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### Montaigne's Essays

In Three Books. With Notes and Quotations. And an Account of The Author's Life ; With a short Character of the Author and Translator, by the late Marquis of Halifax; With the Addition of A Complete Table to each Volume

**Montaigne, Michel Eyquem de**

**London, 1743**

Chap. 25. Of the Education of Children.

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the *Turks*, a People equally inclin'd to the Estimation of Arms, and the Contempt of Letters. I find *Rome* was more valiant before she grew so learned; and the most warlike Nations at this Time in Being, are the most ignorant; of which the *Scythians*, *Parthians*, and the great *Tamerlane*, may serve for sufficient Proof. When the *Goths* over-ran *Greece*, the only Thing that preserv'd all the Libraries from the Fire, was, that some one possess'd them with an Opinion, that they were to leave this kind of Furniture entire to the Enemy, as being most proper to divert them from the Exercise of Arms, and to fix them to a lazy and sedentary Life. When our King *Charles* the Eighth, almost without striking a Blow, saw himself possess'd of the Kingdom of *Naples*, and a considerable Part of *Tuscany*, the Nobility about him attributed this unexpected Facility of Conquest to this, that the Princes and Nobles of *Italy* more studied to render themselves ingenious and learned, than vigorous and warlike.



## C H A P. XXV.

*Of the Education of Children. To Madam Diana of Foix, Countess of Gurfon.*

I Never yet saw that Father, but, let his Son be never so decrepid or deform'd, would notwithstanding own him: Nevertheless, if he were not totally besotted, and blinded with his paternal Affection, that he did not well enough discern his Defects: Notwithstanding all Defaults, he is still his. Just so do I, I see better than any other, that all I write are but the idle Whimsies of a Man that has only nibbled upon the outward Crust of Science in his Nonage, and only retain'd a general and formless Image of them, who has got a little Snatch of every Thing, and nothing of the whole *a la mode de France*; For I know in general, that there is such a Thing as Physick, a Knowledge in the Laws, four Parts in Mathematicks, and, in Part, what all these  
aim



aim and point at; and peradventure I yet know farther, what Sciences in general pretend unto, in order to the Services of human Life; but to dive farther than that, and to have cudgell'd my Brains in the Study of *Aristotle*, the Monarch of all modern Learning; or particularly addicted myself to any one Science, I have never done it; neither is there any one Art of which I am able to draw the first Lineaments and dead Colour; insomuch that there is not a Boy of the lowest Form in a School, that may not pretend to be wiser than I, who am not able to pose him in his first Lesson, which, if I am at any Time forc'd upon, I am necessitated in my own Defence to ask him some universal Questions, such as may serve to try his natural Understanding; a Lesson as strange and unknown to him, as his is to me. I never seriously settled myself to the Reading of any Book of solid Learning, but *Plutarch* and *Seneca*; and there, like the *Danaides*, I eternally fill, and it as constantly runs out; something of which drops upon this Paper, but very little or nothing stays behind. History is my Delight, as to Matter of Reading, or else Poetry, for which I have, I confess, a particular Kindness and Esteem: For, as *Cleanthes* said, as the Voice, forc'd through the narrow Passage of a Trumpet, comes out more forceable and shrill; so, methinks, a Sentence, couch'd in the Harmony of Verse, darts more briskly upon the Understanding, and strikes both my Ear and Apprehension with a smarter and more pleasing Power. As to the natural Parts I have, of which this is the Essay, I find them to bow under the Burthen; my Fancy and Judgment do but grope in the Dark, trip and stumble in their Way, and when I have gone as far as I can, I discover still a new and greater Extent of Land before me, but with troubled and imperfect Sight, and wrapt up in Clouds, that I am not able to penetrate. And taking upon me to write indifferently of whatever comes into my Head, and therein making Use of nothing but my own proper and natural Force and Ammunition, if I happen'd, as I often do, accidentally to meet in any good Author, the same Heads and common-Places upon which I have attempted to write, (as I did but a little before in *Plutarch's* Discourse of the Force of Imagination) to see myself so weak and so forlorn, so heavy and so flat, in Comparison of those better Writers, I at once pity and despise myself. Yet do I flatter and please



myself with this, that my Opinions have often the Honour and good Fortune to jump with theirs, and that I follow in the same Paths, though at a very great Distance; I am farther satisfied to find, that I have a Quality, which every one is not blest withal, which is, to discern the vast Difference betwixt them and me; and notwithstanding all that, suffer my own Inventions, low and contemptible as they are, to run on in their Career, without mending or plaistering up the Defects that this Comparison has laid open to my own View; and in plain Truth, a Man had need of a good strong Back to keep Pace with these People. The indiscreet Scribblers of our Times, who amongst their laborious Nothings, insert whole Sections, Paragraphs, and Pages, out of ancient Authors, with a Design by that Means to illustrate their own Writings, do quite contrary; for this infinite Dissimilitude of Ornaments renders the Complexions of their own Compositions so pale, fallow, and deform'd, that they lose much more than they get. The Philosophers, *Chrysippus* and *Epicurus*, were, in this, of two quite contrary Humours; for the first did not only in his Books mix the Passages and Sayings of other Authors, but entire Pieces, and in one the whole *Medea* of *Euripides*; which gave *Apolodorus* Occasion to say, That should a Man pick out of his Writings all that was none of his, he would leave him nothing but blank Paper: Whereas the latter, quite contrary, in three hundred Volumes that he left behind him, has not so much as one Quotation. I happened the other Day upon this Piece of Fortune; I was reading a *French Book*, where after I had a long Time run dreaming over a great many Words, so dull, so insipid, so void of all Wit, or common Sense, that indeed they were only Words; after a long and tedious Travel, I came at last to meet with a Piece that was lofty, rich, and elevated to the very Clouds; of which, had I found either the Declivity easy, or the Ascent accessible, there had been some Excuse; but it was so perpendicular a Precipice, and so wholly cut off from the rest of the Work, that by the first Words I found myself flying into the other World, and from thence discover'd the Vale from whence I came so deep and low, that I had never since the Heart to descend into it any more. If I should set out my Discourses with such rich Spoils as these, the Plagiary would be too manifest in his own Defects, and I should



I should too much discover the Imperfection of my own Writing. To reprehend the Fault in others, that I am guilty of myself, appears to me no more unreasonable, than to condemn, as I often do, those of others in myself. They are to be every where reprov'd, and ought to have no Sanctuary allow'd them. I know very well how imprudently I myself at every Turn attempt to equal myself to my Thefts, and to make my Stile go Hand in Hand with them, not without a temerarious Hope of deceiving the Eyes of my Reader from discerning the Difference; but withal, it is as much by the Benefit of my Application, that I hope to do it, as by that of my Invention, or any Force of my own. Besides, I do not offer to contend with the whole Body of these Champions, nor Hand to Hand with any one of them, 'tis only by Sights and little light Skirmishes that I engage them; I do not grapple with them, but try their Strength only, and never engage so far as I make a Shew to do; and if I could hold them in Play, I were a brave Fellow; for I never attack them, but where they are most finewy and strong. To cover a Man's self (as I have seen some do) with another Man's Arms, so as not to discover so much as their Fingers Ends; to carry on a Design (as it is not hard for a Man that has any Thing of a Scholar in him, in an ordinary Subject to do) under old Inventions, patcht up here and there with his own Trumpery: And then to endeavour to conceal the Theft, and to make it pass for his own, is first Injustice, and Meanness of Spirit in whoever does it, who having nothing in them of their own fit to procure them a Reputation, endeavour to do it by attempting to impose Things upon the World in their own Name, which they have really no Manner of Title to; and then a ridiculous Folly to content themselves with acquiring the ignorant Approbation of the Vulgar by such a pitiful Cheat, at the Price, at the same Time, of discovering their Insufficiency to Men of Understanding, who will soon smell out, and trace them in those borrow'd Allégories, and from whom alone they are to expect a legitimate Applause. For my own Part, there is nothing I would not sooner do than that, neither have I said so much of others, but to get a better Opportunity to excuse myself: Neither in this do I in the least Glance at the Composers of Canto's, who declare themselves for such; of which Sort of Writers,



I have in my Time known many very ingenious, and have their Rhapsodies in very great Esteem, and particularly one, under the Name of *Capitulus*, besides the Ancients. These are really Men of Wit, and that make it appear they are so, both by that and other Ways of Writing; as for Example, *Lipsius*, in that learned and laborious Contexture of his Politicks. But, be it how it will, and how inconsiderable soever these Essays of mine may be, I will ingenuously confess, I never intended to conceal them, no more than my old bald grissled Picture before them, where the Graver has not presented you with a perfect Face, but the Resemblance of mine. And these also are but my own particular Opinions and Fancies, and I deliver them for no other, but only what I myself believe, and not for what is really to be believ'd. Neither have I any other End in this Writing, but only to discover myself, who also shall peradventure be another Thing To-morrow, if I chance to meet any Book or Friend, to convince me in the mean Time. I have no Authority to be believ'd, neither do I desire it, being too conscious of my own Inerudition to be able to instruct others.

A Friend of mine then, having read the precedent Chapter the other Day, told me, that I should have insisted a little longer upon the Education of Children; and have extended my Discourse upon so necessary a Point: Which, how fit I am to do, let my Friends flatter me if they please, I have in the mean Time no such Opinion of my own Talent, as to promise myself any very good Success from my Endeavour; but (Madam) were my Abilities equal to the Subject, I could not possibly employ them better than in presenting my best Instructions to the little Gentleman, whose happy Birth you shortly expect, and your Friends are in daily Hopes of; for, Madam, you are too generous to begin otherwise than with a Male: Having had so great a Hand in your Marriage, I have a Sort of particular Right and Interest in the Greatness and Prosperity of the Issue that shall proceed from it; besides, as you have been so long in Possession of the best of my Wishes and Services, I am oblig'd to desire and contribute to the Honour and Advantage of every Thing that concerns you. But, in Truth, all I understand as to that Particular, is only this, that the greatest and most important Difficulty of human Science is the Education of Children. For as in Agriculture, the  
Husbandry



Husbandry that is to precede Planting, as also planting itself, is certain, plain, easy, and very well known; but after that which is planted comes to take Root, to spread, and shoot up, there is a great deal more to be done, more Art to be us'd, more Care to be taken, and much more Difficulty to cultivate and bring it to Perfection: So it is with Men; it is no hard Matter to get Children; but after they are born, then begins the Trouble, Solitude and Care, virtuously to train, principle, and bring them up. The Symptoms of their Inclinations in that young and tender Age are so obscure, and the Promises so uncertain and fallacious, that it is very hard to establish any solid Judgment or Conjecture upon them. As *Simon*, for Example, and *Themistocles*, and a thousand others, who have very much deceiv'd the little Expectation the World had of them; Bears Cubs, and Bitches Puppies, do truly, and indeed discover their natural Inclination; but Men, so soon as ever grown up, immediately applying themselves to certain Habits, engaging themselves in certain Opinions, and conforming themselves to particular Laws and Customs, do easily change, or at least disguise their true and real Disposition. And yet it is hard to force the Propensity of Nature; whence it comes to pass, that for not having chosen the right Course, a Man often takes very great Pains, and consumes great Part of his Age in training up Children to Things, for which, by their natural Aversion, they are totally unfit. In this Difficulty, nevertheless, I am clearly of Opinion, that they ought to be elemented in the best and most advantageous Studies, without taking too much Notice of, or being too superstitious in those light Prognosticks they give of themselves in their tender Years; to which *Plato*, in his Republick, gives, methinks, too much Authority. But, *Madam*, Science is doubtless a very great Ornament, and a Thing of marvellous Use, especially in Persons rais'd to that Degree of Fortune in what you are placed; and in Truth, in Persons of mean and low Condition, cannot perform it's true and genuine Office, being naturally more prompt to assist in the Conduct of War, in the Government of Armies and Provinces, and in negotiating the Leagues and Friendships of Princes and foreign Nations, than in forming a Syllogism in Logick, in pleading a Procefs in Law or in prescribing a Dose of Pills in Physick. Wherefore,



*Madam*, believing you will not omit this so necessary Embellishment in the Education of your Posterity, yourself having tasted the Fruits of it, and being of a learned Extraction (for we yet have the Writings of the ancient Counts of *Foix*, from whom my Lord your Husband, and yourself are both of you descended, and *Monsieur de Candale*, your Uncle, does every Day oblige the World with others, which will extend the Knowledge of this Quality in your Family to many succeeding Ages) I will, upon this Occasion, presume to acquaint your Ladyship with one particular Fancy of my own, contrary to the common Method, which likewise is all I am able to contribute to your Service in this Affair. The Charge of the Tutor or Governor you shall provide for your Son, upon the Choice of whom depends the whole Success of his Education, has several other great and considerable Parts and Duties requir'd in so important a Trust, besides that of which I am about to speak, which however I shall not mention, as being unable to add any Thing of Moment to the common Rules, that every one who is qualified for a Governor is perfect in: And also in this, wherein I take upon me to advise, he may follow it so far only as it shall appear rational and conducing to the End, at which he aims and intends.

For a Boy of Quality then, who pretends to Letters not upon the Account of Profit, (for so mean an Object as that is unworthy of the Grace and Favour of the Muses; and moreover, in that a Man directs his Service to, and professes to depend upon others) nor so much for outward Ornament, as for his own proper and peculiar Use, and to furnish and enrich himself within, having rather a Desire to go out an accomplished Cavalier, and a fine Gentleman, than a mere Scholar and a learned Man; for such a one, I say, I would also have his Friends solicitous to find him out a Tutor, who has rather an elegant than a learned Head, and both, if such a Person can be found; but however, to prefer his Manners and his Judgment before his Reading, and that this Man should pursue the Exercise of his Charge after a new Method. 'Tis the Custom of School-Masters, to be eternally thundring in their Pupils Ears, as they were pouring into a Funnel, whilst their Business is only to repeat what the other have said before: Now, I would have a Tutor to correct this Error, and that at the very first;



first, he should according to the Capacity he has to deal with, put it to the Test, permitting his Pupil himself to taste and relish Things, and of himself to choose and discern them, sometimes opening the Way to him, and sometimes making him to break the Ice himself; that is, I would not have him alone to invent and speak, but that he should also hear his Pupil speak in Turn. *Socrates*, and since him *Arcefilaus*, made first their Scholars speak, and then spoke to them. *Obest plerumque iis qui discere volunt, auctoritas eorum qui docent*\*; *The Authority of those who teach, is very oft an Impediment to those who desire to learn.* It is good to make him like a young Horse trot before him, that he may judge of his going, and how much he is to abate of his own Speed, to accommodate himself to the Vigour and Capacity of the other. For Want of which due Proportion, we spoil all; which also to know how to adjust, and to keep within an exact and due Measure, is one of the hardest Things I know in the educating Youth, and an Effect of a judicious and well tempered Soul, to know how to condescend to his Puerile Motions, and to govern and direct them. I walk firmer and more secure up Hill than down, and such as according to our common Way of Teaching undertake, with one and the same Lesson, and the same Measure of Direction, to instruct several Boys of so differing and unequal Capacities, are infinitely mistaken in their Method; and at this Rate, 'tis no Wonder, if in a Multitude of Scholars, there are not found above two or three who bring away any good Account of their Time and Discipline. Let the Master not only examine him about the grammatical Construction of the bare Words of his Lesson, but of the Sense and Meaning of them, and let him judge of the Profit he has made, not by the Testimony of his Memory, but by that of his Understanding. Let him make him put what he hath learned into an hundred several Forms, and accommodate it to so many several Subjects, to see if he yet rightly comprehend it, and had made it his own; taking Instruction by his Progress from the Institutions of *Plato*. 'Tis a Sign of Crudity and Indigestion to vomit up what we eat in the

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\* *Cic. de Nat. Deor. l. 1.*



same Condition it was swallowed down, and the Stomach has not performed it's Office, unless it hath altered the Form and Condition of what was committed to it to concoct: So our Minds work only upon Trust, being bound and compelled to follow the Appetite of another's Fancy, enflav'd and captivated under the Authority of another's Instruction we have been so subjected to the Trammel, that we have no free nor natural Pace of our own, our own Vigour and Liberty is extinct and gone. *Nunquam tutelæ suæ sumus*\*, *They are never in Wardship, and never left to their own Tuition.* I was privately at *Pisa* carried to see a very honest Man, but so great an *Aristotelian*, that his most usual Thesis was, *That the Touch-stone and Square of all solid Imagination, and of the Truth, was an absolute Conformity to Aristotle's Doctrine; and that all besides was nothing but Inanity and Chimæra; for that he had seen all, and said all.* A Position, that for having been a little too injuriously and maliciously interpreted, brought him first into, and afterwards long kept him in great Trouble in the Inquisition at *Rome*. Let him, make him examine, and thoroughly fit every thing reads, and lodge nothing in his Fancy upon simple Authority, and upon Trust. *Aristotle's Principles* will then be no more Principles to him, than those of *Epicurus* and the *Stoicks*: Only let this Diversity of Opinions be propounded to, and laid before him, he will himself choose, if he be able; if not, he will remain in doubt.

*Che non menche saper dubiar m' aggrada†.*

I love sometimes to doubt, as well as know.

For if he embrace the Opinions of *Xenophon* and *Plato*, by maintaining them, they will no more be theirs, but become his own. Who follows another, follows nothing, finds nothing, nay is inquisitive after nothing. *Non sumus sub Rege, sibi quisque se vindicet*; Let him at least know, that he knows. It will be necessary that he imbibe their Knowledge, not that he be corrupted with their Precepts; and no matter if he forgets where he had his Learning provided he knows how to apply it to his own Use; Truth and Reason are common to every one, and are no

\* *Sen. Ep. 33.*

† *Dante inferno, Canto 12.*  
more



more his who spoke them first, than his who spake them after. 'Tis no more according to *Plato*, than according to me, since both he and I equally see and understand them. Bees cull their several Sweets from this Flower, and that Blossom, here and there where they find them, but themselves after make the Honey, which is all, and purely their own, and no more Thyme and Marjoram: So the several Fragments he borrows from others, he will transform and shuffle together to compile a Work that shall be absolutely his own; that is to say, his Judgment, his Instruction, Labour, and Study, tend to nothing else but to incline, and make him capable so to do. He is not obliged to discover whence he had his Ammunition, but only to produce what he has himself composed. Men that live upon Rapine, and borrowing, expose their Purchases and Buildings to every one's Knowledge and View; but do not proclaim how they came by the Money. We do not see the Fees and Perquisites belonging to the Function and Offices of a Gentleman of the long Robe; but we see the noble Alliances wherewith he fortifies himself and his Family, and the Titles and Honours he has obtained for him and his. No Man divulges his Revenue; or at least which Way it comes in; but every one publishes his Purchases, and is content the World should know his good Condition. The Advantages of our Study are to become better and wiser. 'Tis (says *Epicharmus*) the Understanding that sees and hears, 'tis the Understanding that improves every thing, that orders every thing, and that acts, rules, and reins: All other Faculties are blind and deaf, and without Soul; and certainly, we render it timorous and servile, in not allowing it the Liberty and Privilege to do any thing of itself. Who ever asked his Pupil what he thought of Grammar and Rhetorick, or of such and such a Sentence of *Cicero*? Our Masters dart and stick them full feathered in our Memories, and there establish them like Oracles, of which the very Letters and Syllables are of the Substance of the Thing. To know by rote, is no Knowledge, and signifies no more but only to retain what one has intrusted to his Memory. That which a Man rightly knows and understands, he is the free Disposer of at his own full Liberty, without any Regard to the Author from whence he had it, or fumbling over the Leaves of his Book.

A mere



A mere bookish Learning is both troublesom and ungrateful; and though it may serve for some Kind of Ornament, there is yet no Foundation for any Superstructure to be built upon it, according to the Opinion of *Plato*, who says, that *Contitancy*, Faith, and Sincerity, are the true Philosophy, and the other Sciences, that are directed to other Ends, to be adulterate and false. I could wish, that *Paluel* or *Pompey*, the two famous Dancing-Masters of my Time, could have taught us to cut Capers, by only seeing them do it, without stirring from our Places, as these Men pretend to inform the Understandings, without ever setting them to work; or that we could learn to ride, handle a Pike, touch a Lute, or sing, without the Trouble of Practice, as these attempt to make us judge, and speak well, without exercising us in Judging and Speaking. Now in this Initiation of our Studies, and in the Progress of them, whatsoever presents itself before us, is Book sufficient: An arch or waggish Trick of a Page, a sottish Mistake of a Servant, or a Jest at the Table, are so many new Subjects. And for this very Reason, Conversation with Men is of very great Use, and Travel into foreign Countries of singular Advantage; not to bring back (as most of our young Monfieurs do) an Account only of how many Paces *Santa Rotonda* is in Circuit; or of the Richness of *Signora Livia's* Attire; or, as some others, how much *Nero's* Face, in a Statue in such an old Ruin, is longer and broader than that made for him at such another Place: But to be able chiefly to give an Account of the Humours, Manners, Customs and Laws of those Nations where he has been. And, that we may whet and sharpen our Wits, by rubbing them upon those of others, I would that a Boy should be sent abroad very young (and principally to kill two Birds with one Stone) into those neighbouring Nations whose Language is most differing from our own, and to which, if it be not formed betimes, the Tongue will be grown too stiff to bend. And also 'tis the general Opinion of all, that a Child should not be brought up in his Mother's Lap. Mothers are too tender, and their natural Affection is apt to make the most discreet of them all so over-fond, that they can neither find in their Hearts to give them due Correction for the Faults they commit, nor suffer them to be brought up



up in those Hardships and Hazards they ought to be. They would not endure to see them return all Dust and Sweat from their Exercise, to drink cold Drink when they are hot, nor see them mount an unruly Horse, nor take a File in Hand against a rude Fencer, or so much as to discharge a Carbine: And yet there is no Remedy; whoever will breed a Boy to be good for any Thing when he comes to be a Man, must by no Means spare him, even when so young, and must very often transgress the Rules of Physick:

*Fondness of Mothers pernicious to Education.*

*Vitamque sub dio, & trepides agat  
In rebus\*.*

He must sharp Cold and scorching Heat despise,  
And most tempt Danger, where most Danger lyes.

It is not enough to fortify his Soul, you are also to make his Sinews strong; for the Soul will be oppress'd, if not assist'd by the Members, and would have too hard a Task to discharge two Offices alone. I know very well, to my Cost, how much mine groans under the Burthen, for being accommodated with a Body so tender and indispos'd, as eternally leans and presses upon her; and often in my Reading perceive, that our Masters, in their Writings, make Examples pass for Magnanimity and Fortitude of Mind, which really is rather Toughness of Skin and Hardness of Bones; for I have seen Men, Women, and Children, naturally born of so hard and insensible a Constitution of Body, that a sound Cudgelling has been less to them, than a Flirt with a Finger would have been to me, and that would neither cry out, wince, nor quitch for a good swinging Beating; and when Wrestlers counterfeit the Philosophers in Patience, 'tis rather Strength of Nerves than Stoutness of Heart. Now to be inured to undergo Labour, is to be accustomed to endure Grief. *Labor callum obducit dolori* †: *Labour supplies Grief with a certain Callus, that defends it from the Blow.* A Boy is to be inured to the Toil and Vehemency of Exercise, to train him up to the Pain and Suffering of Dislocations, Colicks, Cauteries, and even Imprisonment, and the Rack

\* Horat. l. 1. Ode 2.

† Cicero Insc. l. 2.

itself,



itself, for he may come, by Misfortune, to be reduced to the worst of these, which (as this World goes) is sometimes inflicted on the Good, as well as the Bad. As for Proof, in our present Civil War, whoever draws his Sword against the Laws, threatens all honest Men with the Whip and the Halter. And moreover, by living at home, the Authority of this Governor, which ought to be sovereign over the Boy he has received into his Charge, is often check'd, interrupted, and hindred by the Presence of Parents; to which may also be added, that the Respect the whole Family pay him, as their Master's Son, and the Knowledge he has of the Estate and Greatness he is heir to, are, in my Opinion, no small Inconveniencies in these tender Years. And yet even in this conversing with Men I spoke of but now, I have observed this Vice, That instead of gathering Observations from others, we make it our whole Business to lay ourselves open to them, and are more concerned how to expose and set out our own Commodities, than how to encrease our Stock by acquiring new. Silence therefore and Modesty are very advantageous Qualities in Conversation: And one should therefore train up this Boy to be sparing, and a good Husband of his Talent of Understanding, when once acquired; and to forbear taking Exceptions at, or reproving every idle Saying, or ridiculous Story, spoke or told in his Presence; for it is a Rudeness to controvert every Thing that is not agreeable to our own Palate. Let him be satisfied with correcting himself, and not seem to condemn every Thing in another he would not do himself, nor dispute against common Customs. Let him be wise without Arrogancy, without Envy. Let him avoid these vain and uncivil Images of Authority, this childish Ambition of Coveting to appear better bred and more accomplished than he really will by such Carriage discover himself to be, and as if Opportunities of interrupting and reprehending were not to be omitted, to desire from thence to derive the Reputation of something more than ordinary; for, as it becomes none but great Poets to make Use of the poetical Licence, allowed only to those of celebrated Art; it is also intolerable, that any but Men of great and illustrious Souls should be privileged above the Authority of Custom; *Siquid Socrates, & Aristippus contra morem, & consuetudinem fecerunt, idem sibi ne arbitratur licere; magis enim illi, & divinit*



*divinis bonis hanc licentiam assequebantur* \*, If Socrates and Aristippus have transgressed the Rules of Custom, let him not imagine that he is licensed to do the same; for it was by great and sovereign Virtues that they obtained this Privilege. Let him be instructed not to engage in Discourse, or dispute but with a Champion worthy of him, and even there, not to make Use of all the little Fallacies and Subtleties that are pat for his Purpose; but only such as may best serve him upon that Occasion. Let him be taught to be curious in the Election and Choice of his Reasons, to abominate Impertinence, and consequently, to affect Brevity; but above all, let him be lessoned to acquiesce and submit to Truth as soon as ever he shall discover it, whether in his Opponent's Argument, or upon better Consideration of his own; for he shall never be preferred to the Chair for a mere Clatter of Words and Syllogisms, and is no farther engaged to any Argument whatever, than as he shall in his own Judgment approve it: Nor yet is Arguing a Trade, where the Liberty of Recantation, and getting off upon better Thoughts are to be sold for ready Money. *Neque ut omnia, quæ præscripta & imperata sint, defendat, necessitate ulla cogitur* †: Neither is there any Necessity or Obligation upon him at all, that he should defend all Things that are recommended to and enjoined him. If his Governor be of my Humour, he will form his Will to be a very good and loyal Subject to his Prince, very affectionate to his Person, and very stout in his Quarrel; but withal, he will cool in him the Desire of having any other Tie to his Service, than merely a publick Duty; because, besides several other Inconveniencies, that are very inconsistent with the honest Liberty every honest Man ought to have, a Man's Judgment being bribed and pre-possessed by these particular Obligations and Favours, is either blinded and less free to exercise it's Function, or shall be blemished either with Ingratitude or Indiscretion. A Man that is purely a

*Dependance upon Princes.*

Courtier, can neither have Power nor Wit to speak or think otherwise than favourably and well of a Master, who, amongst so many Millions of other Subjects has pick'd out him with his own Hand to

\* *Cic. de Offic. l. 1.*

† *Cic. Acad. l. 4.*

nourish



nourish and advance him. This Favour, and the Profit flowing from it, must needs, and not without some Shew of Reason, corrupt his Understanding, and deprive him of the Freedom of Speaking: And also we commonly see that People speak in another Kind of Phrase than is ordinarily spoken by others of the same Nation, though what they say in that courtly Language, is not much to be believed in such Cases. Let his Conscience and Virtue be eminently manifest in his Speaking, and have only Reason for their Guide. Make him understand, that to acknowledge the Error he should discover in his own Argument, though only found out by himself, is an Effect of Judgment and Sincerity, which are the principal Things he is to seek after. That Obstinacy and Contention are common Qualities, more appearing in and best becoming a mean and illiterate Soul. That to recollect, and to correct himself, and to forsake an unjust Argument in the Height and Heat of Dispute, are great and philosophical Qualities. Let him be advised, being in Company, to have his Eye and Ear in every Corner of the Room; for I find that the Places of greatest Honour are commonly possess'd by Men that have look'd in them, and that the greatest Fortunes are not always accompanied with the ablest Parts. I have been present when, whilst they at the upper End of the Chamber have been only commending the Beauty of the *Arras*, or the Flavour of the Wine, many Things that have been very finely said, have been lost and thrown away at the lower End of the Table. Let him examine every Man's Talent, a Peasant, a Bricklayer, or a Passenger; a Man may learn something from every one of these in their several Capacities, and something will be picked out of their Discourses, whereof some Use may be made at one time or another; nay, even the Folly and Impertinence of others will contribute to his Instruction. By observing the Graces and Fashions of all he sees, he will create to himself an Emulation of the Good, and a Contempt of the Bad. Let an honest Curiosity be suggested to his Fancy of being inquisitive after every thing, and whatever there is of singular and rare near the Place where he shall reside, let him go and see it; a fine House, a delicate Fountain, an eminent Man, the Place where a Battle has been anciently fought, and the Passages of *Cæsar* and *Charlemain*.



*Quæ Tellus sit lenta gelu, quæ putris ab æstu,  
Ventus in Italiam quis bene vela ferat* \*.

What Countries to the Bear objected lye,  
What with the Dog-star Heats are parch'd and dry,  
And what Wind fairest serves for *Italy*.

Let him enquire into the Manners, Revenues, and Alliances of Princes, Things in themselves very pleasant to learn, and very useful to know. In thus conversing with Men, I mean, and principally, those who only live in the Records of History; he shall, by Reading those Books, converse with those great and heroick Souls of former and better Ages. 'Tis an idle and vain Study, I confess, to those who make it so, by doing it after a negligent Manner, but to those who do it with Care and Observation, 'tis a Study of inestimable Fruit and Value; and the only one, as *Plato* reports, the *Lacedæmonians* reserved to themselves. What Profit shall he not reap as to the Business of Men, by Reading the Lives of *Plutarch*? But withal, let my Governor remember to what End his Instructions are principally directed, and that he do not so much imprint in his Pupil's Memory the Date of the Ruin of *Carthage*, as the Manners of *Hannibal* and *Scipio*; nor so much where *Marcellus* died, as why it was unworthy of his Duty that he died there. That he do not teach him so much the narrative Part, as the Business of History. The Reading of which, in my Opinion, is a Thing which of all others we apply ourselves unto with the most differing and uncertain Measures. I have read an hundred Things in *Livy*, that another has not, or not taken Notice of at least; and *Plutarch* has read an hundred more than ever I could find, or than peradventure that Author ever writ. To some it is merely a Grammar-Study; to others, the very Anatomy of Philosophy; by which the most secret and abstruse Parts of our human Nature are penetrated into. There are in *Plutarch* many long Discourses † very worthy to be carefully read and observed, for he is, in my Opinion, of all other, the greatest Master in that Kind of Writing; but withal, there are a thousand others which he has only

\* *Propert. l. 4. Eleg. 39.*  
VOL. I.

† *Elegy of Plutarch.*  
touched



touched and glanced upon, where he only points with his Finger to direct us which Way we may go if we will, and contents himself sometimes with only giving one brisk Hit in the nicest Article of the Question, from whence we are to grope out the rest; as for Example, where he says, *That the Inhabitants of Asia came to be Vassals to one only, for not having been able to pronounce one Syllable, which is No.* Which Saying of his gave perhaps Matter and Occasion to *Boëtius* to write his *Voluntary Servitude*. Even this, but to see him pick out a light Action in a Man's Life, or a Word, that does not seem to be of any such Importance, is itself a whole Discourse. 'Tis to our Prejudice that Men of Understanding should so immoderately affect Brevity; no Doubt but their Reputation is the better by it: But in the mean Time we are the worse. *Plutarch* had rather we should applaud his Judgment, than commend his Knowledge, and had rather leave us with an Appetite to read more, than glutted with that we have already read. He knew very well, that a Man may say too much even upon the best Subjects, and that *Alexandrides* did justly reproach him who made very elegant; but too long Speeches to the *Ephori*, when he said, *O Stranger! thou speakest the Things thou oughtest to speak, but not after the Manner thou shouldest speak them.* Such as have lean and spare Bodies, stuff themselves out with Clothes; so they who are defective in Matter, endeavour to make amends with Words. Human Understanding is marvellously enlightened by daily Conversation with Men, for we are otherwise of ourselves so stupid as to have our Sight limited to the Length of our own Noses. One asking *Socrates* of what Country he was, he did not make Answer, *Of Athens*, but, *Of the World*; thus he whose Imagination was better levelled could carry farther; he embraced the whole World for his Country, and extended his Society and Friendship to all Mankind; not as we do, who look no farther than our Feet. When the Vines of our Village are nipped with the Frost, the Parish-Priest presently concludes, that the Indignation of God is gone out against all the human Race, and that the *Cannibals* have already got the Pip. Who is it, that seeing the bloody Havock of these Civil Wars of ours, does not cry out, That the Machine of the World is near Dissolution, and that the Day of Judgment



Judgment is at Hand; without considering, that many worse Revolutions have been seen, and that, in the mean Time, People are very merry in a thousand other Parts of the Earth for all this? For my Part, considering the License and Impunity that always attend such Commotions, I admire they are so moderate, and that there is no more Mischief done. To him that feels the Hail-stones patter about his Ears, the whose Hemisphere appears to be in Storm and Tempest; like the ridiculous *Savoyard*, who said very gravely, That if that simple King of *France* could have managed his Fortune as he should have done, he might in Time have come to have been Steward of the Household to the Duke his Master. The Fellow could not, in his shallow Imagination, conceive that there could be any Thing greater than a Duke of *Savoy*. And, in Truth, we are all of us insensibly in this Error, an Error of a very great Train and very pernicious Consequence. But whoever shall represent to his Fancy, as in a Picture, that great Image of our Mother Nature, portrayed in her full Majesty and Lustre, whoever in her Face shall read so general and so constraint a Variety, whoever shall observe himself in that Figure, and not himself but a whole Kingdom, no bigger than the least Touch or Prick of a Pencil, in Comparison of the Whole, that Man alone is able to value Things according to their true Estimate and Grandeur. This great World, which some do yet multiply as several *Species* under one *Genus*, is the Mirror wherein we are to behold ourselves, to be able to know ourselves as we ought to do. In short, I would have this to be the Book my young Gentleman should study with the most Attention; for so many Humours, so many Sects, so many Judgments, Opinions, Laws, and Customs, teach us to judge aright of our own, and inform our Understandings to discover their Imperfection and natural Infirmity, which is no trivial Speculation. So many Mutations of States and Kingdoms, and so many Turns and Revolutions of publick Fortune, will make us wise enough to make no great Wonder of our own. So many great Names, so many famous Victories and Conquests drowned and swallowed in Oblivion, render our Hopes ridiculous, of eternizing our Names by the taking of half a Score light Horse, or a poultry Turret, which only derives it's Memory from it's Ruin. The Pride and



Arrogancy of so many foreign Poms and Ceremonies, the tumorous Majesty of so many Courts and Grandeurs, accustom and fortify our Sight without Astonishment, to behold and endure the Lustre of our own. So many Millions of Men buried before us encourage us not to fear to go seek so good Company in the other World, and so of all the rest. *Pythagoras* was wont to say, That our Life retires to the great and populous Assembly of the *Olympic Games*, wherein some exercise the Body, that they may carry away the Glory of the Prize in those Contentions, and others carry Merchandise to sell for Profit. There are also some (and those none of the worst Sort) who pursue no other Advantage than only to look on, and consider how, and why every Thing is done, and to be unactive Spectators of the Lives of other Men, thereby the better to judge of, and regulate their own; and indeed, from Examples, all the Instruction couched in philosophical Discourses, may naturally flow, to which all human Actions, as to their best Rule, ought to be especially directed: Where a Man shall be taught to know,

— *Quid fas optare, quid asper  
Utile nummus habet, patriæ charisque propinquis  
Quantum elargiri deceat, quem te Deus esse  
Fussit, & humana qua parte locatus es in re,  
Quid sumus, aut quidnam victuri gignimur* \*.

What he may wish, what's Money's natural Use,  
What to be liberal is, and what profuse,  
What God commands, an honest Man should be,  
And here on Earth, to know in what Degree  
That God has plac'd thee, what we are, and why,  
He gave us Being and Humanity.

what it is to know, and what to be ignorant, what ought to be the End and Design of Study, what Valour, Temperance, and Justice are, the Difference betwixt Ambition and Avarice, Servitude and Subjection, License and Liberty, by what Token a Man may know the true and solid Contentation, how far Death, Affliction, and Disgrace are to be apprehended.

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\* *Persius, Sat. 3.*



*Et quo quemque modo fugiatque feratque laborem* \*.

And what Way every one may know  
Labour t'avoid or undergo.

By what secret Springs we move, and the Reason of our various Agitations and Irresolutions: For, methinks, the first Doctrine with which one should season his Understanding, ought to be that which regulates his Manners and his Sense; that teaches him to know himself, and how both well to die, and well to live. Amongst the liberal Sciences, let us begin with that which makes us free; not that they do not all serve in some Measure to the Instruction and Use of Life, as all other Things in some sort also do; but let us make Choice of that which directly and professedly serves to that End. If we are once able to restrain the Offices of human Life within their just and natural Limits, we shall find that most of the Sciences in Use are of no great Use to us, and even in those that are, that there are many very unnecessary Cavities and Dilatations which we had better let alone, and following *Socrates's* Direction, limit the Course of our Studies to those Things only where a true and real Utility and Advantage are to be expected and found.

— *Sapere aude.*

*Incipe vivendi, qui recte prorogat horam,  
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis, at ille  
Labitur, & labetur in omne volubilis ævum* †.

Dare to be wise; begin, who to their wrong,  
The Hour of living well defer too long,  
Like rustick Fools, sit with a patient Eye  
Expecting when the murm'ring Brook runs dry,  
Whose Springs can never fail, 'till the last Fire  
Lick up the Ocean, and the World expire,

'Tis a great Foolery to teach our Children

*Quid moveant Pisces, animosaque signa Leonis,  
Lotus, & Hesperia quid Capricornus aqua* ‡.

\* *Virg. Æn. l. 6.*  
*pert. l. 4. Eleg. 1.*

† *Horat. Epist. 2.*

‡ *Pro-*



What Influence *Pisces* have, o'er what the Ray  
Of angry *Leo* bears the greatest Sway,  
Or *Capricornus* Province, who still laves  
His threat'ning Forehead in the *Hesperian* Waves.

The Knowledge of the Stars, and the Motion of the eighth  
Sphere, before their own.

Τί πλεῖα δέσσιμα μοί  
Τί δ' ἀστράσι βωότew\*.

How swift the seven Sisters Motions are,  
Or the dull Churls how slow, what need I care.

*Anaximenes* writing to *Pythagoras*, *To what Purpose, said he, should I trouble myself in searching out the Secrets of the Stars, having Death or Slavery continually before my Eyes?* For the Kings of *Persia* were at that Time preparing to invade his Country. Every one ought to say the same, Being assaulted, as I am, by *Ambition, Avarice, Temerity, and Superstition, and having within so many other Enemies of Life, shall I go cudgel my Brains about the World's Revolutions?* After having taught him what will make him more wise and good, you may then entertain him with the Elements of *Logick, Physick, Geometry, and Rhetorick*, and the Science which he shall then himself most incline to, his Judgment being beforehand formed and fit to chuse, he will quickly make his own. The Way of instructing him ought to be sometimes by Discourse, and sometimes by Reading, sometimes his Governor shall put the Author himself, which he shall think most proper for him, into his Hands, and sometimes only the Marrow and Substance of it; and if the Governor himself be not conversant enough in Books, to turn to all the fine Discourses the Book contains, there may some Men of Learning be joined to him, that upon every Occasion shall supply him with what he desires, and stand in Need of, to recommend to his Pupil. And who can doubt, but that this Way of Teaching is much more easy and natural than that of *Gaza*? In which the Precepts are so intricate, and so harsh, and the Words so vain, lean, and insignificant, that there is no Hold to be taken of

\* *Anacreon, Ode 17.*



them; nothing that quickens and elevates the Wit and Fancy; whereas, here the Mind has what to feed upon, and to digest: This Fruit therefore is not without Comparison, much more fair and beautiful; but will also be much more early and ripe. 'Tis a thousand Pities that Matters should be at such a Pass in this Age of ours, that Philosophy, even with Men of Understanding, should be looked upon as a vain and fantastick Name, a Thing of no Use, no Value, either in Opinion or Effect, of which I think those lousy Ergotisms, and little Sophistry, by prepossessing the Avenues unto it, are the Cause. And People are much to blame to represent it to Children for a Thing of so difficult Access, and with such a frowning, grim, and formidable Aspect: Who has disguised it thus with this false, pale, and ghostly Countenance? There is nothing more airy, more gay, more frolick, and I had like to have said, more wanton. She preaches nothing but Feasting and Jollity; a melancholick thoughtful Look shews that she does not inhabit there. *Demetrius*, the Grammarian, finding in the Temple of *Delphos* a Knot of Philosophers set chattering together, said to them, *Either I am much deceived, or by your chearful and pleasant Countenance, you are engaged in no very deep Discourse.* To which one of them, *Heracleon*, the Magician, replied, 'Tis for such as are puzzled about enquiring whether the future Tense of the Verb *βάλλω*, be spelt with a double *λ*, or that hunt after the Derivation of the Comparatives *χεέριον*, *βέλιον*, and the Superlatives *χεέριστον*, *βέλισσιον*, to knit their Brows whilst discoursing of their Science; but as to philosophical Discourses, they always divert and cheer up those they entertain, and never deject them, or make them sad.

*Deprendas animi tormenta latentis in ægro*

*Corpore, deprendas, & gaudia, sumit utrumque*

*Inde habitum facies\*.*

Th' internal Anguish of a sick Man's Mind

Your Eye may soon discern, and also find

The Joys of those in better Health that are,

For still the Face does the Mind's Livery wear.

\* *Juven. Sat. 9.*

N 4

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The Soul that entertains Philosophy ought to be of such a Constitution of Health, as to render the Body in like Manner healthful too; she ought to make her Tranquillity and Satisfaction shine, so as to appear without, and her Contentment ought to fashion the outward Behaviour to her own Mould, and consequently to fortify it with a graceful Confidence, active Carriage, and with a serene and contented Countenance. The most manifest Sign of Wisdom is a continual Chearfulness; her Estate is like that of Things in the Regions above the Moon, always clear and serene. 'Tis *Baraco* and *Barabiston* that render their Disciples so dirty and ill-favoured, and not she; they do not so much as know her, but by Hear-say. 'Tis she that calms and appeases the Storms and Tempests of the Soul, and who teaches Famine and Fevers to laugh and sign; and that, not by certain imaginary Epicycles, but by natural and manifest Reasons. She has Virtue for her End; which is not, as the School-men say, situate upon the Summit of a perpendicular Rock, and an inaccessible Precipice. Such as have approached her, find it quite contrary, to be seated in a fair, fruitful, and flourishing Plain, from whence she easily discovers all Things subjected to her; to which Place any one may however arrive, if he know but the easiest and the nearest Way, through shady, green, and sweetly flourishing Walks and Avenues, by a pleasant, easy, and smooth Descent, like that of the celestial Arches. 'Tis for not having frequented this supreme, this beautiful, triumphant, and amiable, this equally delicious and courageous Virtue, this so professed and implacable Enemy to Anxiety, Sorrow, Fear, and Constraint, who, having Nature for her Guide, has Fortune and Pleasure for her Companions, that they have gone according to their own weak Imagination, and created this ridiculous, this sorrowful, querulous, spiteful, threatening, terrible Image of it to themselves and others, and placed it upon a solitary Rock amongst Thorns and Brambles, and made of it a Hobgoblin to fright People from daring to approach it. But the Governor that I would have, that is, such a one as knows it to be his Duty to possess his Pupil with as much or more Affection than Reverence to Virtue, will be able to inform him, that the Poets have evermore accommodated themselves to the publick Humour, and



and make him sensible, that the Gods have planted more Toil and Sweat in the Avenues of the Cabinets of *Venus*, than those of *Minerwa*, which, when he shall once find him begin to apprehend, and shall represent to him a *Bradamanta*, or an *Angelica* for a Mistress, a natural, active, generous manly Beauty, in Comparison of a soft, delicate, artificial, simpering, and affected Form; the one disguis'd in the Habit of an heroick Youth, with her beautiful Face set out in a glittering Helmet, the other trick'd up in Curls and Ribbons like a wanton Minx; he will then look upon his own Affection as brave and masculine, when he shall chuse quite contrary to that effeminate Shepherd of *Phrygia*. Such a Tutor will make a Pupil to digest this new Doctrine, that the Height and Value of true Virtue consists in the Facility, Utility, and Pleasure of it's Exercise; so from Difficulty, that Boys, as well as Men, and the Innocent, as well as the Subtile, may make it their own; and it is by Order and good Conduct, and not by Force, that it is to be acquir'd. *Socrates*, her first Minion, is so averse to all Manner of Violence, as totally to throw it aside, to slip into the more natural Facility of her own Progress: 'Tis the Nursing-Mother of all human Pleasures, who, in rendring them just, renders them also pure and permanent; in moderating them, keeps them in Breath and Appetite; in interdicting those which she herself refuses, whets our Desire to those which she allows; and, like a kind and liberal Mother, abundantly allows all that Nature requires, even to Satiety, if not to Lassitude; unless we will declaim, That the Regimen of Health that stops the Toper's Hand before he has drank himself drunk, the Glutton's before he hath eaten to a Surfeit, and the Whoremaster's Career before he hath got the Pox, is an Enemy to Pleasure. If the ordinary Fortune fail, and that she meets with an indocile Disposition, she passes that Disciple by, and takes another, not so fickle and unsteady, whom she forms wholly her own. She can be rich, potent and wise, and knows how to lye upon soft Down, and perfum'd Quilts too: She loves Life, Beauty, Glory, and Health; but her proper and peculiar Office is to know regularly how to make use of all these good Things, and how to part with them without Concern; an Office much more noble than troublesome, and without which the whole Course of Life is unnatural,



unnatural, turbulent and deform'd; and there it is indeed, that Men may justly represent those Monsters upon Rocks and Precipices. If this Pupil shall happen to be of so cross and contrary a Disposition, that he had rather hear a Tale of a Tub, than the true Narrative of some noble Expedition, or some wise and learned Discourse; who at the Beat of a Drum, that excites the youthful Ardour of his Companions, leaves that to follow another that calls to a Morrice, or the Bears, and who would not wish, and find it more delightful, and more pleasing, to return all Dust and Sweat victorious from a Battle, than from Tennis, or from a Ball, with the Prize of those Exercises; I see no other Remedy, but that he be bound Apprentice in some good Town to learn to make Minc'd-Pies, though he were the Son of a Duke, according to *Plato's* Precept, That Children are to be plac'd out, and dispos'd of, not according to the Wealth, Qualities, or Condition of the Father, but according to the Faculties and the Capacities of their own Soul. But since Philosophy is that which instructs us to live, and that Infancy has there it's Lessons as well as other Ages, why is it not communicated to Children betimes? And why are they not more early initiated in it?

*Udum, & molle lutum est, nunc, nunc properandus, & arri  
Fingendus sine fine rota\*.*

The Clay is moist and soft, now, now make Haste,  
And form the Pitcher, for the Wheel turns fast.

They begin to teach us to live when we have almost done living. A hundred Students have got the Pox before they have come to read *Aristotle's* Lecture of Temperance. *Cicero* said, that though he should live two Men's Ages, he should never find Leisure to study the *Lyrick* Poets; and I find these Sophisters yet more deplorably unprofitable. The Boy we would breed, has a great deal less Time to spare; he owes but the first fifteen or sixteen Years of his Life to Discipline, the Remainder is due to Action: Therefore let us employ that short Time in necessary Instruction. Away with the Logical Subtilties, they are Abuses, Things by which our Lives can never be amended: Take me the

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*Perf. Stat. 3.*

plain



plain Philosophical Discourses, learn first how rightly to choose, and then rightly to apply them, they are more easy to be understood than one of *Boccace's* Novels; a Child from Nurse is much more capable of them, than of learning to read or to write. Philosophy has Discourses equally proper for Childhood, as for the decrepid Age of Men; and I am of *Plutarch's* Mind, that *Aristotle* did not so much trouble his great Disciple with the Knack of forming Syllogisms, or with the Elements of Geometry, as with infusing into him good Precepts concerning Valour, Prowess, Magnanimity, Temperance, and the Contempt of Fear; and with this Ammunition sent him whilst yet a Boy, with no more than 30000 Foot, 4000 Horse, and but 42000 Crowns to subjugate the Empire of the whole Earth. For the other Arts and Sciences, *Alexander* says, he highly indeed commended their Excellency and Quaintness, and had them in very great Honour and Esteem, but not ravish'd with them to that Degree, as to be tempted to affect the Practice of them in his own Person.

*Aristotle's Method of Instructing Alexander the Great.*

— *Petite hanc juvenesque, senesque  
Finem animo certum, miserique viatica canis* \*.

Young Men and old, from hence yourselves befriend,  
Form both your Minds, with some sure Aim and End;  
And both therein against the Time to come  
Wretched old Age, get a *Viaticum*.

*Epicurus*, in the Beginning of his Letter to *Meniceus*, says, that neither the Youngest should refuse to philosophise, nor the Eldest grow weary of it: And who does otherwise, seems tacitly to imply, that either the Time of living happily is not yet come, or that it is already past: And yet for all that, I would not have this Pupil of ours imprison'd, and made a Slave to his Book; nor would I have him given up to the Morosity, and melancholick Humour of a sour, Ill-natur'd Pedant. I would not have his Spirit cow'd and subdu'd, by applying him to the Rack, and tormenting him as some do, 14 or 15 Hours a Day, and so make a Pack-Horse of him. Neither should I think it good,

\* *Perf. Stat. 5.*

when



when by reason of a solitary and melancholic Complexion, he is discover'd to be much addicted to his Book, to nourish that Humour in him, for that renders them unfit for civil Conversation, and diverts them from better Employments. And how many have I seen in my Time totally brutified by an immoderate Thirst after Knowledge? *Carneades* was so besotted with it, that he would not find Time so much as to comb his Head, or pare his Nails; neither would I have his generous Manners spoil'd and corrupted by the Incivility and Barbarity of those of another. The *French* Wisdom has anciently been turn'd into Proverb, *Early but of no Continuance*; and in truth we yet see, that nothing can be more ingenious and pretty than the Children of *France*; but they ordinarily deceive the Hope and Expectation hath been conceiv'd of them, and grown up to be Men, have nothing extraordinary, or worth taking Notice of. I have heard Men of good Understanding say, these Colleges of ours to which we send our young People (and of which we have but too many) make them such Animals as they are. But to our little *Monfieur*, a Closet, a Garden, the Table, his Bed, Solitude and Company, Morning and Evening, all Hours shall be the same, and all Places to him a Study; for Philosophy, who, as the Formatrix of Judgment and Manners, shall be his principal Lesson, has that Privilege to have a Hand in every Thing. The Orator *Isocrates*, being at a Feast intreated to speak of his Art, all the Company were satisfied with, and commended his Answer; *It is not now a Time*, said he, *to do what I can do; and that which it is now Time to do, I cannot do.* For to make Orations and rhetorical Disputes in a Company met together to laugh and make good Cheer, had been very unseasonable and improper, and as much might have been said of all the other Sciences: But as to what concerns Philosophy, that Part of it at least that treats of Man, and of his Offices and Duties; it has been the joint Opinion of all wise Men, that, out of Respect to the Sweetness of her Conversation, she is ever to be admitted in all Sports and Entertainments. And *Plato* having invited her to his Feast, we shall see after how gentle and obliging a Manner, accommodated both to Time and Place, she entertain'd the Company, though in a Discourse of the highest and most important Nature.

*Aque*



*Æquè pauperibus prodest, locupletibus æquè,  
Et neglecta æquè pueris, sensibusque nocebit\*.*

It profits Poor and Rich alike, but when  
Neglected, t'Old and Young are hurtful then.

By which Method of Instruction, my young Pupil will be much more, and better employ'd than those of the College are: But as the Steps we take in walking to and fro in a Gallery, though three Times as many, do not tire a Man so much as those we employ in a formal Journey; so our Lesson, as it were accidentally occurring, without any set Obligation of Time or Place, and falling naturally into every Action, will insensibly insinuate itself. By which Means, our very Exercises, and Recreations, Running, Wrestling, Musick, Dancing, Hunting, Riding, and Fencing, will prove to be a good Part of our Study. I would have his outward Behaviour, and Mein, and the Disposition of his Limbs form'd at the same Time with his Mind. 'Tis not a Soul, 'tis not a Body that we are training up, but a Man, and we ought not to divide him: And, as *Plato* says, we are not to fashion one without the other, but make them draw together like two Horses harness'd to a Coach. By which Saying of his, does he not seem to allow more Time for, and to take more Care of Exercises for the Body, and to believe that the Mind in a good Proportion does her Business at the same Time too? As to the rest, this Method of Education ought to be carried on with a severe Sweetness quite contrary to the Practice of our Pedants, who, instead of tempting and alluring Children to Letters by apt and gentle Ways, do in truth present nothing before them but Rods and Ferula's, Horror and Cruelty. Away with this Violence! away with this Compulsion! than which, I certainly believe nothing more dulls and degenerates a well-descended Nature. If you would have him apprehend Shame and Chastisement, do not harden him to them. Inure him to Heat and Cold, to Wind and Sun, and to Dangers that he ought to despise. Wean him from all Effeminacy, and Delicacy in Clothes and Lodging, Eating and Drinking; accustom him to every Thing, that he may

*Severity an  
Enemy to E-  
ducation.*

\* *Horat. l. 1. Epist. 1.*



not be a Sir *Paris*, a Carpet-Knight, but a finewy, hardy, and vigorous young Man. I have ever from a Child, to the Age wherein I now am, been of this Opinion, and am still constant to it. But amongst other Things, the strict Government of most of our Colleges has evermore displeas'd me, and peradventure they might have err'd less perniciously on the indulgent Side. 'Tis the true House of Correction of imprison'd Youth. They are taught to be debauch'd, by being punish'd before they are so. Do but come in when they are about their Lesson, and you shall hear nothing but the Out-cries of Boys under Execution, with the thundring Noise of their *Pedagogues*, drunk with Fury, to make up the Concert. A very pretty Way this! to tempt these tender and timorous Souls to love their Book, with a furious Countenance, and a Rod in Hand! A curfed and pernicious way of Proceeding! Besides what *Quintilian* has very well observed, that this insolent Authority is often attended by very dangerous Consequences, and particularly our Way of chastising. How much more decent would it be to see their Classes strew'd with green Leaves and fine Flowers, than with the bloody Stumps of Birch and Willows? Were it left to my ordering, I should paint the School with the Pictures of Joy and Gladness; *Flora*, and the *Graces*, as the Philosopher *Speusippus* did his; that where their Profit is, they might there have their Pleasure too. Such Viands as are proper and wholesom for Children should be seasoned with Sugar, and such as are dangerous to them, with Gall. A Man should admire to see how solicitous *Plato* is in his Laws concerning the Gaiety and Diversion of the Youth of his City, and how much he enlarges himself upon their Races, Sports, Songs, Leaps and Dances: Of which, he says, that Antiquity has given the ordering and Patronage particularly to *Apollo*, *Minerva*, and the *Muses*. He insists long upon, and is very particular in giving innumerable Precepts for Exercises; but as to the lettered Sciences says very little, and only seems particularly to recommend Poesy upon the Account of Musick. All Singularity in our Manners and Condition is by all Means to be avoided, as inconsistent with civil Society. Who would not be astonish'd at so strange a Constitution as that of *Demophoon*, Steward to *Alexander* the Great, who sweated in the Shade, and shiver'd in the Sun?



Sun? I have seen those who have run from the Smell of a mellow Apple with greater Precipitation, than from a Harquebuse Shot; others run away from a Mouse; others vomit at the Sight of Cream; others ready to swoon at the Sight of a Cat, as *Germanicus*, who could neither endure the Sight nor the Crowing of a Cock. I will not deny, but that there may, peradventure, be some occult Cause and natural Aversion in these Cases; but certainly a Man might conquer it, if he took it in Time. Precept has in this wrought so effectually upon me, though not without some Endeavour on my Part, I confess, that Beer excepted, my Appetite accommodates itself indifferently to all Sorts of Diet. Young Bodies are supple, one should therefore in that Age bend and ply them to all Fashions and Customs: And provided a Man can contain the Appetite and the Will within their due Limits, let a young Man, a God's Name, be render'd fit for all Nations and all Companies, even to Debauchery and Excess, if Occasion be; that is, where he shall do it out of Complacency to the Customs of the Place. Let him be able to do every Thing, but love to do nothing but what is good. The Philosophers themselves do not justify *Calisthenes* for forfeiting the Favour of his Master *Alexander* the Great, by refusing to pledge him a Cup of Wine. Let him laugh, play, and drink with his Prince: Nay, I would have him, even in his Debauches, too hard for the rest of the Company, and to excel his Companions in Ability and Vigour, and that he may not give over doing it, either thorough defect of Power or Knowledge how to do it, but for Want of Will. *Multum interest, utrum peccare quis nolit, aut nesciat*\*; There is a vast Difference betwixt forbearing to sin, and not knowing how to sin. I thought I past a Compliment upon a Lord, as free from those Excesses as any Man whatever in *France*, by asking him before a great deal of good Company, how many Times in his Life he had been drunk in *Germany*, in the Time of his being there about his Majesty's Affairs; which he also took as it was intended, and made Answer, Three Times; and withal, told us the whole Story of his Debauches. I know some, who for Want of this Faculty,

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\* *Seneca, Epist. 60.*

have



have found a great Inconvenience by it in negotiating with that Nation. I have often with great Admiration reflected upon the wonderful Constitution of *Alcibiades*, who so easily could transform himself to so various Fashions without any Prejudice to his Health; one while out-doing the *Persian* Pomp and Luxury, and another, the *Lacedæmonian* Austerity and Frugality, as reform'd in *Sparta*, as voluptuous in *Ionia*.

*Omnis Aristippum decuit color, & status, & res §.*

All Shapes and Colours you can name

*Aristippus* well became.

I would have my Pupil to be such a one,

— *Quem duplici panno patientia velat,*

*Mirabor vitæ via si conversa decebit,*

*Personamque feret non inconcinuus utramque†.*

Whom Patience in patch'd Clothes does meanly shade,

Where a new Fortune a new Suit has made,

I shall admire if gracefully he can

Th' old Beggar hide in the new Gentleman.

These are my Lessons, and he who puts them in Practice shall reap more Advantage, than he who has had them read to him only, and only knows them. If you see him, you hear him; If you hear him, you see him. God forbid, says one in *Plato*, that to philosophize were only to read a great many Books, and to learn the Arts. *Hanc amplissimam omnium artium bene vivendi disciplinam, vita magis quam literis persequuti sunt\**. They have more illustrated and improv'd this Discipline of living well, which of all Arts is the greatest, by their Lives, than by their Reading. *Leo*, Prince of the *Phliasiensians*, asking *Heraclides Ponticus* of what Art or Science he made Profession; I know, said he, neither Art nor Science, but I am a Philosopher. One reproaching *Diogenes*, that being ignorant, he should pretend to Philosophy; I therefore, answer'd he, pretend to it with so much the more Reason. *Hegefius* intreated that he would read a certain Book to him; You are pleasant, said he, who chuse those Figs that are true and natural, and not

§ *Horat. l. 1. Epist. 17.* † *Id. Ibid.* \* *Cic. Tusc. 4.*  
those



those that are painted; why do you not also chuse Exercises which are naturally true, rather than those written and prescrib'd? A Man cannot so soon get his Lesson by Heart, as he may practise it: He will repeat it in his Actions. We shall discover if there be Prudence in his Exercises, if there be Sincerity and Justice in his Departments, if there be Grace and Judgment in his Speaking, if there be Constancy in his Sicknes, if there be Modesty in his Mirth, Temperance in his Pleasures, Order in his Oeconomy, and Indiferency in his Palate, whether what he eats or drinks be Flesh or Fish, Wine or Water. *Qui disciplinam suam non ostentationem scientiæ, sed legem vitæ putet, quique obtemperet ipse sibi, & decretis pareat* \*; Who considers his own Discipline, not as a vain Ostentation of Science, but as a Law and Rule of Life; and who obeys his own Decrees, and observes that Regimen he has prescrib'd to himself. The Conduct of our Lives is the true Mirror of our Doctrine. Zeupidamus, to one who asked him, Why the Lacedæmonians did not commit their Constitutions of Chivalry to Writing, and deliver them to their young Men to read, made Answer, That it was because they would inure them to Action, and not amuse them with Words: With such a one, after fifteen or sixteen Years Study, compare one of our College Latinists, who has thrown away so much Time in nothing but learning to speak. The World is nothing but Babble; and I hardly ever yet saw that Man who did not rather prate too much, than speak too little; and yet half of our Age is embezzled this Way. We are kept four or five Years to learn Words only, and to tack them together into Clauses; as many more to make Exercises; and to divide a continued Discourse into so many Parts; and other five Years at least to learn succinctly to mix and interweave them after a subtle and intricate Manner. Let us leave it to the learned Professors. Going one Day to Orleans, I met in the Plain on this Side Clery, two Pedants travelling towards Bourdeaux, about fifty Paces distant from one another, and a good Way farther behind them, I discover'd a Troop of Horse, with a Gentleman at the Head of them, which was the late Monsieur le Comte de la Rouchefoucaut; one of my



People enquir'd of the foremost of these *Domines*, who that Gentleman was that came after him, who having not seen the Train that follow'd after, and thinking he meant his

*A pleasant Answer of a Pedant.* Companion, pleasantly answer'd, *He is not a Gentleman, Sir, he is a Grammarian, and I am a Logician.* Now we, who quite

contrary, do not here pretend to breed a Grammarian, or a Logician, but a complete Gentleman, let us leave them to throw away their Time at their own Fancy: Our Business lies elsewhere. Let but our Pupils be well furnish'd with Things, Words will follow but too fast; he will pull them after him, if they do not voluntarily follow. I have observ'd some to make Excuses, that they cannot express themselves, and pretend to have their Fancies full of a great many very fine Things, which yet for want of Elocution, they cannot utter; a mere Shift and nothing else. Will you know what I think of it? I think they are nothing but Shadows of some imperfect Images and Conceptions that they know not what to make of within, nor consequently bring them out: They do not yet themselves understand what they would be at, and if you but observe how they haggle and stammer upon the Point of Parturition, you will soon conclude, that their Labour is not to Delivery, but about Conception, and that they are but licking their formless Embryo. For my Part, I hold, and *Socrates* is positive in it, That whoever has in his Mind a sprightly and clear Imagination, he will express it well enough in one Kind or another, and though he were dumb, by Signs.

*Verbaque prævisam rem non invita sequentur*.\*

When once a Thing conceiv'd is in the Wit,  
Words soon present themselves to utter it.

And as another as poetically says in Prose, *cum Res Antimum occupaverit, Verba ambiunt* †. When Things are first form'd in the Fancy, Words offer themselves in Multitude: And this other, *ipsæ res Verba rapiunt* ‖. The Things themselves force Words to express them. He knows no thing of Ablative, Conjunctive, Substantive, or Gram-

\* *Hor. de Arte Poetic.* † *Seneca.* ‖ *Cicero de fin. l. 3.*



mar, no more than his Lacquey, or a Fish-wife of the *Petit-Pont*; and these yet will give you a Belly full of Talk, if you will hear them, and peradventure shall trip as little in their Language, as the best Masters of Art in *France*. He knows no Rhetorick, nor how in a Preface to bribe the Benevolence of the courteous Reader; neither does he care, nor is it very necessary he should know it. Indeed all this Decoration of Painting is easily obscur'd and put down by the Lustre of a simple and blunt Truth; these fine Flourishes serve only to amuse the Vulgar, of themselves incapable of more solid and nutritive Diet, as *Afer* does very evidently demonstrate in *Tacitus*. The Ambassadors of *Samos*, prepar'd with a long elegant Oration, came to *Cleomenes* King of *Sparta*, to incite him to a War against the Tyrant *Polycrates*, who after he had heard their Harangue with great Gravity and Patience, gave them this short Answer; As to the *Exordium*, I remember it not, nor consequently the Middle of your Speech, but for what concerns your Conclusion, I will not do what you desire: A very pretty Answer this, methinks, and a Pack of learned Orators no doubt most sweetly confounded. And what did this other say? The *Athenians* were to chuse one of two Architects for a Surveyor to a very great Building they had design'd, of which, the first, a pert affected Fellow, offer'd his Service in a long premeditated Discourse upon the Subject, and by his Oratory inclin'd the Voices of the People in his Favour; but the other in three Words, Lords of *Athens*, *All that this Man hath said, I will do*. When *Cicero* was in the Height and Heat of his Eloquence, many were struck with Admiration; but *Cato* did only laugh at it, saying, *We have a pleasant Consul*. Let it go before, or come after, a good Sentence, or a Thing well said, is always in Season, if it neither suit well with what went before, nor has any very good Coherence with what follows after, it is however good in itself. I am none of those who think that good Rhyme makes a good Poem. Let him make short long, and long short if it will, 'tis no great Matter; if there be Invention, and that the Wit and Judgment have well perform'd their Offices, I will say here's a good Poet, but an ill Rhymer.

*Emunctæ naris, durus componere versus* \*.

\* *Hor. ser. lib. Stat. 4.*

○ 2

His



His Fancy's rich, his Sense is clear  
In Verse, though he has no good Ear.

Let a Man, says *Horace*, divest his Work of all Ornaments  
and Measure.

*Tempora certa, modosque, Et quod prius ordine verbum est,  
Posterius faciat, præponens ultima primis,  
Invenias etiam disjecti membra Poetæ :*

Let Tense and Mood, and Words be all misplac'd,  
Those last that should be first, those first the last,  
Though all Things be thus shuffled out of Frame,  
You'll yet a Poem find in † Anagram.

He will never the more forfeit his Praise, for that the very  
Pieces will be fine by themselves. *Menander's* Answer had  
this Meaning, who being reprov'd by a Friend, the Time  
drawing on at which he had precisely promis'd a Comedy  
that he had not yet fall'n in Hand with it, It is made and rea-  
dy, said he, all to the Verses. Having contriv'd the Subject,  
and dispos'd the Scenes in his Fancy, he took little Care for  
the rest. Since *Ronsard* and *Du Bellay* have given Reputa-  
tion to our *French* Poesy, every little Dabbler, for ought I  
see, swells his Words as high, and makes his Cadences very  
near as harmonious as they. *Plus sonat, quam valet\**;  
*There were never so many Poetasters as now*; but though they  
find it no hard Matter to rhyme as musically as they, they  
yet fall infinitely short of imitating the brave Descriptions  
of the one, and the curious Invention of the other. But  
what will become of our young Gentleman, if he be at-  
tack'd with the Sophistick Subtilty of some Syllogism? A  
*Westphalia* Ham makes a Man drink, Drink quenches  
Thirst; therefore a *Westphalia* Ham quenches Thirst. Why  
let him laugh at it, and it will be more Discretion to do so,  
than to go about to answer it; or let him borrow this plea-  
sant Evasion from *Aristippus*, Why should I trouble myself  
to unty that, which, bound as it is, gives me so much  
Trouble? One offering at this dialectick Juggling against  
*Cleanthes*, *Chrystippus* took him short, saying, Reserve these

† According to that of *Dr. Donne*, *D. of St. Paul's*.

\* *Seneca*, *Epist.* 40.



Baubles to play with Children, and do not by such Fooleries divert the serious Thoughts of a Man of Years. If these ridiculous Subtilties, *contorta, & aculeata Sophismata* \*, as Cicero calls them, are design'd to possess him with an Untruth, they are then dangerous; but if they signify no more than only to make him laugh, I do not see why they should be so considerable, that a Man need to be fortified against them. There are some so ridiculous, as to go a Mile out of their Way to hook in a fine Word: *Aut qui non verba rebus aptant, sed res arcessunt, quibus verba convenient* †; Who do not fit Words to the Subject, but seek out Things quite from the Purpose, to fit those Words they are so enamour'd of. And, as another says, *Qui alicujus verbi decore placentis vocentur ad id, quod non proposuerant scribere* ||; Who by their Fondness of some fine sounding Word, are tempted to something they had no Intention to treat of. I, for my Part, rather bring in a fine Sentence by Head and Shoulders to fit my Purpose, than divert my Designs to hunt after a Sentence. On the contrary, Words are to serve, and to follow a Man's Purpose; and let Gascon come in Play where French will not do. I would have Things so exceed, and wholly possess the Imagination of him that hears, that he should have something else to do, than to think of Words. The Way of Speaking that I love is natural and plain, as well in Writing as Speaking, and a sinewy and significant Way of expressing a Man's self, short and pithy, and not so elegant and artificial as prompt and vehement.

*Hæc demum sapiet dictio, quæ feriet* ‡.

Most Weight and Wisdom does that Language bear,  
Does pierce and captivate the Hearer's Ear.

Rather hard than harsh, free from Affectation; irregular, incontiguous, and bold, where every Piece makes up an entire Body; not like a Pedant, a Preacher, or a Pleader, but rather a Soldier-like Stile, as Suetonius calls that of Julius Cæsar; and yet I see no Reason why he should call it so. I have never yet been apt to imitate the negligent Garb, which is yet observable among the Young-Men of

\* Cicero Acad. l. 4. † Quin. l. 8. || Seneca, Epist. 59.  
‡ Epist. Lucan.



our Time, to wear my Cloak on one Shoulder, my Bonnet on one Side, and one Stocking in something more Disorder than the other, which seems to express a kind of manly Disdain of those exotick Ornaments, and a Contempt of Art; but I find that Negligence of much better Use in the Form of Speaking. All Affectation, particularly in the French Gaiety and Freedom, is ungraceful in a Courtier, and in a Monarchy every Gentleman ought to be fashion'd according to the Court Model; for which Reason, an easy and natural Negligence does well. I no more like a Web where the Knots and Seams are to be seen, than a fine Proportion, so delicate, that a Man may tell all the Bones and Veins. *Quæ veritati operam dat oratio, incomposita sit, & simplex. Quis accuratè loquitur, nisi qui vult putidè loqui?* Let the Language that is dedicated to Truth be plain and unaffected. For who studies to speak quaintly and accurately, that does not at the same Time design to perplex his Auditory. That Eloquence prejudices the Subject it would advance, that wholly attracts us to itself. And as in our outward Habit, 'tis a ridiculous Effeminacy to distinguish ourselves by a particular and unpractis'd Garb or Fashion, so in Language, to study new Phrases, and to affect Words that are not of current Use, proceeds from a Childish and Scholastick Ambition. Shall I be bound to speak no other Language than what is spoken in the Courts of Paris? *Aristophanes* the Grammarian was a little out, when he reprehended *Epicurus* for this plain Way of delivering himself, the End and Design of his Oratory being only Perspicuity of Speech, and to be understood. The Imitation of Words by it's own Facility, immediately disperses itself thorough a whole People: But the Imitation of inventing, and fitly applying those Words, is of a slower Progress. The Generality of Readers, for having found a like Robe, very mistakingly imagine they have the same Body and Inside too, whereas Force and Sinews are never to be borrowed, the Gloss and outward Ornament, that is, Words and Elocution, may in most of those I converse with, speak the same Language I here write; but whether they think the

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\* *Seneca, Epist. 40.*



same Thoughts I cannot say. The *Athenians* (says *Plato*) are observed to study Length and Elegancy of Speaking; the *Lacedæmonians* to affect Brevity; and those of *Crete* to aim more at the Fecundity of Conception than the Fertility of Speech, and these are the best. *Zenon* us'd to say that he had two Sorts of Disciples, one that he call'd *Φιλόλογος*, curious to learn Things, and these were his Favourites; the other, *λογοφίλος*, that cared for nothing but Words. Not that fine Speaking is not a very good and commendable Quality; but not so excellent and so necessary as some would make it; and I am scandaliz'd that our whole Life should be spent in nothing else. I would first understand my own Language, and that of my Neighbours with whom most of my Business and Conversation lyes. No doubt but *Greek* and *Latin* are very great Ornaments, and of very great Use, but we buy them too dear: I will hear discover one Way, which also has been experimented in my own Person, by which they are to be had better cheap, and such may make Use of it as will. My Father having made the most precise Enquiry that any Man could possibly make amongst Men of the greatest Learning and Judgment, of an exact Method of Education, was by them caution'd of the Inconvenience then in Use, and made to believe, that the tedious Time we apply'd to the learning of the Languages of those People who had them for nothing, was the sole Cause we could not arrive to that Grandeur of Soul, and Perfection of Knowledge with the ancient *Greeks* and *Romans*: I do not however believe that to be the only Cause: But the Expedient my Father found out for this, was, that in my Infancy, and before I began to speak, he committed me to the Care of a *German*, who since died a famous Physician in *France*, totally ignorant of our Language, but very fluent and a great Critick in *Latin*. This Man, whom he had fetch'd out of his own Country, and whom he entertain'd with a very great Salary for this only End, had me continually in his Arms: To whom there were also join'd two others of the same Nation, but of inferior Learning to attend me, and sometimes to relieve him; who all of them entertain'd me with no other Language but *Latin*. As to the rest of his Family, it was an inviolable Rule, that neither himself, nor my Mother, Man, nor Maid, should speak any thing



in my Company, but such *Latin* Words as every one had learnt only to gabble with me. It is not to be imagin'd how great an Advantage this prov'd to the whole Family; my Father and my Mother, by this Means learning *Latin* enough to understand it perfectly well, and to speak it to such a Degree, as was sufficient for any necessary Use; as also those of the Servants did, who were most frequent with me. To be short, we did *Latin* it at such a Rate, that it overflowed to all the neighbouring Villages, where there yet remain, that have establish'd themselves by Custom, several *Latin* Appellations of Artizans, and their Tools. As for what concerns myself, I was above fix Years of Age before I understood either *French* or *Perigordin*, any more than *Arabick*, and without Art, Book, Grammar, or Precept, Whipping, or the Expence of a Tear, had by that Time learn'd to speak as pure *Latin* as my Master himself. If (for Example) they were to give me a Theme after the College Fashion, they gave it to others in *French*, but to me, they were of Necessity to give it in the worst *Latin*, to turn it into that which was pure and good; and *Nicholas Grouchi*, who writ a Book *de Comitibus Romanorum*; *William Guirentes*, who has writ a Comment upon *Aristotle*; *George Buchanan*, that great *Scotch* Poet, and *Marcus Antonius Muretus*, (whom both *France* and *Italy* have acknowledg'd for the best Orator of his Time) my domestick Tutors, have all of them often told me, that I had in my Infancy that Language so very fluent and ready, that they were afraid to enter into Discourse with me; and particularly *Buchanan*, whom I since saw attending the late *Mareschal de Brissac*, then told me, that he was about to write a Treatise of Education, the Example of which he intended to take from mine, for he was then Tutor to that Count *de Brissac*, who afterwards prov'd so valiant and so brave a Gentleman. As to *Greek*, of which I have but little Smattering, my Father also design'd to have taught it me by a Trick; but a new one, and by way of Sport; tossing out Declensions to and fro, after the Manner of those, who by certain Games, at Tables, and Chess, learn Geometry and Arithmetick: For he, amongst other Rules, had been advis'd to make me relish Science and Duty by an unforc'd Will, and of my own voluntary Motion, and to educate my  
Soul



Soul in all Liberty and Delight, without any Severity or Constraint. Which also he was an Observer of to such a Degree even of Superstition, if I may say so, that some being of Opinion, it did trouble and disturb the Brains of Children suddenly to wake them in the Morning, and to snatch them violently and over-hastily from Sleep (wherein they are much more profoundly envolved than we) he only caused me to be waked by the Sound of some musical Instrument, and was never unprovided of a Musician for that Purpose; by which Example you may judge of the rest, this alone being sufficient to recommend both the Prudence and Affection of so good a Father; who therefore is not to be blamed if he did not reap the Fruits answerable to so exquisite a Culture; of which, two Things were the Cause: *First*, a Steril and improper Soil: For though I was of a strong and healthful Constitution, and of a Disposition tolerably sweet and tractable; yet I was withal so heavy, idle, and indisposed, that they could not rouze me from this Stupidity to any Exercise of Recreation, nor get me out to play. What I saw, I saw clear enough, and under this lazy Complexion, nourished a bold Imagination, and Opinions above my Age. I had a slothful Wit, that would go no faster than it was led, a slow Understanding, a languishing Invention, and after all, an incredible Defect of Memory; so that it is no Wonder, if from all these nothing considerable can be extracted. *Secondly*, (like those, who, impatient of a long and steady Cure, submit to all Sorts of Prescriptions and Receipts) the good Man being extremely timorous of any Way failing in a Thing he had so wholly set his Heart upon, suffered himself at last to be over-ruled by the common Opinion, and complying with the Method of the Time, having no longer those Persons he had brought out of *Italy*, and who had given him the first Model of Education, about him, he sent me at six Years of Age to the College of *Guienne*, at that time the most flourishing in *France*. And there it was not possible to add any Thing to the Care he had to provide me the most able Tutors, with all other Circumstances of Education, reserving also several particular Rules contrary to the College Practice; but so it was, that with all these Precautions, it was a College still. My *Latin* immediately grew corrupt, of which also by Discontinuance I have since lost all Manner of Use: So that this new

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Way



Way of Institution served me to no other End, than only at my first coming to prefer me to the first Forms: For at thirteen Years old, that I came out of the College, I had run through my whole Course, (as they call it) and, in Truth, without any Manner of Improvement, that I can honestly brag of, in all this Time. The first Thing that gave me any Taste of Books, was the Pleasure I took in Reading the Fables of *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, and with them I was so taken, that being but seven or eight Years old, I would steal from all other Divertisements to read them, both by Reason that this was my own natural Language, the easiest Book that I was acquainted with, and for the Subject, the most accommodated to the Capacity of my Age: For as for *Lancelot du Lake*, *Amadis de Gaule*, *Huon of Bourdeaux*, and such Trumpery, which Children are most delighted with, I had never so much as heard their Names, no more than I yet know what they contain: so exact was the Discipline wherein I was brought up. But this was enough to make me neglect the other Lessons prescribed me; and here it was infinitely to my Advantage, to have to do with an understanding Tutor, who very well knew discreetly to connive at this and other Truantries of the same Nature; for by this Means, I ran through *Virgil's Æneids*, *Terence*, *Plautus*, and some *Italian Comedies*, allured by the Softness and Pleasure of the Subject; whereas, had he been so foolish as to have taken me off this Diversion, I do really believe I had brought nothing away from the College but a Hatred of Books, as almost all our young Gentlemen do; but he carried himself very discreetly in that Business, seeming to take no Notice, and allowing me only such Time as I could steal from my other regular and yet moderate Studies, which whetted my Appetite to devour those Books I was naturally so much in Love with before. For the chief Things my Father expected from their Endeavour to whom he had delivered me for Education, was Affability of Manners and good Humour; and, to say the Truth, mine had no other Vice but Sloth and Want of Mettle. There was no Fear that I would do ill, but that I would do nothing; No-body suspected that I would be wicked, but useles; they foresaw an Idleness, but no Malice in my Nature; and I find it falls out accordingly. The Complaints I hear of my-  
self



self are these, he is idle, cold in the Offices of Friendship and Relation, and remiss in those of the Publick; he is too particular, he is too proud: But the most injurious do not say, Why has he taken such a Thing? Why has he not paid such a one? But why does he part with nothing? Why does he not give? And I should take it for a Favour that Men would expect from me no greater Effects of Supererogation than these. But they are unjust to exact from me what I do not owe; and in condemning me to it, they efface the Gratification of the Act, and deprive me of the Gratitude that would be due to me upon such a Bounty; whereas the active Benefit ought to be of so much the greater Value from my Hands; by how much I am not passive that Way at all. I can the more freely dispose of my Fortune, the more it is mine, and of myself the more I am my own. Nevertheless, if I were good at setting out my own Actions, I could peradventure very well repel these Reproaches, and could give some to understand, that they are not so much offended, that I do not enough, as that I am able to do a great deal more than I do. Yet for all this heavy Disposition of mine, my Mind, when retired into itself, was not altogether idle, nor wholly deprived of solid Inquisition, nor of certain and infallible Results about those Objects it could comprehend, and could also without any Helps digest them; but amongst other Things, I do really believe, it had been totally impossible to have made it to submit by Violence and Force. Shall I here acquaint you with one Faculty of my Youth? I had great Boldness and Assurance of Countenance, and to that a Flexibility of Voice and Gesture to any Part I undertook to act.

*Alter ab undecimo tum me vix ceperat annus\*.*

For the next Year to my eleventh had  
Me but a very few Days older made.

When I played the chiefest Parts in the *Latin* Tragedies of *Buchanan*, *Guerent*, and *Muretus*, that were presented in our College of *Guienne*, with very great Applause; wherein *Andreas Goveanus*, our Principal, as in all other Parts of his

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\* *Virg. Bucol. 8.*

Undertaking,



Undertaking, was, without Comparifon, the beft of that Employment in *France*; and I was looked upon as one of the chief Actors. 'Tis an Exercife that I do not difapprove in young People of Condition, and have fince feen our Princes, by the Example of the Ancients, in Perfon handfomly and commendably perform thefe Exercifes; and it was moreover allowed to Perfons of the greateft Quality to profefs, and make a Trade of it in *Greece*. *Ariftoni Tragico aëtori rem aperet: Huic & genus, & fortuna honefta erant: Nec Ars, quia nihil tale apud Græcos pudori eft ea deformabat\**. He imparted this Affair to Arifto the Tragedian, a Man of a good Family and Fortune, which, nevertheless, did neither of them receive any Blemifh by that Profefion; nothing of that Kind being reputed a Difparagement in *Greece*. Nay, I have always taxed thofe with Impertinence, who condemn thefe Entertainments, and with Injuftice thofe who refufe to admit fuch Comedians as are worth feeing into the good Towns, and grudge the People that publick Diverfion. Well-govern'd Corporations take Care to afsemble their Citizens, not only to the folemn Duties of Devotion, but alfo to Sports and Spectacles. They find Society and Friendfhip augmented by it; and befides, can there poffibly be allowed a more orderly and regular Diverfion, than what is performed in the Sight of every one, and very often in the Prefence of the fupreme Magiftrate himfelf? And I, for my Part, fhould think it reasonable, that the Prince fhould fometimes gratify his People at his own Expence; and that in great and popular Cities there might be Theatres erected for fuch Entertainments, if but to divert them from worfe and more private Actions. But to return to my Subject, there is nothing like alluring the Appetite and Affection, otherwife you make nothing but fo many Affes loaden with Books, and by Virtue of the Lafh, give them their Pocket full of Learning to keep; whereas, to do well, you fhould not only lodge it with them, but make them espoufe it.

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\* *Lib. l. 6. 26.*