

THE EDUCATION OF THE FEELINGS

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The Education of the Feelings by Charles Bray

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CHARLES BRAY

**THE EDUCATION
OF THE FEELINGS**



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EDUCATION OF THE FEELINGS.

BY CHARLES BRAY.

SECOND EDITION.

London :

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.

1849.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

MOST of what was valuable in the first edition of this little work, relative to the management of children, I owed to a friend, the greater part of whose life had been devoted to home education. She is now no more; and owing to my own small experience in the active training of children, it does not enter into my design in this republication to add materially to the few practical hints which her experience suggested. The observation of the last ten years has brought me to the conclusion, that no very definite rules can be laid down for the management of the young,—all children requiring different treatment according to the difference of their dispositions,—and that there is but one great rule unvaryingly applicable—viz., to be ourselves what we would wish our children to be. Precept, without this, is comparatively useless; children's minds are fed and formed by the mental atmosphere which surrounds them; if we are selfish, they will become so too; if our morality and religion are little more than deference to public opinion, we must not expect that any higher feeling than love of applause will be developed under our guidance. We may more easily

deceive ourselves in the knowledge of our own hearts, than we can deceive children, who, with their bright, unsophisticated vision, early learn to distinguish between truth and shams. Immediately children are entrusted to us a kind of second education commences in ourselves: all that we say, do, and even feel, is imitated—we see the reflex of ourselves in others, and, startled into consciousness by the *fac simile*, frequently for the first time begin to inquire what we are, and what we ought to be. In the course of our own early training, our immature powers were incapable of reflecting upon the nature of the different feelings which influenced us; but now, when we have to direct others, we feel that above all things a correct analysis of the heart is necessary. The object of this present edition is not so much to assist in the direct education of children, as in this second education of ourselves; to aid self-knowledge and self-development, and to enable us to distinguish clearly the higher from the inferior or selfish feelings. Education goes on through life, and whether the object be the education of ourselves or children, it is desirable that we should know clearly what we would do, and what we would not do. Without a systematic knowledge of the human feelings and faculties this is impossible, as the object of all training is the developing and perfecting of all the faculties which make a

complete man. As an illustration of the necessity of such a knowledge let us take the compound nature of love. The love of sex, of children, of friends, of mankind, have all a different source in the mental constitution: each requires different management; the consequences of such management are distinctly marked in after life, and no error could be more serious than that which should confound the sources of these diverse primitive feelings under the general term of love.

The time seems now to have arrived when education, as a science, must be inseparably blended with mental philosophy. Custom and tradition no longer rule men's minds, and it is to the dictates of our highest moral faculties—to the moral law written by God in our hearts, that we must look for a more definite ruler in their place. Religious sects are more and more divided, and therefore cannot be trusted for a correct interpretation of God's will, and we are called upon diligently to compare their dogmas with the revelation he has given of Himself in his works. If we would ascertain the purposes for which God has formed us, let us study the nature of the faculties with which he has endowed us, and by making use of each faculty in the direction for which its nature shows it was evidently intended, we shall best fulfil His end and aim.

Roschill, September 3, 1849.

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