue be nursed by liberty, it will never attain due strength—and what they say of man I extend to mankind, insisting that in all cases morals must be fixed on immutable principles; and, that the being cannot be termed rational or virtuous, who obeys any authority, but that of reason.	Moralists have unanimously agreed that unless virtue is nurtured by liberty, it will never reach its proper strength. What they say of men I extend to all humankind. I insist that in every case morals must rest on unchanging principles, and that no being who obeys any authority but that of reason can be called rational or virtuous.
13.71 To render women truly useful members of society, I argue that they should be led, by having their understandings cultivated on a large scale, to acquire a rational affection for their country, founded on knowledge, because it is obvious that we are little interested about what we do not understand. And to render this general knowledge of due importance, I have endeavoured to shew that private duties are never properly fulfilled unless the understanding enlarges the heart; and that public virtue is only an aggregate of private.	To make women truly useful members of society, I argue that they should be led to acquire a rational love for their country, founded on knowledge, by having their understandings cultivated on a large scale. After all, we obviously care little about what we do not understand. And to show that this general knowledge matters as it should, I have tried to demonstrate that private duties are never properly fulfilled unless the understanding enlarges the heart, and that public virtue is only the sum of private virtue.
But, the distinctions established in society undermine both, by beating out the solid gold of virtue, till it becomes only the tinsel-covering of vice; for whilst wealth renders a man more respectable than virtue, wealth will be sought before virtue; and whilst women's persons are caressed, when a childish simper shews an absence of mind—the mind will lie fallow. Yet, true voluptuousness must proceed from the mind —for what can equal the sensations produced by mutual affection, supported by mutual respect?	But the distinctions established in society undermine both, beating out the solid gold of virtue until it becomes nothing but a tinsel covering for vice. As long as wealth makes a man more respected than virtue does, wealth will be sought before virtue. And as long as women's bodies are caressed when a childish simper shows an absent mind, the mind will lie fallow. Yet true sensual delight must come from the mind, for what can equal the feelings produced by mutual affection

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What are the cold, or feverish caresses of appetite, but sin embracing death, compared with the modest overflowings of a pure heart and exalted imagination?

Yes, let me tell the libertine of fancy when he despises understanding in woman—that the mind, which he disregards, gives life to the enthusiastic affection from which rapture, short-lived as it is, alone can flow! And, that, without virtue, a sexual attachment must expire, like a tallow candle in the socket, creating intolerable disgust.

To prove this, I need only observe, that men who have wasted great part of their lives with women, and with whom they have sought for pleasure with eager thirst, entertain the meanest opinion of the sex.—Virtue, true refiner of joy!—if foolish men were to fright thee from earth, in order to give loose to all their appetites without a check—some sensual wight of taste would scale the heavens to invite thee back, to give a zest to pleasure!

13.72 That women at present are by ignorance rendered foolish or vicious, is, I think, not to be disputed; and, that the most salutary effects tending to improve mankind might be expected from a revolution in female manners, appears, at least, with a face of probability, to rise out of the observation. For as marriage has been termed the parent of those endearing charities which draw man from the brutal herd, the corrupting intercourse that wealth, idleness, and folly, produce between the sexes, is more universally injurious to morality than all the other vices of mankind collectively considered.

To adulterous lust the most sacred duties are sacrificed, because before marriage, men, by a promiscuous intimacy with women, learned to consider love as a selfish gratification—learned to separate it not only from esteem but from the affection merely built on habit, which mixes a little humanity with it. Justice and friendship are also set at defiance, and that purity of taste is vitiated which would naturally lead a man to relish an artless display of affection rather than affected airs.

But that noble simplicity of affection, which dares to appear unadorned, has few attractions for the libertine, though it be the charm, which by

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supported by mutual respect? Compared with the modest overflowings of a pure heart and an exalted imagination, what are the cold or feverish caresses of appetite but sin embracing death?

Yes, when the libertine of fancy scorns understanding in a woman, let me tell him this: the mind he disregards is what gives life to the passionate affection from which alone rapture can flow, short-lived as it is! And without virtue, an attachment between the sexes must burn out like a tallow candle guttering in its socket, leaving an intolerable disgust.

To prove this, I need only point out that the men who have wasted a great part of their lives with women, seeking pleasure from them with eager thirst, hold the lowest opinion of the sex. Virtue, true refiner of joy! If foolish men were to frighten you off the earth so as to give free rein to all their appetites without a check, some sensual fellow of taste would scale the heavens to invite you back and give pleasure its zest!

I do not think anyone can dispute that ignorance at present makes women foolish or vicious. And from this observation it seems at least probable that the most beneficial effects for the improvement of humanity might be expected from a revolution in female manners. Marriage has been called the parent of those endearing affections that draw man out of the brutish herd. It follows that the corrupting relations between the sexes produced by wealth, idleness, and folly do more universal harm to morality than all the other vices of humanity put together.

The most sacred duties are sacrificed to adulterous lust because before marriage men, through promiscuous intimacy with women, learned to regard love as a selfish gratification. They learned to separate it not only from esteem but even from the affection built merely on habit, which at least mixes a little humanity into it. Justice and friendship are defied as well. And the purity of taste that would naturally lead a man to enjoy an artless display of affection more than affected airs is corrupted.

But that noble simplicity of affection which dares to appear unadorned has few attractions for the libertine. Yet it is the very charm that cements the

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	cementing the matrimonial tie, secures to the pledges of a warmer passion the necessary parental attention; for children will never be properly educated till friendship subsists between parents. Virtue flies from a house divided against itself—and a whole legion of devils take up their residence there.	marriage bond, and so secures for the offspring of a warmer passion the parental attention they need. Children will never be properly educated until there is friendship between their parents. Virtue flees from a house divided against itself, and a whole legion of devils moves in.
13.73	The affection of husbands and wives cannot be pure when they have so few sentiments in common, and when so little confidence is established at home, as must be the case when their pursuits are so different. That intimacy from which tenderness should flow, will not, cannot subsist between the vicious.	The affection of husbands and wives cannot be pure when they have so few feelings in common and so little trust is established at home, as must be the case when their pursuits are so different. The intimacy from which tenderness should flow will not, cannot exist between the vicious.
13.74	Contending, therefore, that the sexual distinction which men have so warmly insisted upon, is arbitrary, I have dwelt on an observation, that several sensible men, with whom I have conversed on the subject, allowed to be well founded; and it is simply this, that the little chastity to be found amongst men, and consequent disregard of modesty, tend to degrade both sexes; and further, that the modesty of women, characterized as such, will often be only the artful veil of wantonness instead of being the natural reflection of purity, till modesty be universally respected.	I contend, therefore, that the distinction between the sexes that men have so warmly insisted on is arbitrary. In making this case I have dwelt on an observation that several sensible men I have talked with on the subject agreed was well founded. It is simply this: the little chastity found among men, and the resulting disregard of modesty, tend to degrade both sexes. Further, until modesty is respected universally, the so-called modesty of women will often be merely a cunning veil for wantonness rather than the natural reflection of purity.
13.75	From the tyranny of man, I firmly believe, the greater number of female follies proceed; and the cunning, which I allow makes at present a part of their character, I likewise have repeatedly endeavoured to prove, is produced by oppression.	I firmly believe that most female follies proceed from the tyranny of man. I have also repeatedly tried to prove that the cunning which, I admit, is at present part of women's character is produced by oppression.
13.76	Were not dissenters, for instance, a class of people, with strict truth characterized as cunning? And may I not lay some stress on this fact to prove, that when any power but reason curbs the free spirit of man, dissimulation is practised, and the various shifts of art are naturally called forth? Great attention to decorum, which was carried to a degree of scrupulosity, and all that puerile bustle about trifles and consequential solemnity, which Butler's caricature of a dissenter, brings before the imagination, shaped their persons as well as their minds in the mould of prim littleness.	Were not Dissenters, for example, a class of people described, with strict truth, as cunning? And may I not lean on this fact to prove my point? Whenever any power but reason curbs the free spirit of man, people resort to pretense, and all the various dodges of artifice are naturally called forth. Dissenters paid great attention to decorum, to the point of fussiness. They showed all the childish bustle about trifles and the self-important solemnity that Butler's caricature of a Dissenter calls to mind. All this shaped their bodies as well as their minds in the mold of prim littleness.[10]

10 Dissenters were English Protestants outside the Church of England, barred by law from public office and the universities. Samuel Butler mocked them in his satirical poem *Hudibras* (1663–78).

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I speak collectively, for I know how many ornaments to human nature have been enrolled amongst sectaries; yet, I assert, that the same narrow prejudice for their sect, which women have for their families, prevailed in the dissenting part of the community, however worthy in other respects; and also that the same timid prudence, or headstrong efforts, often disgraced the exertions of both. Oppression thus formed many of the features of their character perfectly to coincide with that of the oppressed half of mankind; for is it not notorious that dissenters were, like women, fond of deliberating together, and asking advice of each other, till by a complication of little contrivances, some little end was brought about?

A similar attention to preserve their reputation was conspicuous in the dissenting and female world, and was produced by a similar cause.

13.77 Asserting the rights which women in common with men ought to contend for, I have not attempted to extenuate their faults; but to prove them to be the natural consequence of their education and station in society. If so, it is reasonable to suppose that they will change their character, and correct their vices and follies, when they are allowed to be free in a physical, moral, and civil sense[3].

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13.78 Let woman share the rights, and she will emulate the virtues of man; for she must grow more perfect when emancipated, or justify the authority that chains such a weak being to her duty.—If the latter, it will be expedient to open a fresh trade with Russia for whips; a present which a father should always make to his son-in-law on his wedding day, that a husband may keep his

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I speak of them as a group, for I know how many ornaments to human nature have belonged to the sects. Still, I maintain that the Dissenting part of the community, however worthy in other respects, showed the same narrow partiality for their sect that women show for their families. I also maintain that the same timid prudence, or the same headstrong efforts, often disgraced the undertakings of both. Oppression thus shaped many features of their character to match exactly the character of the oppressed half of humanity. Is it not notorious that Dissenters, like women, were fond of deliberating together and asking one another's advice, until some little end was achieved through a tangle of little schemes?

A similar concern to preserve their reputation was conspicuous among Dissenters and among women, and it was produced by a similar cause.

In asserting the rights that women, in common with men, ought to fight for, I have not tried to excuse their faults. I have tried to prove that those faults are the natural consequence of their education and their position in society. If so, it is reasonable to suppose that women will change their character, and correct their vices and follies, when they are allowed to be free in a physical, moral, and civil sense[3].

Let woman share the rights, and she will emulate the virtues of man. For once she is set free, she must either grow more perfect or justify the authority that chains so weak a being to her duty. If the latter, it will be advisable to open a new trade with Russia for whips. A father should always make one a present to his son-in-law on his wedding day, so that a husband can keep his whole

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[3] I had further enlarged on the advantages which might reasonably be expected to result from an improvement in female manners, towards the general reformation of society; but it appeared to me that such reflections would more properly close the last volume.

[3] I had written at greater length on the advantages that might reasonably be expected for the general reform of society from an improvement in female manners. But it seemed to me that such reflections would more properly close the last volume.[11]

11 The further volume Wollstonecraft planned was never published.

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whole family in order by the same means; and without any violation of justice reign, wielding this sceptre, sole master of his house, because he is the only being in it who has reason:—the divine, indefeasible earthly sovereignty breathed into man by the Master of the universe.

Allowing this position, women have not any inherent rights to claim, and by the same rule, their duties vanish, for rights and duties are inseparable.

13.79 Be just then, O ye men of understanding! and mark not more severely what women do amiss, than the vicious tricks of the horse or the ass for whom ye provide provender—and allow her the privileges of ignorance, to whom ye deny the rights of reason, or ye will be worse than Egyptian task-masters, expecting virtue where nature has not given understanding!

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family in order by the same means. Then, wielding this scepter, he can reign without any violation of justice as sole master of his house, because he is the only being in it who has reason: the divine, indefeasible earthly sovereignty breathed into man by the Master of the universe.

Grant this position, and women have no inherent rights to claim. By the same rule, their duties vanish, for rights and duties are inseparable.

Be just, then, O you men of understanding! Do not judge women's wrongdoing more harshly than the vicious tricks of the horse or the donkey you provide fodder for. Allow the privileges of ignorance to her to whom you deny the rights of reason, or you will be worse than the Egyptian taskmasters, expecting virtue where nature has not given understanding![13]

13 In Exodus 5, Pharaoh's taskmasters demand that the enslaved Israelites make bricks without being given straw.