

**È TON PAIDON AGOGÈ, BEING A
COLLECTION OF LETTERS ON
EARLY EDUCATION AND ITS
INFLUENCE IN THE PREVENTION
OF CRIME**

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THOMAS FORSTER

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65.

Η ΤΩΝ ΠΑΙΔΩΝ ΑΓΩΓΗ

BEING A *Phil 675*

COLLECTION OF LETTERS,

OR

EARLY EDUCATION,

AND ITS INFLUENCE

IN THE

PREVENTION OF CRIME.

*Μοχθος μὲν τὸλιγος, τὸ δὲ μύρον αἰτικ' οὐκ οὐκ
Γαῖ' ἐπιφροσύνης αἰετὸς πεφυλαγμένῳ ἀνδρὶ.*

Quo semel est imbuta recens servabit odorem
Testa diu.

By T. FORSTER, M.B. FRAS FLS., Hon. M. Med. Chir. S. CORRESPONDING
MEMB. OF THE ACAD. SCIENCES PHIL., CORR. MEMB. OF
THE ACADEMIE ROYALE etc.

HONORARY FOREIGN SECRETARY OF THE ANIMALS FRIEND SOCIETY.

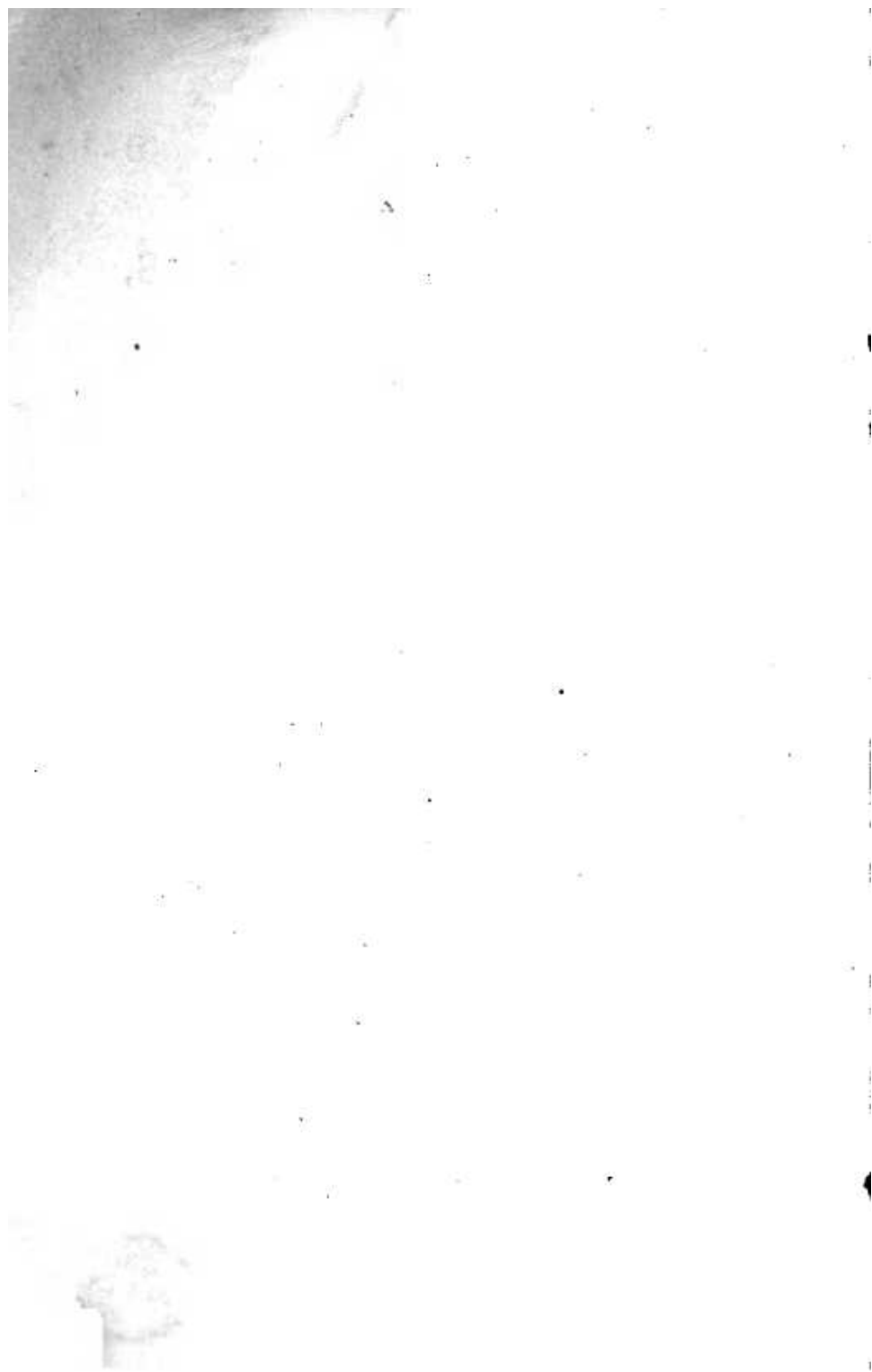
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1844.





Phil 615

P R E F A C E.

At every period of the world, as far back as history written or traditional enables us to look into past ages, and thence to trace the progress of the human understanding, as society advances, down to our days, we find a popular complaint of the badness of the times, of the corrupt state of public morals and of the frightful prevalence of crime. If we begin at the earliest period and descend through each succeeding century to our own, we find the same lamentation in every age and country. There are always croakers too who on a grand scale cry out; —

*Aetas parentum pejor avis tulit
Nos nequiores mox daturos
Progeniem vitiosiore.*

And while the exact historian finds the same crimes in every age, modified only by circumstances; while the speculative philosopher contents himself with referring all to the hidden source of evil in general; the practical political œconomist seeks for the remedy in various schemes, and proposes endless plans for bettering the condition of the people, which fail, one after the other, and leave society just where it was, the prey of enormous public delinquency.

If we believe what we read in the daily newspapers, crime must be rather on the increase in England, and cannot be much lessened anywhere. It is therefore evident that the plans hitherto adopted for the amelioration of society have failed.

It appears to me that, as far as it goes, the method of education used by the Jesuits is the best which has yet been acted on. But independent of the fact that few persons, in proportion to the whole mass, can avail themselves of this advantageous schooling, there are moreover many things to be done which have hitherto been over-

looked, before we can expect much improvement in the functions of this branch of moral science.

Phrenology has added prodigiously to our means of education, in enabling us to discover the natural propensities of children by indubitable outward signs. But this study has also led to the knowledge of another fact of parallel importance, namely that the character may be so materially altered for better or worse, in early life, by precept, and above all by example, that the very organization itself shall undergo changes in its essential nature.

Deeply impressed with this important fact, I sought for those general faults of education which, by corrupting children, tended to demoralize society. And I found the most influential to be the one which has been the most generally overlooked, namely the vitiating power of early scenes of cruelty to animals on the young mind; which by exciting the worst passions of our nature, actually prepare young persons for the commission of those appalling offenses that endanger the peace and security of society. I therefore

collected together some hasty letters and essays which I had written on this subject, with a view of offering them, as I now do, to the consideration of the public; reserving for a future occasion an interesting collection of illustrative anecdotes.

In the mean time I wish to guard against a misapprehension which, in the present position of the Education Question, might be dangerous; — In proposing to remodel our plans of bringing up children and to banish from the nursery and school many things formerly permitted, agreeably to the sound and philanthropical views of the Animals Friend Society, I by no means intend to interfere with existing institutions, much less to wrest education away from the catholic clergy, in whose hands, as guardians of public religion and morals, it ought to remain; but merely to carry out, to a greater length than has been hitherto done, the humane principles of Cardinal Bellarmine, and other talented fathers of the church, who have maintained the sinfulness of invading unnecessarily the rights of animals; and to prove by an appeal to ex-

perience, that every species of cruelty and injustice towards them entails a vitious retaliation on ourselves, which is manifested in the social crimes by which we are surrounded; and that in fact, the neglect of our duties towards animals has been the cause of the principal evils suffered by man; according to that constant law of reaction which we call vindictive Justice, and from whose flail no living being can escape; as I have shewn by some remarkable instances of its operation.

I could wish that this work were better done, and that I had possessed time and patience to correct it: but imperfect as may be the execution, the subject itself is so important, that I feel no apology to be necessary for this imperfect endeavour to bring it before the general contemplation of the public in this vaunted age of improvement.

As early as the year 1813 I wrote a small tract on the advantages which might be derived from the introduction of phrenology into England by the works of Dr Gall. This tract was read before a small Philosophical Society at Cambridge consisting of MM. Herschel, Babbage, Whewell