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EMILE

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imagination which transmute into vices the passions of finite beings, of angels even, if indeed they have passions; for they must needs know the nature of every creature to realise what relations are best adapted to themselves.

This is the sum of human wisdom with regard to the use of the passions. First, to be conscious of the true relations of man both in the species and the individual; second, to control all the affections in accordance with these relations.

But is man in a position to control his affections according to such and such relations? No doubt he is, if he is able to fix his imagination on this or that object, or to form this or that habit. Moreover, we are not so much concerned with what a man can do for himself, as with what we can do for our pupil through our choice of the circumstances in which he shall be placed. To show the means by which he may be kept in the path of nature is to show plainly enough how he might stray from that path.

So long as his consciousness is confined to himself there is no morality in his actions; it is only when it begins to extend beyond himself that he forms first the sentiments and then the ideas of good and ill, which make him indeed a man, and an integral part of his species. To begin with we must therefore confine our observations to this point.

These observations are difficult to make, for we must reject the examples before our eyes, and seek out those in which the successive developments follow the order of nature.

A child sophisticated, polished, and civilised, who is only awaiting the power to put into practice the precocious instruction he has received, is never mistaken with regard to the time when this power is acquired. Far from awaiting it, he accelerates it; he stirs his blood to a premature ferment; he knows what should be the object of his desires long before those desires are experienced. It is not nature which stimulates him; it is he who forces the hand of nature; she has nothing to teach him when he becomes a man; he was a man in thought long before he was a man in reality.

The true course of nature is slower and more gradual. Little by little the blood grows warmer, the faculties expand, the character is formed. The wise workman who directs the process is careful to perfect every tool before he puts it to use; the first desires are preceded by a long period of unrest, they are deceived by a prolonged ignorance, they know not what they want. The blood ferments and bubbles; overflowing vitality seeks to extend its sphere. The eye grows brighter and surveys others, we begin to be interested in those about us, we begin to feel that we are not meant to live alone; thus the heart is thrown open to human affection, and becomes capable of attachment.

The first sentiment of which the well-trained youth is capable is not love but friendship. The first work of his rising imagination is to make known to him his fellows; the species affects him before the sex. Here is another advantage to be gained from prolonged innocence; you may take advantage of his dawning sensibility to sow the first seeds of humanity in the heart of the young adolescent. This advantage is all the greater because this is the only time in his life when such efforts may be really successful.

I have always observed that young men, corrupted in early youth and addicted to women and debauchery, are inhuman and cruel; their passionate temperament makes them impatient, vindictive, and angry; their imagination fixed on one object only, refuses all others; mercy and pity are alike unknown to them; they would have sacrificed father, mother, the whole world, to the least of their pleasures. A young man, on the other hand, brought up in happy innocence, is drawn by the first

stirrings of nature to the tender and affectionate passions; his warm heart is touched by the sufferings of his fellow-creatures; he trembles with delight when he meets his comrade, his arms can embrace tenderly, his eyes can shed tears of pity; he learns to be sorry for offending others through his shame at causing annoyance. If the eager warmth of his blood makes him quick, hasty, and passionate, a moment later you see all his natural kindness of heart in the eagerness of his repentance; he weeps, he groans over the wound he has given; he would atone for the blood he has shed with his own; his anger dies away, his pride abases itself before the consciousness of his wrong-doing. Is he the injured party, in the height of his fury an excuse, a word, disarms him; he forgives the wrongs of others as whole-heartedly as he repairs his own. Adolescence is not the age of hatred or vengeance; it is the age of pity, mercy, and generosity. Yes, I maintain, and I am not afraid of the testimony of experience, a youth of good birth, one who has preserved his innocence up to the age of twenty, is at that age the best, the most generous, the most loving, and the most lovable of men. You never heard such a thing; I can well believe that philosophers such as you, brought up among the corruption of the public schools, are unaware of it.

Man's weakness makes him sociable. Our common sufferings draw our hearts to our fellow-creatures; we should have no duties to mankind if we were not men. Every affection is a sign of insufficiency; if each of us had no need of others, we should hardly think of associating with them. So our frail happiness has its roots in our weakness. A really happy man is a hermit; God only enjoys absolute happiness; but which of us has any idea what that means? If any imperfect creature were self-sufficient, what would he have to enjoy? To our thinking he would be wretched and alone. I do not understand how one who has need of nothing could love anything, nor do I understand how he who loves nothing can be happy.

Hence it follows that we are drawn towards our fellow-creatures less by our feeling for their joys than for their sorrows; for in them we discern more plainly a nature like our own, and a pledge of their affection for us. If our common needs create a bond of interest our common sufferings create a bond of affection. The sight of a happy man arouses in others envy rather than love, we are ready to accuse him of usurping a right which is not his, of seeking happiness for himself alone, and our selfishness suffers an additional pang in the thought that this man has no need of us. But who does not pity the wretch when he beholds his sufferings? who would not deliver him from his woes if a wish could do it? Imagination puts us more readily in the place of the miserable man than of the happy man; we feel that the one condition touches us more nearly than the other. Pity is sweet, because, when we put ourselves in the place of one who suffers, we are aware, nevertheless, of the pleasure of not suffering like him. Envy is bitter, because the sight of a happy man, far from putting the envious in his place, inspires him with regret that he is not there. The one seems to exempt us from the pains he suffers, the other seems to deprive us of the good things he enjoys.

Do you desire to stimulate and nourish the first stirrings of awakening sensibility in the heart of a young man, do you desire to incline his disposition towards kindly deed and thought, do not cause the seeds of pride, vanity, and envy to spring up in him through the misleading picture of the happiness of mankind; do not show him to begin with the pomp of courts, the pride of palaces, the designs of pageants; do not take him into society and into brilliant assemblies; do not show him the outside of society till you have made him capable of estimating it at its true worth. To show him the world before he is acquainted with men, is not to train him, but to corrupt him; not to teach, but to

By nature men are neither kings, nobles, courtiers, nor millionaires. All men are born poor and naked, all are liable to the sorrows of life, its disappointments, its ills, its needs, its suffering of every kind, and all are condemned at length to die. This is what it really means to be a man, this is what no mortal can escape. Begin then with the study of the essentials of humanity, that which really constitutes mankind.

At sixteen the adolescent knows what it is to suffer, for he himself has suffered; but he scarcely realises that others suffer too; to see without feeling is not knowledge, and as I have said again and again the child who does not picture the feelings of others knows no ills but his own; but when his imagination is kindled by the first beginnings of growing sensibility, he begins to perceive himself in his fellow-creatures, to be touched by their cries, to suffer in their sufferings. It is at this time that the sorrowful picture of suffering humanity should stir his heart with the first touch of pity he has ever known.

If it is not easy to discover this opportunity in your scholars, whose fault is it? You taught them so soon to play at feeling, you taught them so early its language, that speaking continually in the same strain they turn your lessons against yourself, and give you no chance of discovering when they cease to lie, and begin to feel what they say. But look at Emile; I have led him up to this age, and he has neither felt nor pretended to feel. He has never said, "I love you dearly," till he knew what it was to love; he has never been taught what expression to assume when he enters the room of his father, his mother, or his sick tutor; he has not learnt the art of affecting a sorrow he does not feel. He has never pretended to weep for the death of any one, for he does not know what it is to die. There is the same insensibility in his heart as in his manners. Indifferent, like every child, to every one but himself, he takes no interest in any one; his only peculiarity is that he will not pretend to take such an interest, he is less deceitful than others.

Emile having thought little about creatures of feeling will be a long time before he knows what is meant by pain and death. Groans and cries will begin to stir his compassion, he will turn away his eyes at the sight of blood; the convulsions of a dying animal will cause him I know not what anguish before he knows the source of these impulses. If he were still stupid and barbarous he would not be them; if he were more learned he would recognise their source; he has compared ideas too frequently already to be insensible, but not enough to know what he feels.

So pity is born, the first relative sentiment which touches the human heart according to the order of nature. To become sensitive and pitiful the child must know that he has fellow-creatures who suffer as he has suffered, who feel the pains he has felt, and others which he can form some idea of, but capable of feeling them himself. Indeed, how can we let ourselves be stirred by pity unless we are beyond ourselves, and identify ourselves with the suffering animal, by leaving, so to speak, our own nature and taking his. We only suffer so far as we suppose he suffers; the suffering is not ours, but So no one becomes sensitive till his imagination is aroused and begins to carry him outside himself. What should we do to stimulate and nourish this growing sensibility, to direct it, and to follow the natural bent? Should we not present to the young man objects on which the expansive force of the heart may take effect, objects which dilate it, which extend it to other creatures, which take outside himself? Should we not carefully remove everything that narrows, concentrate in kindness, goodness, pity, and beneficence, all the gentle and attractive passions which are naturally strengthened the power of the human self? that is to say, in other words, we should arouse in

pleasing to man; those passions prevent the growth of envy, covetousness, hatred, all the repulsive and cruel passions which make our sensibility not merely a cipher but a minus quantity, passions which are the curse of those who feel them.

I think I can sum up the whole of the preceding reflections in two or three maxims, definite, straightforward, and easy to understand.

FIRST MAXIM.—It is not in human nature to put ourselves in the place of those who are happier than ourselves, but only in the place of those who can claim our pity.

If you find exceptions to this rule, they are more apparent than real. Thus we do not put ourselves in the place of the rich or great when we become fond of them; even when our affection is real, we only appropriate to ourselves a part of their welfare. Sometimes we love the rich man in the midst of misfortunes; but so long as he prospers he has no real friend, except the man who is not deceived by appearances, who pities rather than envies him in spite of his prosperity.

The happiness belonging to certain states of life appeals to us; take, for instance, the life of a shepherd in the country. The charm of seeing these good people so happy is not poisoned by envy; we are genuinely interested in them. Why is this? Because we feel we can descend into this state of peace and innocence and enjoy the same happiness; it is an alternative which only calls up pleasant thoughts, so long as the wish is as good as the deed. It is always pleasant to examine our stores, to contemplate our own wealth, even when we do not mean to spend it.

From this we see that to incline a young man to humanity you must not make him admire the brilliant lot of others; you must show him life in its sorrowful aspects and arouse his fears. Thus it becomes clear that he must force his own way to happiness, without interfering with the happiness of others.

SECOND MAXIM.—We never pity another's woes unless we know we may suffer in like manner ourselves.

"Non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco."—Virgil.

I know nothing go fine, so full of meaning, so touching, so true as these words.

Why have kings no pity on their people? Because they never expect to be ordinary men. Why are the rich so hard on the poor? Because they have no fear of becoming poor. Why do the nobles look down upon the people? Because a nobleman will never be one of the lower classes. Why are the Turks generally kinder and more hospitable than ourselves? Because, under their wholly arbitrary system of government, the rank and wealth of individuals are always uncertain and precarious, so that they do not regard poverty and degradation as conditions with which they have no concern; to-morrow, any one may himself be in the same position as those on whom he bestows alms to-day. This thought, which occurs again and again in eastern romances, lends them a certain tenderness which is not to be found in our pretentious and harsh morality.

So do not train your pupil to look down from the height of his glory upon the sufferings of the unfortunate, the labours of the wretched, and do not hope to teach him to pity them while he considers them as far removed from himself. Make him thoroughly aware of the fact that the fate of these unhappy persons may one day be his own, that his feet are standing on the edge of the abyss, into which he may be plunged at any moment by a thousand unexpected irresistible misfortunes.

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Teach him to put no trust in birth, health, or riches; show him all the changes of fortune; and examples—there are only too many of them—in which men of higher rank than himself have below the condition of these wretched ones. Whether by their own fault or another's is for present no concern of ours; does he indeed know the meaning of the word fault? Never interfere in the order in which he acquires knowledge, and teach him only through the means within his reach needs no great learning to perceive that all the prudence of mankind cannot make certain whether he will be alive or dead in an hour's time, whether before nightfall he will not be grinding his teeth in pangs of nephritis, whether a month hence he will be rich or poor, whether in a year's time he will not be rowing an Algerian galley under the lash of the slave-driver. Above all do not teach him like his catechism, in cold blood; let him see and feel the calamities which overtake men; surprise startle his imagination with the perils which lurk continually about a man's path; let him see pitfalls all about him, and when he hears you speak of them, let him cling more closely to you for lest he should fall. "You will make him timid and cowardly," do you say? We shall see; let us make kindly to begin with, that is what matters most.

THIRD MAXIM.—The pity we feel for others is proportionate, not to the amount of the evil, but to the feelings we attribute to the sufferers.

We only pity the wretched so far as we think they feel the need of pity. The bodily effect of sufferings is less than one would suppose; it is memory that prolongs the pain, imagination projects it into the future, and makes us really to be pitied. This is, I think, one of the reasons we are more callous to the sufferings of animals than of men, although a fellow-feeling ought to identify ourselves equally with either. We scarcely pity the cart-horse in his shed, for we suppose that while he is eating his hay he is thinking of the blows he has received and the labour store for him. Neither do we pity the sheep grazing in the field, though we know it is about to be slaughtered, for we believe it knows nothing of the fate in store for it. In this way we also are callous to the fate of our fellow-men, and the rich console themselves for the harm done by the poor, by the assumption that the poor are too stupid to feel. I usually judge of the value a man puts on the welfare of his fellow-creatures by what he seems to think of them. We naturally scornfully of the people, and philosophers profess to think mankind so wicked.

The people are mankind; those who do not belong to the people are so few in number that they are not worth counting. Man is the same in every station of life; if that be so, those ranks to which men belong deserve most honour. All distinctions of rank fade away before the eyes of a noble person; he sees the same passions, the same feelings in the noble and the gutter-snipe; there is a slight difference in speech, and more or less artificiality of tone; and if there is indeed any difference between them, the disadvantage is all on the side of those who are more sophisticated people show themselves as they are, and they are not attractive; but the fashionable are compelled to adopt a disguise; we should be horrified if we saw it as it really is.

There is, so our wisacres tell us, the same amount of happiness and sorrow in every state of life, and the wretched are not wretched in their condition, but in their conduct. The man who says himself about any one? Let every one stay where he is; leave the slave to be ill-treated, the squire to be rich, and the wretched to perish; they have nothing to gain by any change in their condition. The rich man's sufferings do not come from his position, but from himself alone; he is as dead in its effects as it is incapable of proof; if all are equally happy why should we not be equally happy? Let every one stay where he is; leave the slave to be ill-treated, the squire to be rich, and the wretched to perish; they have nothing to gain by any change in their condition. The rich man's sufferings do not come from his position, but from himself alone; he is as dead in its effects as it is incapable of proof; if all are equally happy why should we not be equally happy? Let every one stay where he is; leave the slave to be ill-treated, the squire to be rich, and the wretched to perish; they have nothing to gain by any change in their condition.

owns making, and he could be happy if he chose. But the sufferings of the poor man come from external things, from the hardships fate has imposed upon him. No amount of habit can accustom him to the bodily ills of fatigue, exhaustion, and hunger. Neither head nor heart can serve to free him from the sufferings of his condition. How is Epictetus the better for knowing beforehand that his master will break his leg for him; does he do it any the less? He has to endure not only the pain itself but the pains of anticipation. If the people were as wise as we assume them to be stupid, how could they be other than they are? Observe persons of this class; you will see that, with a different way of speaking, they have as much intelligence and more common-sense than yourself. Have respect then for your species; remember that it consists essentially of the people, that if all the kings and all the philosophers were removed they would scarcely be missed, and things would go on none the worse. In a word, teach your pupil to love all men, even those who fail to appreciate him; act in such way that he is not a member of any class, but takes his place in all alike: speak in his hearing of the human race with tenderness, and even with pity, but never with scorn. You are a man; do not dishonour mankind. It is by these ways and others like them—how different from the beaten paths—that we must reach the heart of the young adolescent, and stimulate in him the first impulses of nature; we must develop that heart and open its doors to his fellow-creatures, and there must be as little self-interest as possible mixed up with these impulses; above all, no vanity, no emulation, no boasting, none of those sentiments which force us to compare ourselves with others; for such comparisons are never made without arousing some measure of hatred against those who dispute our claim to the first place, were it only in our own estimation. Then we must be either blind or angry, a bad man or a fool; let us try to avoid this dilemma. Sooner or later these dangerous passions will appear, so you tell me, in spite of us. I do not deny it. There is a time and place for everything; I am only saying that we should not help to arouse these passions.

This is the spirit of the method to be laid down. In this case examples and illustrations are useless, for here we find the beginning of the countless differences of character, and every example I gave would possibly apply to only one case in a hundred thousand. It is at this age that the clever teacher begins his real business, as a student and a philosopher who knows how to probe the heart and strives to guide it aright. While the young man has not learnt to pretend, while he does not even know the meaning of pretence, you see by his look, his manner, his gestures, the impression he has received from any object presented to him; you read in his countenance every impulse of his heart; by watching his expression you learn to protect his impulses and actually to control them.

It has been commonly observed that blood, wounds, cries and groans, the preparations for painful operations, and everything which directs the senses towards things connected with suffering, are usually the first to make an impression on all men. The idea of destruction, a more complex matter, does not have so great an effect; the thought of death affects us later and less forcibly, for no one knows from his own experience what it is to die; you must have seen corpses to feel the agonies of the living, but when once this idea is established in the mind, there is no spectacle more dreadful in our eyes, whether because of the idea of complete destruction which it arouses through our senses, or because we know that this moment must come for each one of us and we feel ourselves all the more keenly affected by a situation from which we know there is no escape.

These various impressions differ in manner and in degree, according to the individual character of each one of us and his former habits, but they are universal and no one is altogether free from them.