

## On the Government of the Thoughts

5. We should be curious too in the choice of the books we peruse, as another thing that will very much influence our way of thinking, and either greatly improve or greatly corrupt our notions and opinions.

For what we peruse not only diverts and employs the mind for the present, but also leaveth a flavor and relish behind it. We chew the cud as it were and ruminate upon it afterwards; and the same thoughts frequently occur to us, the same notions still remain with us, though perhaps we have forgotten from what source they were borrowed.

Reading is the food of the mind, and we should take care to supply it with wholesome provisions to nourish and strengthen it, and not with unclean meats to enervate and pollute it. For there are too many books in the world, and I wish they were not in too many hands and too well known to be particularly enumerated, which represent vice in the the most pleasing dress, give us false ideas of love and honor, ridicule all notions of decency and virtue; and are read most by the young and unexperienced, where they are likely to make the deepest impression.

But God be thanked, there is a number of good books... and to the treasures of ancient learning we may add the improvements of the moderns, so that we need never be at loss for proper entertainment and employment for our thoughts.

And above all books there is the book of God, which as the apostle says (1 Tim. III. 15, 16, 17.) "is able to make us wise unto salvation, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," and all good thoughts.

(The Works of the Right Reverend Thomas Newton... Vol. III, 2nd. Edition, London, MDCCLXXXVII, 52-53, e-book, Text and paragraph structure modified)