



PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

Modern and Contemporary
Ideas of Education

SECOND EDITION

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1

JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) is one of the most colorful figures in the history of philosophy of education. Born in Geneva, his early life was characterized by upheaval, uncertainty, and constant change. He was largely self-taught. He discovered philosophy when he entered and won an essay contest in 1749. His books include *Julie or the New Eloise* (1761), *The Social Contract* (1762), *Emile or on Education* (1762), and his highly amusing autobiography, *Confessions* (1781).

Emile is not an essay, a treatise, or a handbook on education; it is a utopian work that describes Rousseau's dream of an ideal education. You will most likely have strong reactions to it, as Rousseau intended. He wants the reader to learn just how much his or her thinking is biased by contemporary norms. The text's pedagogy reflects Rousseau's fundamental belief that, if an experience—including the act of reading—is to be genuinely educational, then it must engage both an individual's intellect *and* sentiments. Rousseau is well known for his eschewal of social convention and reason in favor of nature and emotion. He believed that children were closer to nature and that educators should study them in order to understand humanity better. For this reason he is often described as the father of Romanticism and child-centered education.

Rousseau's basic premise is that human beings are born free but become enslaved by public opinion. This results in moral turpitude because public opinion endorses a morality of false propriety. For Rousseau, the challenge that faces education is to create first an

individual who desires to live truthfully and, second, a society that supports the flourishing of such individuals. Rousseau thought that humans would live together virtuously if they could only be taught to seek the truth. He aspired to unify humanity through nature. Nature represents the appropriate equilibrium between an individual's desires and faculties: the individual desires to perform only those activities for which he or she has a capacity. In this context, Rousseau distinguishes between *amour de soi*, defined as a healthy love of self, and *amour de propre*, defined as an unhealthy love of self which is mediated by a reliance on the opinions of others. Rousseau argues that our desire for one another compels us to make comparisons that fuel our sense of hurt, anger, resentment, disappointment, envy, and jealousy. We only need to think about, beauty culture, materialism, and academic competitiveness in this regard.

Emile is divided into five books, which depict the imaginary life of its two central characters, Emile and Sophie. Addressed to "thinking mothers," Book 1 advises the reader on infancy, nursing, and swaddling. By Book 2, Emile is under the supervision of a tutor who is the "character" representing Rousseau. Isolated from society, Emile is thoroughly engaged in experiential learning—occupying himself with playing, running, navigation, competition, problem-solving, and planting—and discovering how to differentiate between necessary and unnecessary suffering. In Book 3, Emile learns a trade in order to contribute to society and to be financially self-sufficient. In Book 4, he reaches puberty. The awakening of Emile's sexual passions makes it difficult for him to be true to himself, and Rousseau recommends hunting and travel as tactical diversions. Book 5 describes Emile's courtship with, and eventual marriage to, Sophie.

Book 4 introduces the character of the Savoyard Vicar. The Vicar is usually interpreted as a cipher for Rousseau's own views. The Vicar argues that it is unnecessary and offensive to mandate people's thinking on civil and religious issues because people's ability to make judgments is essentially trustworthy, particularly if educated according to Rousseau's utopian vision, for if an individual's ability to make correct judgments in relationship first to nature and then to things is trustworthy, then so, too, is his or her ability to make correct political and moral judgments.

Rousseau is one of education's most paradoxical thinkers. Like the ancient philosophers, he has a deep interest in virtue, yet his celebration

of the individual is distinctly modernist. He is a philosopher of the Enlightenment and one of its severest critics. He is one of the earliest philosophers to address femininity and women's education, yet in this area his work has only essentialized female difference. In sum, Rousseau can be described equally as a romantic, progressivist, pragmatist, or behaviorist. Drawing on Plato's myth of the cave, Rousseau referred to himself as the individual who, having seen the sun, returns to the cave to educate his fellow cave-dwellers, only to be vilified for his insights and to die in relative obscurity.

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BOOK I

Everything is good as it leaves the hands of the Author of things; everything degenerates in the hands of man. He forces one soil to nourish the products of another, one tree to bear the fruit of another. He mixes and confuses the climates, the elements, the seasons. He mutilates his dog, his horse, his slave. He turns everything upside down; he disfigures everything; he loves deformity, monsters. He wants nothing as nature made it, not even man; for him, man must be trained like a school horse; man must be fashioned in keeping with his fancy like a tree in his garden.

Were he not to do this, however, everything would go even worse, and our species does not admit of being formed halfway. In the present state of things a man abandoned to himself in the midst of other men from birth would be the most disfigured of all. Prejudices, authority, necessity, example, all the social institutions in which we find ourselves submerged would stifle nature in him and put nothing in its place. Nature there would be like a shrub that chance had caused to be born in the middle of a path and that the passers-by soon cause to perish by bumping into it from all sides and bending it in every direction.

It is to you that I address myself, tender and foresighted mother,*¹ who are capable of keeping the nascent shrub away from the highway and securing it from the impact of human opinions! Cultivate and water the young plant before it dies. Its fruits will one day be your delights. Form an enclosure around your child's soul at an early date. Someone else can draw its circumference, but you alone must build the fence.

Plants are shaped by cultivation and men by education. If man were born big and strong, his size and strength would be useless to him until he had learned to make use of them. They would be detrimental to him in that they would keep others from thinking of aiding him.* And abandoned to himself, he would die of want before knowing his needs. And childhood is taken to be a pitiable state! It is not seen that the human race would have perished if man had not begun as a child.

*The first education is the most important, and this first education belongs incontestably to women; if the Author of nature had wanted it to belong to men, He would

We are born weak, we need strength; we are born totally unprovided we need aid. We are born stupid, we need judgment. Everything we do not have at our birth and which we need when we are grown is given us by education.

This education comes to us from nature or from men or from things. The internal development of our faculties and our organs is the education of nature. The use that we are taught to make of his development is the education of men. And what we acquire from our own experience about the objects which affect us is the education of things.

Each of us is thus formed by three kinds of masters. The disciple in whom their various lessons are at odds with one another is badly raised and will never be in agreement with himself. He alone in whom they all coincide at the same points and tend to the same ends reaches his goal and lives consistently. He alone is well raised.

Now, of these three different educations, the one coming from nature is in no way in our control; that coming from things is in our control only in certain respects; that coming from men is the only one of which we are truly the masters. Even of it we are the masters only by hypothesis. For who can hope entirely to direct the speeches and the deeds of all those surrounding a child?

have given them milk with which to nurse the children. Always speak, then, preferably to women in your treatises on education; for, beyond the fact that they are in a position to watch over it more closely than are men and always have greater influence on it, they also have much more interest in its success, since most widows find themselves almost at the mercy of their children; then their children make mothers keenly aware, for good or ill, of the effect of the way they raised their children. The laws—always so occupied with property and so little with persons, because their object is peace not virtue—do not give enough authority to mothers. However, their status is more certain than that of fathers; their duties are more painful; their cares are more important for the good order of the family; generally they are more attached to the children. There are occasions on which a son who lacks respect for his father can in some way be excused. But if on any occasion whatsoever a child were unnatural enough to lack respect for his mother—for her who carried him in her womb, who nursed him with her milk, who for years forgot herself in favor of caring for him alone—one should hasten to strangle this wretch as a monster unworthy of seeing the light of day. Mothers, it is said, spoil their children. In that they are doubtless wrong—but less wrong than you perhaps who deprave them. The mother wants her child to be happy, happy now. In that she is right. When she is mistaken about the means, she must be enlightened. Fathers' ambition, avarice, tyranny, and false foresight, their negligence, their harsh insensitivity are a hundred times more disastrous for children than is the blind tenderness of mothers. Moreover, the sense I give to the name *mother* must be explained; and that is what will be done hereafter.

*Similar to them on the outside and deprived of speech as well as of the ideas it expresses, he would not be in a condition to make them understand the need he had of their help, and nothing in him would manifest this need to them.

Therefore, when education becomes an art, it is almost impossible for it to succeed, since the conjunction of the elements necessary to its success is in no one's control. All that one can do by dint of care is to come more or less close to the goal, but to reach it requires luck.

What is that goal? It is the very same as that of nature. This has just been proved. Since the conjunction of the three educations is necessary on their perfection, the two others must be directed toward the one over which we have no power. But perhaps this word *nature* has too vague absense. An attempt must be made here to settle on its meaning.

Nature, we are told, is only habit. What does than mean? Are there not habits contracted only by force which never do stifle nature? Such, for example, is the habit of the plants whose vertical direction is interfered with. The plant, set free, keeps the inclination it was forced to take. But the sap has not as a result changed its original direction; and if the plant continues to grow, its new growth resumes the vertical direction. The case is the same for men's inclinations. So long as one remains in the same contains in the same condition, the inclinations which result from habit and are the least natural to us can be kept; but as soon as the situation changes, habit ceases and the natural returns. Education is certainly only habit. Now are there not people who forget and lose their education? Others who keep it? Where does this difference come from? If the name *nature* were limited to habits conformable to nature, we would spare ourselves this garble.

We are born with the use of our senses, and from our birth we are affected in various ways by the objects surrounding us. As soon as we have, so to speak, consciousness of our sensations, we are disposed to seek or avoid the objects which produce them, at first according to whether they are pleasant or unpleasant to us, then according to the conformity or lack of it that we find between us and these objects, and finally according to the judgments we make about them on the basis of the idea of happiness or of perfection given us by reason. These dispositions are extended and strengthened as we become more capable of using our senses and more enlightened; but constrained by our habits, they are more or less corrupted by our opinions. Before this corruption they are what I call in us *nature*.

It is, then, to these original dispositions that everything must be related; and that could be done if our three educations were only different from one another. But what is to be done when they are opposed?

When, instead of raising a man for himself, one wants to raise him for others? Then their harmony is impossible. Forced to combat nature or the social institutions, one must choose between making a man or a citizen, for one cannot make both at the same time.

Every particular society, when it is narrow and unified, is estranged from the all-encompassing society. Every patriot is harsh to foreigners. They are only men. They are nothing in his eyes.² This is a drawback, inevitable but not compelling. The essential thing is to be good to the people with whom one lives. Abroad, the Spartan was ambitious, avaricious, iniquitous. But disinterestedness, equity, and concord reigned within his walls. Distrust those cosmopolitans who go to great length in their books to discover duties they do not deign to fulfill around them. A philosopher loves the Tartars so as to be spared having to love his neighbors.

Natural man is entirely for himself. He is numerical unity, the absolute whole which is relative only to itself or its kind. Civil man is only a fractional unity dependent on the denominator; his value is determined by his relation to the whole, which is the social body. Good social institutions are those that best know how to denature man, to take his absolute existence from him in order to give him a relative one and transport the I into the common unity, with the result that each individual believes himself no longer one but a part of the unity and no longer feels except within the whole. A citizen of Rome was neither Caius nor Lucius; he was a Roman. He even loved the country exclusive of himself. Regulus claimed he was Carthaginian on the grounds that he had become the property of his masters. In his status of foreigner he refused to sit in the Roman senate; a Carthaginian had to order him to do so. He was indignant that they wanted to save his life. He conquered and returned triumphant to die by torture. This has little relation, it seems to me, to the men we know.³

The Lacedaemonian Pedareetus runs for the council of three hundred. He is defeated. He goes home delighted that there were three hundred men worthier than he to be found in Sparta. I take this display to be sincere, and there is reason to believe that it was. This is the citizen.⁴

A Spartan woman had five sons in the army and was awaiting news of the battle. A Helot arrives; trembling, she asks him for news. "Your five sons were killed." "Base slave, did I ask you that?" "We won the victory." The mother runs to the temple and gives thanks to the gods. This is the female citizen.⁵

He who in the civil order wants to preserve the primacy of the sentiments of nature does not know what he wants. Always in contradiction with himself, always floating between his inclinations and his duties, he will never be either man or citizen. He will be good neither for himself nor for others. He will be one of these men of our days: a Frenchman, an Englishman, a bourgeois.⁶ He will be nothing.

To be something, to be oneself and always one, a man must act as he speaks; he must always be decisive in making his choice, make it in a lofty style, and always stick to it. I am waiting to be shown this marvel so as to know whether he is a man or a citizen, or how he goes about being both at the same time.

From these necessarily opposed objects come two contrary forms of instruction—the one, public and common; the other, individual and domestic.

Do you want to get an idea of public education? Read Plato's *Republic*. It is not at all a political work, as think those who judge books only by their titles. It is the most beautiful educational treatise ever written.

When one wishes to refer to the land of chimeras, mention is made of Plato's institutions. If Lycurgus had set his down only in writing, I would find them far more chimerical. Plato only purified the heart of man; Lycurgus denatured it.⁷

Public instruction no longer exists and can no longer exist, because where there is no longer fatherland, there can no longer be citizens. These two words, *fatherland* and *citizen*, should be effaced from modern languages. I know well the reason why this is so, but I do not want to tell it. It has nothing to do with my subject.⁸

I do not envisage as a public education those laughable establishments called *colleges*.⁹ Nor do I count the education of society, because this education, tending to two contrary ends, fails to attain either. It is fit only for making double men, always appearing to relate everything to others and never relating anything except to themselves alone. Now since these displays are common to everyone, no one is taken in by them. They are so much wasted effort.

⁶There are in the academy of Geneva and the University of Paris professors whom I like very much and believe to be very capable of instructing the young well, if they were not forced to follow the established practice. I exhort one among them to publish the project of reform which he has conceived. Perhaps, when it is seen that the ill is not without remedy, there will be a temptation to cure it.

From these contradictions is born the one we constantly experience within ourselves. Swept along in contrary routes by nature and by men, forced to divide ourselves between these different impulses, we follow a composite impulse which leads us to neither one goal nor the other. Thus, in conflict and floating during the whole course of our life, we end it without having been able to put ourselves in harmony with ourselves and without having been good either for ourselves or for others.

There remains, finally, domestic education or the education of nature. But what will a man raised uniquely for himself become for others? If perchance the double object we set for ourselves could be joined in a single one by removing the contradictions of man, a great obstacle to his happiness would be removed. In order to judge of this, he would have to be seen wholly formed: his inclinations would have to have been observed, his progress seen, his development followed. In a word, the natural man would have to be known. I believe that one will have made a few steps in these researches when one has read this writing.

To form this rare man; what do we have to do? Very much, doubtless. What must be done is to prevent anything from being done. When it is only a question of going against the wind, one tacks. But if the sea is heavy and one wants to stand still, one must cast anchor. Take care, young pilot, for fear that your cable run or your anchor drag and that the vessel drift without your noticing.

In the social order where all positions are determined, each man ought to be raised for his. If an individual formed for his position leaves it, he is no longer fit for anything. Education is useful only insofar as fortune is in agreement with the parents' vocation. In any other case it is harmful to the student, if only by virtue of the prejudices it gives him. In Egypt where the son was obliged to embrace the station of his father, education at least had a sure goal. But among us where only the ranks remain and the men who compose them change constantly, no one knows whether in raising his son for his rank he is not working against him.

In the natural order, since men are all equal, their common calling is man's estate and whoever is well raised for that calling cannot fail to fulfill those callings related to it. Let my student be destined for the sword, the church, the bar. I do not care. Prior to the calling of his parents is nature's call to human life. Living is the job I want to teach him. On leaving my hands, he will, I admit, be neither magistrate nor soldier nor priest. He will, in the first place, be a man. All that a man should be,

he will in case of need know how to be as well as anyone and fortune may try as it may to make him change place, he will always be in his own place. *Occupavi te fortuna atque cepi omnesque aditus tuos interclusi, ut ad me aspirare non posses.**

Our true study is that of the human condition. He among us who best knows how to bear the goods and the ills of this life is to my taste the best raised: from which it follows that the true education consists less in precept than in practice. We begin to instruct ourselves when we begin to live. Our education begins with us. Our first preceptor is our nurse. Thus this word *education* had another meaning for the ancients which we no longer give to it. *Educit obstetrix*, says Varro, *educat nutrix*, *instituit pedagogus*, *docet magister*.†

Thus education, instruction, and teaching are three things as different in their object as are the governess, the preceptor, and the master. But these distinctions are ill drawn; and, to be well led, the child should follow only a single guide.

We must, then, generalize our views and consider in our pupil abstract man, man exposed to all the accidents of human life. If men were born attached to a country's soil, if the same season lasted the whole year, if each man were fixed in his fortune in such a way as never to be able to change it—the established practice would be good in certain respects. The child raised for his station, never leaving it, could not be exposed to the disadvantages of another. But given the mobility of human things, given the unsettled and restless spirit of this age which upsets everything in each generation, can one conceive of a method more senseless than raising a child as though he never had to leave his room, as though he were going to be constantly surrounded by his servants? If the unfortunate makes a single step on the earth, if he goes down a single degree, he is lost. This is not teaching him to bear suffering; it is training him to feel it.

One thinks only of preserving one's child. That is not enough. One ought to teach him to preserve himself as a man, to bear the blows of fate, to brave opulence and poverty, to live, if he has to, in freezing Iceland or on Malta's burning rocks. You may very well take precautions against his dying. He will nevertheless have to die. And though his death were not the product of your efforts, still these efforts would be

ill conceived. It is less a question of keeping him from dying than of making him live. To live is not to breathe; it is to act; it is to make use of our organs, our senses, our faculties, of all the parts of ourselves which give us the sentiment of our existence.¹² The man who has lived the most is not he who has counted the most years but he who has most felt life. Men have been buried at one hundred who died at their birth. They would have gained from dying young; at least they would have lived up to that time.

All our wisdom consists in servile prejudices. All our practices are only subjection, impediment, and constraint. Civil man is born, lives, and dies in slavery. At his birth he is sewed in swaddling clothes; at his death he is nailed in a coffin. So long as he keeps his human shape, he is enchained by our institutions.

Observe nature and follow the path it maps out for you. It exercises children constantly; it hardens their temperament by tests of all sorts; it teaches them early what effort and pain are. Teething puts them in a fever; sharp colics give them convulsions; long coughs suffocate them; worms torment them; plethora corrupts their blood; various leavens ferment in it and cause perilous eruptions. Almost all the first age is sickness and danger. Half the children born perish before the eighth year. The tests passed, the child has gained strength; and as soon as he can make use of life, its principle becomes sounder.

That is nature's rule. Why do you oppose it? Do you not see that in thinking you correct it, you destroy its product, you impede the effect of its care? To do on the outside what nature does on the inside redoubles the danger, according to you; and, on the contrary, this diverts the danger and weakens it. Experience teaches that even more children raised delicately die than do others. Provided the limit of their strength is not exceeded, less is risked in employing that strength than in sparing it. Exercise them, then, against the attacks they will one day have to bear. Harden their bodies against the intemperance of season, climates, elements; against hunger, thirst, fatigue. Steep them in the water of the Styx. Before the body's habit is acquired, one can give it the habit one wants to give it without danger. But when it has once gained its consistency, every alteration becomes perilous for it. A child will bear changes that a man would not bear; the fibers of the former, soft and flexible, take without effort the turn that they are given; those of the man, more hardened, change only with violence the turn they have received. A child, then, can be made robust without exposing its life and

**Tuscul.* V.¹⁰

†*Non. Marcell.*¹¹

its health; and if there were some risk, still one must not hesitate. Since these are risks inseparable from human life, can one do better than shift them to that part of its span when they are least disadvantageous?

A child becomes more precious as he advance in age. To the value of his person is joined that of the effort he has cost; to the loss of his life is joined in him the sentiment of death. It is, then, especially of the future that one must think in looking after his preservation. It is against the ills of youth that he must be armed before he reaches them; for if the value of life increases up to the age of making use of it, what folly is it not to spare childhood some ills while multiplying them for the age of reason? Are those the lessons of the master?

The fate of man is to suffer at all times. The very care of his preservation is connected with pain. Lucky to know only physical ills in his childhood—ills far less cruel, far less painful than are the other kinds of ills and which far more rarely make us renounce life than do the others! One does not kill oneself for the pains of gout. There are hardly any but those of the soul which produce despair. We pity the lot of childhood, and it is our own that should be pitied. Our greatest ills come to us from ourselves.

A child cries at birth; the first part of his childhood is spent crying. At one time we bustle about, we caress him in order to pacify him; at another, we threaten him, we strike him in order to make him keep quiet. Either we do what pleases him, or we exact from him what pleases us. Either we submit to his whims, or we submit him to ours. No middle ground; he must give orders or receive them. Thus his first ideas are those of domination and servitude. Before knowing how to speak, he commands; before being able to act, he obeys. And sometimes he is chastised before he is able to know his offenses or, rather, to commit any. It is thus that we fill up his young heart at the outset with the passions which later we impute to nature and that, after having taken efforts to make him wicked, we complain about finding him so.

Once we know the principle, we see clearly the point where one leaves the path of nature. Let us see what must be done to stay on it.

Far from having superfluous strength, children do not even have enough for everything nature asks of them. One must, therefore, let them have the use of all the strength nature gives them—a strength they could not know how to abuse. First maxim.

One must aid them and supplement what is lacking to them, whether in intelligence or strength, in all that is connected with physical need. Second maxim.

One must, in the help one gives them, limit oneself solely to the really useful, without granting anything to whim or to desire without reason; for whim, inasmuch as it does not come from nature, will not torment them if it has not been induced in them. Third maxim.

One must study their language and their signs with care in order that, at an age at which they do not know how to dissimulate, one can distinguish in their desires what comes immediately from nature and what comes from opinion. Fourth maxim.

BOOK II

This is the second period of life, and now infancy, strictly speaking, has ended. For the words *infans* and *puer* are not synonymous. The former is contained in the latter and signifies "one who cannot speak"; this is why *puerum infantem* is found in Valerius Maximus.¹ But I shall continue to use this word according to the usage of our language until I reach an age for which it has another name.

When children begin to speak, they cry less. This is a natural progress. One language is substituted for the other. As soon as they can say with words that they are in pain, why would they say it with cries, except when the pain is too intense for speech to express it? If they continue to cry then, it is the fault of the people around them. As soon as Emile has once said, "It hurts," very intense pains indeed will be needed to force him to cry.

If the child is delicate, sensitive, if naturally he starts crying for nothing, by making his cries useless and ineffective, I will soon dry up their source. So long as he cries, I do not go to him. I run as soon as he has stopped. Soon his way of calling me will be to keep quiet or, at the most, to let out a single cry. It is by the effect they sense their cries make that children judge their own senses. There is no other convention for them. Whatever injury a child may do to himself, it is very rare that he cries when he is alone, unless he hopes to be heard.

If he falls, if he bumps his head, if his nose bleeds, if he cuts his fingers, instead of fussing around him as though I were alarmed, I will remain calm, at least for a short time. The harm is done; it is a necessity that he endure it; all my fussing would only serve to frighten him more and increase his sensitivity. At bottom, it is less the blow than the fear which torments when one has been hurt. I will at least spare him this latter anxiety, for quite certainly he will judge of his injury as he sees me judge of it. If he sees me run in agitation to console and pity him, he will consider himself lost. If he sees me keep my composure, he will soon regain his and will believe the injury cured when he no longer feels it. It is at this age that one gets the first lessons in courage and that, bearing slight pains without terror, one gradually learns to bear great pains.

Far from being attentive to protecting Emile from injury, I would be most distressed if he were never hurt and grew up without knowing pain. To suffer is the first thing he ought to learn and the thing he will

most need to know. It seems that children are little and weak only in order that they may get these important lessons without danger. If the child falls down, he will not break his leg; if he hits himself with a stick, he will not break his arm; if he grabs a knife, he will hardly tighten his grip and will not cut himself very deeply. I do not know of a child at liberty who was ever seen to kill, cripple, or do himself any considerable harm, unless he was carelessly exposed on high places or alone near fire, or dangerous instruments were left in his reach. What is to be said about these arsenals of machines set up around a child to arm him at all points against pain, so that when he is grown, he is at its mercy without courage and without experience, believes he is dead at the first prick, and faints on seeing the first drop of his blood?

Our didactic and pedantic craze is always to teach children what they would learn much better by themselves and to forget what we alone could teach them. Is there anything more foolish than the effort made to teach them to walk, as if anyone were ever seen who, due to his nurse's negligence, did not when grown know how to walk? How many people, on the contrary, does one see walk badly for their whole lives because they were badly taught how to walk?

Emile will not have padded bonnets, strollers, buggies, or leading strings; or, at least, as soon as he begins to know how to put one foot before the other, he will be supported only in paved places, and we shall hastily pass them by.* Instead of letting him stagnate in the stale air of a room, let him be taken daily to the middle of a field. There let him run and frisk about; let him fall a hundred times a day. So much the better. That way he will learn how to get up sooner. The well-being of freedom makes up for many wounds. My pupil will often have bruises. But, in compensation, he will always be gay. If your pupils have fewer bruises, they are always hindered, always enchained, always sad. I doubt whether the advantage is theirs.

Another progress makes complaint less necessary to children; this is the progress of their strength. Able to do more by themselves, they need to have recourse to others less frequently. With their strength develops the knowledge which puts them in a condition to direct it. It is at this second stage that, strictly speaking, the life of the individual

*There is nothing more ridiculous and more lacking in assurance than the step of people who were led too much by leading strings when they were little. This is another of those observations that are trivial by dint of being accurate and that are accurate in more than one sense.

begins. It is then that he gains consciousness of himself. Memory extends the sentiment of identity to all the moments of his existence; he becomes truly one, the same, and consequently already capable of happiness or unhappiness. It is important, therefore, to begin to consider him here as a moral being.

Although the furthest limit of human life can be pretty nearly determined, as well as one's probabilities at each age of approaching that limit, nothing is more uncertain than the duration of each man's life in particular. Very few attain this furthest limit. Life's greatest risks are in its beginnings; the less one has lived, the less one ought to hope to live. Of the children born, half, at the most, reach adolescence; and it is probable that your pupil will not reach the age of manhood.²

What, then, must be thought of that barbarous education which sacrifices the present to an uncertain future, which burdens a child with chains of every sort and begins by making him miserable in order to prepare him from afar for I know not what pretended happiness which it is to be believed he will never enjoy? Even if I were to suppose this education reasonable in its object, how can one without indignation see poor unfortunates submitted to an unbearable yoke and condemned to continual labor like galley slaves, without any assurance that so many efforts will ever be useful to them? The age of gaiety passes amidst tears, punishments, threats, and slavery. The unlucky fellow is tormented for his own good; and the death that is being summoned is unseen, the death which is going to seize him in the midst of this gloomy setup. Who knows how many children perish victims of a father's or a master's extravagant wisdom? Happy to escape his cruelty, the only advantage they get from the ills he has made them suffer is to die without regretting life, of which they knew only the torments.

Men, be humane. This is your first duty. Be humane with every station, every age, everything which is not alien to man. What wisdom is there for you save humanity? Love childhood; promote its games, its pleasures its amiable instinct. Who among you has not sometimes regretted that age when a laugh is always on the lips and the soul is always at peace? Why do you want to deprive these little innocents of the enjoyment of a time so short which escapes them and of a good so precious which they do not know how to abuse? Why do you want to fill with bitterness and pains these first years which go by so rapidly and can return no more for them than they can for you? Fathers, do you know the moment when death awaits your children? Do not prepare

regrets for yourself in depriving them of the few instants nature gives them. As soon as they can sense the pleasure of being, arrange it so that they can enjoy it, arrange it so that at whatever hour God summons them they do not die without having tasted life.

Before prejudices and human institutions have corrupted our natural inclinations, the happiness of children, like that of men, consists in the use of their freedom. But in the case of children this freedom is limited by their weakness. Whoever does what he wants is happy if he is self-sufficient; this is the case of the man living in the state of nature. Whoever does what he wants is not happy if his needs surpass his strength; this is the case of the child in the same state. Children, even in the state of nature, enjoy only an imperfect freedom, similar to that enjoyed by men in the civil state. No longer able to do without others, each of us becomes in this respect weak and miserable again. We were made to be men; laws and society have plunged us once more into childhood. The rich, the nobles, the kings are all children who, seeing that men are eager to relieve their misery, derive a puerile vanity from that very fact and are very proud of care that one would not give to them if they were grown men.

These considerations are important and serve to resolve all the contradictions of the social system. There are two sorts of dependence: dependence on things, which is from nature; dependence on men, which is from society. Dependence on things, since it has no morality, is in no way detrimental to freedom and engenders no vices. Dependence on men, since it is without order,* engenders all the vices, and by it, master and slave are mutually corrupted. If there is any means of remedying this ill in society, it is to substitute law for man and to arm the general wills with a real strength superior to the action of every particular will. If the laws of nations could, like those of nature, have an inflexibility that no human force could ever conquer, dependence on men would then become dependence on things again; in the republic all of the advantages of the natural state would be united with those of the civil state, and freedom which keeps man exempt from vices would be joined to morality which raises him to virtue.

Keep the child in dependence only on things. You will have followed the order of nature in the progress of his education. Never

*In my *Principles of Political Right*⁹ it is demonstrated that no particular will can be ordered in the social system.

present to his indiscriminating will anything but physical obstacles or punishments which stem from the actions themselves and which he will recall on the proper occasion. Without forbidding him to do harm, it suffices to prevent him from doing it. Experience or impotence alone ought to take the place of law for him. Grant nothing to his desires because he asks for it but because he needs it. Let him not know what obedience is when he acts nor what dominion is when one acts for him. Let him sense his liberty equally in his actions and yours.

Nature wants children to be children before being men. If we want to pervert this order, we shall produce precocious fruits which will be immature and insipid and will not be long in rotting. We shall have young doctors¹⁶ and old children. Childhood has its ways of seeing, thinking, and feeling which are proper to it. Nothing is less sensible than to want to substitute ours for theirs, and I would like as little to insist that a ten-year-old be five feet tall as that he possess judgment. Actually, what would reason do for him at that age? It is the bridle of strength, and the child does not need this bridle.

In trying to persuade your pupils of the duty of obedience, you join to this alleged persuasion force and threats or, what is worse, flattery and promises. In this way, therefore, lured by profit or constrained by force, they pretend to be convinced by reason. They see quite well that obedience is advantageous to them and rebellion harmful when you notice either. But since everything you insist on is unpleasant and, further, it is always irksome to do another's will, they arrange to do their own will covertly. They are persuaded that what they do is right if their disobedience is unknown, but are ready on being caught—in order to avoid a worse evil—to admit that what they do is wrong. Since the reason for duty cannot be grasped at their age, there is not a man in the world who could succeed in giving duty a truly palpable sense for them. But the fear of punishment, the hope of pardon, importunity, awkwardness in answering, wrest all the confessions from them that are demanded; and it is believed that they have been convinced when they have only been pestered or intimidated.

What results from this? Firstly, by imposing on them a duty they do not feel, you set them against your tyranny and turn them away from having you. Secondly, you teach them to become dissemblers, fakers, and liars in order to extort rewards or escape punishments. Finally, by accustoming them always to cover a secret motive with an apparent motive, you yourselves give them the means of deceiving you ceaselessly,

of depriving you of the knowledge of their true character, and of fobbing you and others off with vain words when the occasion serves. Laws, you will say, although they obligate conscience, nevertheless also use constraint with grown men. I admit it, but what are these men if not children spoiled by education? This is precisely what must be prevented. Use force with children, and reason with men. Such is the natural order. The wise man does not need laws.

Treat your pupil according to his age. At the outset put him in his place, and hold him there so well that he no longer tries to leave it. Then, before knowing what wisdom is, he will practice its most important lesson. Command him nothing, whatever in the world it might be, absolutely nothing. Do not even allow him to imagine that you might pretend to have any authority over him. Let him know only that he is weak and you are strong, that by his condition and yours he is necessarily at your mercy. Let him know it, learn it, feel it. Let his haughty head at an early date feel the harsh yoke which nature imposes on man, the heavy yoke of necessity under which every finite being must bend. Let him see this necessity in things, never in the caprice* of men. Let the bridle that restrains him be force and not that authority. Do not forbid him to do that from which he should abstain; prevent him from doing it without explanations, without reasonings. What you grant him, grant at his first word, without solicitations, without prayers—above all, without conditions. Grant with pleasure; refuse only with repugnance. But let all your refusals be irrevocable; let no importunity shake you; let "no," once pronounced, be a wall of bronze against which the child will have to exhaust his strength at most five or six times in order to abandon any further attempts to overturn it.

All the instruments have been tried save one, the only one precisely that can succeed: well-regulated freedom. One ought not to get involved with raising a child if one does not know how to guide him where one wants by the laws of the possible and the impossible alone. The sphere of both being equally unknown to him, they can be expanded and contracted around him as one wants. One enchains, pushes, and restrains him with the bond of necessity alone without his letting out a peep. He is made supple and docile by the force of things

*One should be sure that the child will treat as a caprice every will opposed to his own when he does not appreciate the reason for it. Now a child does not appreciate the reason for anything which clashes with his whims.

alone without any vice having the occasion to germinate in him, for the passions never become animated so long as they are of no effect.

Do not give your pupil any kind of verbal lessons; he ought to receive them only from experience. Inflict no kind of punishment on him, for he does not know what it is to be at fault. Never make him beg pardon, for he could not know how to offend you. Devoid of all morality in his actions, he can do nothing which is morally bad and which merits either punishment or reprimand.

I already see the startled reader judging this child by our children. He is mistaken. The perpetual constraint in which you keep your pupils exacerbates their vivacity. The more they are held in check under your eyes, the more they are turbulent the moment they get away. They have to compensate themselves when they can for the harsh constraint in which you keep them. Two schoolboys from the city will do more damage in a place than the young of an entire village. Close up a little gentleman and a little peasant in a room. The former will have turned everything upside down, broken everything, before the latter has left his place. Why is this, if it is not because the one hastens to abuse a moment of license, while the other, always sure of his freedom, is never in a hurry to make use of it? And nevertheless the children of the village people, themselves often indulged or opposed, are still quite far from the state in which I want them kept.

Let us set down as an incontestable maxim that the first movements of nature are always right. There is no original perversity in the human heart. There is not a single vice to be found in it of which it cannot be said how and whence it entered. The sole passion natural to man is *amour de soi* or *amour-propre* taken in an extended sense.¹⁷ This *amour-propre* in itself or relative to us is good and useful; and since it has no necessary relation to others, it is in this respect naturally neutral. It becomes good or bad only by the application made of it and the relations given to it. Therefore, up to the time when the guide of *amour-propre*, which is reason, can be born, it is important for a child to do nothing because he is seen or heard—nothing, in a word, in relation to others; he must respond only to what nature asks of him, and then he will do nothing but good.

I do not mean that he will never do damage, that he will not hurt himself, that he will not perhaps break a valuable piece of furniture if he finds it in his reach. He could do a considerable amount of wrong without wrongdoing, because the bad action depends on the intention

of doing harm, and he will never have this intention. If he had it one single time, all would be lost already; he would be wicked almost beyond recall.

Some things are bad in the eyes of avarice which are not so in the eyes of reason. In leaving children full freedom to exercise their giddiness, it is proper to put away from them everything that could make it costly and to leave nothing fragile and precious within their reach. Let their quarters be fitted with coarse and solid furniture, no mirrors, no china, no objects of quality. As for my Emile, whom I am raising in the country, his room will have nothing which distinguishes it from a peasant's. What is the use of decorating it so carefully, since he is going to stay in it so little? But I am mistaken. He will decorate it himself, and we shall soon see with what.

If in spite of your precautions, the child succeeds in creating some disorder, in breaking some useful piece, do not punish him for your negligence; do not chide him; let him hear not a single word of reproach; do not permit him even to glimpse that he has brought you grief; act exactly as if the thing had been broken of itself. In short, believe you have accomplished a lot if you can say nothing.

Dare I expose the greatest, the most important, the most useful rule of all education? It is not to gain time but to lose it. Common readers, pardon me my paradoxes. When one reflects, they are necessary and, whatever you may say, I prefer to be a paradoxical man than a prejudiced one.¹⁸ The most dangerous period of human life is that from birth to the age of twelve. This is the time when errors and vices germinate without one's yet having any instrument for destroying them; and by the time the instrument comes, the roots are so deep that it is too late to rip them out. If children jumped all at once from the breast to the age of reason, the education they are given might be suitable for them. But, according to the natural progress, they need an entirely contrary one. They ought to do nothing with their soul until all of its faculties have developed, because while the soul is yet blind, it cannot perceive the torch you are presenting to it or follow the path reason maps out across the vast plain of ideas, a path which is so faint even to the best of eyes.

Thus, the first education ought to be purely negative. It consists not at all in teaching virtue or truth but in securing the heart from vice and the mind from error. If you could do nothing and let nothing be done, if you could bring your pupil healthy and robust to the age of twelve without his knowing how to distinguish his right hand from his left, at

your first lessons the eyes of his understanding would open up to reason. Without prejudice, without habit, he would have nothing in him which could hinder the effect of your care. The first idea which must be given him is therefore less that of liberty than that of property and for him to be able to have this idea, he must have something that belongs to him. To mention to him his clothing, his furniture, his toys, is to say nothing to him, since, although he disposes of these things, he knows neither why nor how he came by them. To say to him that he has them because they were given to him is hardly to do better, for in order to give, one must have. Here is, therefore, a property anterior to his, and it is the principle of property one wants to explain to him, not to mention that a gift is a convention and that the child cannot know yet what convention is."^{*} Readers, in this example and in a hundred thousand others, I beg you to note how we stuff children's heads with words which have no meaning within their reach and then believe we have instructed them very well.

The thing to do therefore is to go back to the origin of property, for it is there that the first idea of it ought to be born. The child, living in the country, will have gotten some notion of labor in the fields. For this only eyes and leisure are necessary; he will have both. It belongs to every age, especially his, to want to create, imitate, produce, give signs of power and activity. It will not take two experiences of seeing a garden plowed, sowed, sprouting, and growing vegetables for him to want to garden in his turn.

According to the principles previously established, I in no way oppose his desire. On the contrary, I encourage it, I share his taste. I work with him, not for his pleasure, but for mine; at least he believes it to be so. I become his gardener's helper. Until he has arms I plow the earth for him. He takes possession of it by planting a bean in it. And surely this possession is more sacred and more respectable than that taken of South America when Núñez Balboa in the name of the King of Spain planted his standard on the shore of the South Sea.

We come every day to water the beans; with transports of Joy we see them sprout. I increase this joy by saying to him: "This belongs to you." And then, explaining to him this term "belong," I make him feel that he has put his time, his labor, his effort, finally his person there;

^{*}This is why most children want to have back what they have given and cry when one does not want to return it to them. This no longer occurs when they have gotten a good conception of what a gift is, but then they are more circumspect about giving.

that there is in this earth something of himself that he can claim against anyone whomsoever, just as he could withdraw his arm from the hand of another man who wanted to hold on to it in spite of him.²¹

One fine day he arrives eagerly with the watering can in his hand. O what a sight! O pain! All the beans are rooted out, the plot is torn up, the very spot is not to be recognized. O, what has become of my labor, my product, the sweet fruit of my care and my sweat? Who has stolen my goods? Who took my beans from me? This young heart is aroused. The first sentiment of injustice comes to shed its sad bitterness in it. Tears flow in streams. The grieving child fills the air with moans and cries. I partake of his pain, his indignation. We look; we investigate; we make searches.²² Finally we discover that the gardener did the deed. He is summoned.

But we certainly do not get what we expect. The gardener, learning what we are complaining about, begins to complain more loudly than we do. "What, sirs! Is it you who have thus ruined my work? I had sowed Maltese melons there, the seeds of which had been given me as a treasure and with which I hoped to regale you when they were ripe. But now, in order to plant your miserable beans there, you destroyed my melons for me when they were already sprouting, and they can never be replaced. You have done me an irreparable wrong, and you have deprived yourselves of the pleasure of eating exquisite melons."

JEAN-JACQUES: Excuse us, my poor Robert. You had put your labor, your effort there. I see clearly that we did wrong in ruining your work. But we will have other Maltese seeds sent to you. And we will never again work the land before knowing whether someone has put his hand to it before us.

ROBERT: Very well, sirs! You can then take your rest. There is hardly any fallow land left. I work what my father improved. Each in turn does the same, and all the lands you see have been occupied for a long time.

EMILE: Monsieur Robert, are melon seeds often lost then?
ROBERT: Pardon me, my young fellow, but little gentlemen as giddy as you do not often come our way. No one touches his neighbor's garden. Each respects the labor of others so that his own will' be secure.

EMILE: But I don't have a garden.

ROBERT: What do I care? If you ruin mine, I won't let you go around in it any more, for, you see, I don't want to waste my effort.

JEAN-JACQUES: Couldn't we propose an arrangement with the good Robert? Let him grant us, my little friend and me, a corner of his garden to cultivate on the condition that he will have half the produce.

ROBERT: I grant it to you without condition. But remember that I will go and plow up your beans if you touch my melons.

In this model of the way of inculcating primary notions in children one sees how the idea of property naturally goes back to the right of the first occupant by labor. That is clear, distinct, simple, and within the child's reach. From there to the right of property and to exchange there is only a step, after which one must simply stop short.

One sees further that an explanation that I enclose here in two pages of writing will perhaps take a year to put into practice, for in the career of moral ideas one cannot advance too slowly nor consolidate oneself too well at each step. Young masters, think, I beg you, about this example, and remember that in everything your lessons ought to be more in actions than in speeches; for children easily forget what they have said and what has been said to them, but not what they have done and what has been done to them.

As for my pupil, or rather nature's, trained early to be as self-sufficient as possible, he is not accustomed to turning constantly to others; still less is he accustomed to displaying his great learning for them. On the other hand, he judges, he foresees, he reasons in everything immediately related to him. He does not chatter; he acts. He does not know a word of what is going on in society, but he knows very well how to do what suits him. Since he is constantly in motion, he is forced to observe many things, to know many effects. He acquires a large experience early. He gets his lessons from nature and not from men. He instructs himself so much the better because he sees nowhere the intention to instruct him. Thus his body and his mind are exercised together. Acting always according to his own thought and not someone else's, he continually unites two operations: the more he makes himself strong and robust, the more he becomes sensible and judicious. This is the way one day to have what are believed incompatible and what are united in

almost all great men: strength of body and strength of soul; a wise man's reason and an athlete's vigor.

Young teacher, I am preaching a difficult art to you, that of governing without precepts and doing everything by doing nothing. This art, I agree, is not one that goes with your age; it is not fit to make your talents conspicuous from the outset nor to make an impression on fathers. But it is the only one fit for succeeding. You will never get to the point of producing wise men if you do not in the first place produce rascals. This was the education of the Spartans: instead of being glued to books, they began by being taught how to steal their dinner. Were the Spartans as a result crude when grown? Who does not know the force and saltiness of their rejoinders? Always made to conquer, they crushed their enemies in every kind of war; and the Athenian babblers feared their words as much as their blows.

Take an opposite route with your pupil. Let him always believe he is the master, and let it always be you who are. There is no subjection so perfect as that which keeps the appearance of freedom. Thus the will itself is made captive. The poor child who knows nothing, who can do nothing, who has no learning, is he not at your mercy? Do you not dispose, with respect to him, of everything which surrounds him? Are you not the master of affecting him as you please? Are not his labors, his games, his pleasures, his pains, all in your hands without his knowing it? Doubtless he ought to do only what he wants; but he ought to want only what you want him to do. He ought not to make a step without your having foreseen it; he ought not to open his mouth without your knowing what he is going to say.

There was an indolent and lazy child who was to be trained in running—a child not of himself drawn to this exercise or to any other, although he was intended for a military career. He had persuaded himself, I do not know how, that a man of his rank ought to do and know nothing, and that his noble birth was going to take the place of arms and legs as well as of every kind of merit. To make of such a gentleman a light-footed Achilles, the skill of Chiron himself would have hardly sufficed. The difficulty was all the greater since I wanted to prescribe to him absolutely nothing. I had banished from among my rights exhortations, promises, threats, emulation, the desire to be conspicuous. How could I give him the desire to run without saying anything to him? To run myself would have been a very uncertain means and one subject to disadvantages. Moreover, the intention was also to get for him from this exercise

some object of instruction, so as to accustom the operations of the machine and those of judgment always to work harmoniously. Here is how I went about it—I, that is to say, the man who speaks in this example.

In going walking with him in the afternoon I sometimes put in my pocket two cakes of a kind he liked a lot. We each ate one of them during the walk,* and we came back quite contented. One day he noticed that I had three cakes. He could have eaten six of them comfortably. He dispatched his promptly in order to ask for the third. "No," I said to him, "I could very well eat it myself, or we could divide it. But I prefer to see those two little boys there compete for it by running." I called them, showed them the cake, and proposed the condition to them. They asked for nothing better. The cake was set on a large stone which served as the finish. The course was marked out. We went and sat down. At a given signal the little boys started. The victor seized the cake and ate it without mercy before the eyes of the spectators and the vanquished.

This entertainment was better than the cake, but at first it did not register and produced nothing. I did not give up, nor did I hurry; the education of children is a vocation in which one must know how to lose time in order to gain it. We continued our walks. Often we took three cakes, sometimes four, and from time to time there was one, even two for the runners. If the prize was not big, those who competed for it were not ambitious. The one who won it was praised and given a celebration; it was all done with ceremony. To provide variety and increase interest, I marked off a longer course. I allowed several contestants. Hardly were they in the lanes when all the passers-by stopped to see them. Acclamations, shouts, and clapping cheered them on. I sometimes saw my little fellow tremble, get up, and shout when one was near to catching up with or passing another. These were for him the Olympic games.

However, sometimes the contestants cheated. They held onto or tripped one another or pushed pebbles in one another's way. That gave me the occasion to separate them and make them start from different points, although at equal distances from the goal. The reason for this provision will soon be seen, for I am going to treat this important affair in great detail.

*Walk in the country, as will be seen immediately. The public walks of cities are pernicious for children of both sexes. It is there that they begin to become vain and to want to be looked at. It is in the Luxembourg, the Tuileries, especially the Palais-Royal, that the brilliant young of Paris go to get that impertinent and foppish air which makes them so ridiculous and causes them to be hooted and detested throughout Europe.

Irritated by always seeing cakes, which he desired very much for himself, eaten before his eyes, the knight finally got into his head the suspicion that running well could be good for something; and, seeing that he also had two legs, he began to take a try in secret. I was careful not to see a thing. But I understood that my stratagem had worked. When he believed himself to be up to it, and I had read his thought ahead of him, he affected to importune me for the remaining cake. I refused him. He was stubborn and, in a vexed tone, said to me finally. "Very well, put it on the stone, mark out the field, and we shall see." "Good," I said to him, laughing. "Does a knight know how to run? You will get a bigger appetite and nothing to satisfy it with." Goaded by my mockery, he made an effort and carried off the prize, all the more easily since I had made the lists very short and had taken care to keep the best runner away. It can be conceived how, this first step made, it was easy for me to keep him on his toes. Soon he got such a taste for this exercise that without favor he was almost sure of vanquishing my little scamps at running, however long the course.

This accomplishment produced another of which I had not dreamed. When he had rarely carried off the prize, he almost always ate it alone, as did his competitors. But, in accustoming himself to victory, he became generous and often shared with the vanquished. That provided a moral observation for me, and I learned thereby what the true principle of generosity is.

BOOK V

Now we have come to the last act in the drama of youth, but we are not yet at the dénouement. It is not good for man to be alone.¹ Emile is a man. We have promised him a companion. She has to be given to him. That companion is Sophie. In what place is her abode? Where shall we find her? To find her, it is necessary to know her. Let us first learn what she is; then we shall better judge what places she inhabits. And even when we have found her, everything will still not have been done. "Since our young gentleman," says Locke, "is ready to marry, it is time to leave him to his beloved."² And with that he finishes his work. But as I do not have the honor of raising a gentleman, I shall take care not to imitate Locke on this point.

Sophie or the Woman

Sophie ought to be a woman as Emile is a man—that is to say, she ought to have everything which suits the constitution of her species and her sex in order to fill her place in the physical and moral order. Let us begin, then, by examining the similarities and the differences of her sex and ours.

In everything not connected with sex, woman is man. She has the same organs, the same needs, the same faculties. The machine is constructed in the same way; its parts are the same; the one functions as does the other; the form is similar; and in whatever respect one considers them, the difference between them is only one of more or less.

In everything connected with sex, woman and man are in every respect related and in every respect different. The difficulty of comparing them comes from the difficulty of determining what in their constitutions is due to sex and what is not. On the basis of comparative anatomy and even just by inspection, one finds general differences between them that do not appear connected with sex. They are, nevertheless, connected with sex, but by relations which we are not in a position to perceive. We do not know the extent of these relations. The only thing we know with certainty is that everything man and woman have in common belongs to the species, and that everything which distinguishes them belongs to the sex. From this double perspective, we find them related in so many ways and opposed in so many other ways that it is perhaps one of the marvels of nature to have been able to contract two such similar beings who are constituted so differently.

These relations and these differences must have a moral influence. This conclusion is evident to the senses; it is in agreement with our experience; and it shows how vain are the disputes as to whether one of the two sexes is superior or whether they are equal—as though each, in fulfilling nature's ends according to its own particular purpose, were thereby less perfect than if it resembled the other more! In what they have in common, they are equal. Where they differ, they are not comparable. A perfect woman and a perfect man ought not to resemble each other in mind any more than in looks, and perfection is not susceptible of more or less.

In the union of the sexes each contributes equally to the common aim, but not in the same way. From this diversity arises the first assignable difference in the moral relations of the two sexes. One ought to be active and strong, the other passive and weak. One must necessarily will and be able; it suffices that the other put up little resistance.

Once this principle is established, it follows that woman is made specially to please man. If man ought to please her in turn, it is due to a less direct necessity. His merit is in his power; he pleases by the sole fact of his strength. This is not the law of love, I agree. But it is that of nature, prior to love itself.

If woman is made to please and to be subjugated, she ought to make herself agreeable to man instead of arousing him. Her own violence is in her charms. It is by these that she ought to constrain him to find his strength and make use of it. The surest art for animating that strength is to make it necessary by resistance. Then *amour-propre* unites with desire, and the one triumphs in the victory that the other has made him win. From this there arises attack and defense, the audacity of one sex and the timidity of the other, and finally the modesty and the shame with which nature armed the weak in order to enslave the strong.

Who could think that nature has indiscriminately prescribed the same advances to both men and women, and that the first to form desires should also be the first to show them? What a strange depravity of judgment! Since the undertaking has such different consequences for the two sexes, is it natural that they should have the same audacity in abandoning themselves to it? With so great an inequality in what each risks in the union, how can one fail to see that if reserve did not impose on one sex the moderation which nature imposes on the other, the result would soon be the ruin of both, and mankind would perish by the means established for preserving it? If there were some unfortunate

region on earth where philosophy had introduced this practice—especially in hot countries, where more women are born than men—women would be tyrannized by women. For, given the ease with which women arouse men's senses and reawaken in the depths of their hearts the remains of ardors which are almost extinguished, men would finally be their victims and would see themselves dragged to death without ever being able to defend themselves.

If females among the animals do not have the same shame, what follows from that? Do they have, as women do, the unlimited desires to which this shame serves as a brake? For them, desires comes only with need. When the need is satisfied, the desire ceases. They no longer feign to repulse the male* but really do so. They do exactly the opposite of Augustus' daughter; they accept no more passengers when ship has its cargo. Even when they are free, their times of good will are short and quickly pass. Instinct impels them, and instinct stops them. What will be the substitute for this negative instinct when you have deprived women of modesty? To wait until they no longer care for men is equivalent to waiting until they are no longer good for anything.

The Supreme Being wanted to do honor to the human species in everything. While giving man inclinations without limit, He gives him at the same time the law which regulates them, in order that he may be free and in command of himself. While abandoning man to immoderate passions, He joins reason to these passions in order to govern them. While abandoning woman to unlimited desires, He joins modesty to these desires in order to constrain them. In addition, He adds yet another real recompense for the good use of one's faculties—the taste we acquire for decent things when we make them the rule of our actions. All this, it seems to me, is worth more than the instinct of beasts.

Whether the human female shares man's desires or not and wants to satisfy them or not, she repulses him and always defends herself—but not always with the same force or, consequently, with the same success. For the attacker to be victorious, the one who is attacked must permit or arrange it; for does she not have adroit means to force the aggressor to use force? The freest and sweetest of all acts does not admit of real violence. Nature and reason oppose it: nature, in that it

*I have already noticed that affected and provocative refusals are common to almost all females, even among animals, even when they are most disposed to give themselves. One has to have never observed their wives not to agree with this.

has provided the weaker with as much strength as is needed to resist when it pleases her; reason, in that real rape is not only the most brutal of all acts but the one most contrary to its end—either because the man thus declares war on his companion and authorizes her to defend her person and her liberty even at the expense of the aggressor's life, or because the woman alone is the judge of the condition she is in, and a child would have no father if every man could usurp the father's rights.

Here, then, is a third conclusion drawn from the constitution of the sexes—that the stronger appears to be master but actually depends on the weaker. This is due not to a frivolous practice of gallantry or to the proud generosity of a protector, but to an invariable law of nature which gives woman more facility to excite the desires than man to satisfy them. This causes the latter, whether he likes it or not, to depend on the former's wish and constrains him to seek to please her in turn, so that she will consent to let him be the stronger. Then what is sweetest for man in his victory is the doubt whether it is weakness which yields to strength or the will which surrenders. And the woman's usual ruse is always to leave this doubt between her and him. In this the spirit of women corresponds perfectly to their constitution. Far from blushing at their weakness, they make it their glory. Their tender muscles are without resistance. They pretend to be unable to lift the lightest burdens. They would be ashamed to be strong. Why is that? It is not only to appear delicate; it is due to a shrewder precaution. They prepare in advance excuses and the right to be weak in case of need.

The progress of the enlightenment acquired as a result of our vices has greatly changed the old opinions on this point among us. Rapes are hardly ever spoken of anymore, since they are so little necessary and men no longer believe in them.* By contrast, they are very common in early Greek and Jewish antiquity, because those old opinions belong to the simplicity of nature, and only the experience of libertinism has been able to uproot them. If fewer acts of rape are cited in our day, this is surely not because men are more temperate but because they are less credulous, and such a complaint, which previously would have persuaded simple peoples, in our days would succeed only in attracting the laughter of mockers. It is more advantageous to keep quiet. In

*There can be such a disproportion of age and strength that real rape takes place; but treating here the relation between the sexes according to the order of nature, I take them both as they ordinarily are in that relation.

Deuteronomy there is a law by which a girl who had been abused was punished along with her seducer if the offense had been committed in the city. But if it had been committed in the country or in an isolated place, the man alone was punished: "For," the law says, "the girl cried out and was not heard." This benign interpretation taught the girls not to let themselves be surprised in well-frequented places.

The effect of these differences of opinion about morals is evident. Modern gallantry is their work. Finding that their pleasures depended more on the will of the fair sex than they had believed, men have captivated that will by attentions for which the fair sex has amply compensated them.

Observe how the physical leads us unawares to the moral, and how the sweetest laws of love are born little by little from the coarse union of the sexes. Women possess their empire not because men wanted it that way, but because nature wants it that way. It belonged to women before they appeared to have it. The same Hercules who believed he raped the fifty daughters of Thespius was nevertheless constrained to weave while he was with Omphale; and the strong Samson was not strong as Delilah.⁵ This empire belongs to women and cannot be taken from them, even when they abuse it. If they could ever lose it, they would have done so long ago.

There is no parity between the two sexes in regard to the consequences of sex. The male is male only at certain moments. The female is female her whole life or at least during her whole youth. Everything constantly recalls her sex to her; and, to fulfill its functions well, she needs a constitution which corresponds to it. She needs care during her pregnancy; she needs rest at the time of childbirth; she needs a soft and sedentary life to suckle her children; she needs patience and gentleness, a zeal and an affection that nothing can rebuff in order to raise her children. She serves as the link between them and their father; she alone makes him love them and gives him the confidence to call them his own. How much tenderness and care is required to maintain the union of the whole family! And, finally, all this must come not from virtues but from tastes, or else the human species would soon be extinguished.

The strictness of the relative duties of the two sexes is not and cannot be the same. When woman complains on this score about unjust man-made inequality, she is wrong. This inequality is not a human institution—or, at least, it is the work not of prejudice but of reason. It is up to the sex that nature has charged with the bearing of children to

be responsible for them to the other sex. Doubtless it is not permitted to anyone to violate his faith, and every unfaithful husband who deprives his wife of the only reward of the austere duties of her sex is an unjust and barbarous man. But the unfaithful woman does more; she dissolves the family and breaks all the bonds of nature. In giving the man children which are not his, she betrays both. She joins perfidy to infidelity. I have difficulty seeing what disorders and what crimes do not flow from this one. If there is a frightful condition in the world, it is that of an unhappy father who, lacking confidence in his wife, does not dare to yield to the sweetest sentiments of his heart, who wonders, in embracing his child, whether he is embracing another's, the token of his dishonor, the plunderer of his own children's property. What does the family become in such a situation if not a society of secret enemies whom a guilty woman arms against one another in forcing them to feign mutual love?

It is important, then, not only that a woman be faithful, but that she be judged to be faithful by her husband, by those near her, by everyone. It is important that she be modest, attentive, reserved, and that she give evidence of her virtue to the eyes of others as well as to her own conscience. If it is important that a father love his children, it is important that he esteem their mother. These are the reasons which put even appearances among the duties of women, and make honor and reputation no less indispensable to them than chastity. There follows from these principles, along with the moral difference of the sexes, a new motive of duty and propriety which prescribes especially to women the most scrupulous attention to their conduct, their manners, and their bearing. To maintain vaguely that the two sexes are equal and that their duties are the same, is to lose oneself in vain declaiming, it is to say nothing so long as one does not respond to these considerations.

Is it not a sound way of reasoning to present exceptions in response to such well-grounded general laws? Women, you say, do not always produce children? No, but their proper purpose is to produce them. What! Because there are a hundred big cities in the universe where women living in license produce few children, you claim that it is proper to woman's status to produce few children! And what would become of your cities if women living more simply and more chastely far away in the country did not make up for the sterility of the city ladies? In how many provinces are women who have only produced

four or five children taken to be infecund!*

Finally, what does it matter that this or that woman produces few children? Is woman's status any less that of motherhood, and is it not by general laws that nature and morals ought to provide for this status?

Even if there were intervals as long as one supposes between pregnancies, will a woman abruptly and regularly change her way of life without peril and risk? Will she be nurse today and warrior tomorrow? Will she change temperament and tastes as a chameleon does colors? Will she suddenly go from shade, enclosure, and domestic cares to the harshness of the open air, the labors, the fatigues, and the perils of war? Will she be fearful† at one moment and brave at another, delicate at one moment and robust at another? If young people raised in Paris have difficulty enduring the profession of arms, will women, who have never endured the sun and hardly know how to walk, endure it after fifty years of softness? Will they take up this harsh profession at the age when men leave it?

There are countries where women give birth almost without pain and nurse their children almost without effort. I admit it. But in these same countries the men go half naked at all times, vanquish ferocious beasts, carry a canoe like a knapsack, pursue the hunt for up to seven or eight hundred leagues, sleep in the open air on the ground, bear unbelievable fatigues, and go several days without eating. When women become robust, men become still more so. When men get soft, women get even softer. When the two change equally, the difference remains the same.

In his *Republic*, Plato gives women the same exercises as men.⁶ I can well believe it! Having removed private families from his regime and no longer knowing what to do with women, he found himself forced to make them men. That noble genius had planned everything, foreseen everything. He was forestalling an objection that perhaps no one would have thought of making to him, but he provided a poor solution to the one which is made to him. I am not speaking of that alleged community of women; the often repeated reproach on this point proves that those who make it against him have never read him. I am speaking of that

*Without that, the species would necessarily fade away. In order for it to be preserved, every woman must, everything considered, produce nearly four children; for nearly half of the children who are born die before they can have others, and the two remaining ones are needed to represent the father and the mother. See if the cities will provide you with this population.

†The timidity of women is another instinct of nature against the double risk they run during their pregnancy.

civil promiscuity which throughout confounds the two sexes in the same employments and in the same labors and which cannot fail to engender the most intolerable abuses. I speak of that subversion of the sweetest sentiments of nature, sacrificed to an artificial sentiment which can only be maintained by them—as though there were no need for a natural base on which to form conventional ties; as though the love of one's nearest were not the principle of the love one owes the state; as though it were not by means of the small fatherland which is the family that the heart attaches itself to the large one; as though it were not the good son, the good husband, and the good father who make the good citizen!

Once it is demonstrated that man and woman are not and ought not to be constituted in the same way in either character or temperament, it follows that they ought not to have the same education. In following nature's directions, man and woman ought to act in concert, but they ought not to do the same things. The goal of their labors is common, but their labors themselves are different, and consequently so are the tastes directing them. After having tried to form the natural man, let us also see how the woman who suits this man ought to be formed so that our work will not be left imperfect.

Do you wish always to be well guided? Then always follow nature's indications. Everything that characterizes the fair sex ought to be respected as established by nature. You constantly say, "Women have this or that failing which we do not have." Your pride deceives you. They would be failings for you; they are their good qualities. Everything would go less well if they did not have these qualities. Prevent these alleged failings from degenerating, but take care not to destroy them.

For their part, women do not cease to proclaim that we raise them to be vain and coquettish, that we constantly entertain them with puerilities in order to remain more easily their masters. They blame on us the failings for which we reproach them. What folly! And since when is it that men get involved in the education of girls? Who prevents their mothers from raising them as they please? They have no colleges. What a great misfortune! Would God that there were none for boys; they would be more sensibly and decently raised! Are your daughters forced to waste their time in silliness? Are they made in spite of themselves to spend half their lives getting dressed up, following the example you set them? Are you prevented from instructing them and

having them instructed as you please? Is it our fault that they please us when they are pretty, that their mincing ways seduce us, that the art which they learn from you attracts us and pleases us, that we like to see them tastefully dressed, that we let them sharpen at their leisure the weapons with which they subjugate us? So, decide to raise them like men. The men will gladly consent to it! The more women want to resemble them, the less women will govern them, and then men will truly be the masters.

All the faculties common to the two sexes are not equally distributed between them; but taken together, they balance out. Woman is worth more as woman and less as man. Wherever she makes use of her rights, she has the advantage. Wherever she wants to usurp ours, she remains beneath us. One can respond to this general truth only with exceptions, the constant mode of argument of the gallant partisans of the fair sex.

To cultivate man's qualities in women and to neglect those which are proper to them is obviously to work to their detriment. Crafty women see this too well to be duped by it. In trying to usurp our advantages, they do not abandon theirs. But it turns out that they are unable to manage both well—because the two are incompatible—and they remain beneath their own level without getting up to ours, thus losing half their value. Believe me, judicious mother, do not make a decent man of your daughter, as though you would give nature the lie.⁷ Make a decent woman of her, and be sure that as a result she will be worth more for herself and for us.

Does it follow that she ought to be raised in ignorance of everything and limited to the housekeeping functions alone? Will man turn his companion into his servant? Will he deprive himself of the greatest charm of society with her? In order to make her more subject, will he prevent her from feeling anything, from knowing anything? Will he make her into a veritable automaton? Surely not. It is not thus that nature has spoken in giving women such agreeable and nimble minds. On the contrary, nature wants them to think, to judge, to love, to know, to cultivate their minds as well as their looks. These are the weapons nature gives them to take the place of the strength they lack and to direct ours. They ought to learn many things but only those that are suitable for them to know.

Whether I consider the particular purpose of the fair sex, whether I observe its inclinations, whether I consider its duties, all join equally in

indicating to me the form of education that suits it. Woman and man are made for one another, but their mutual dependence is not equal. Men depend on women because of their desires; women depend on men because of both their desires and their needs. We would survive more easily without them than they would without us. For them to have what is necessary to their station, they depend on us to give it to them, to want to give it to them, to esteem them worthy of it. They depend on our sentiments, on the value we set on their merit, on the importance we attach to their charms and their virtues. By the very law of nature women are at the mercy of men's judgments, as much for their own sake as for that of their children. It is not enough that they be estimable; they must be esteemed. It is not enough for them to be pretty; they must please. It is not enough for them to be temperate; they must be recognized as such. Their honor is not only in their conduct but in their reputation; and it is not possible that a woman who consents to be regarded as disreputable can ever be decent. When a man acts well, he depends only on himself and can brave public judgment; but when a woman acts well, she has accomplished only half of her task, and what is thought of her is no less important to her than what she actually is. From this it follows that the system of woman's education ought to be contrary in this respect to the system of our education. Opinion is the grave of virtue among men and its throne among women.