

LOCKE AND LIBERTY

As an articulate champion of liberty and toleration, of common sense and healthy measure in all things, England's John Locke (1632-1704) became in many respects the guiding spirit for America's Founding Fathers. His perception that personal freedom requires the private ownership of property remains a cornerstone of American political thought. Nonetheless, Locke is a hazy figure to most Americans, even as they approach the 1987 bicentennial of the Constitution, which embraces many of his ideas. Here, Maurice Cranston reviews the man's life and work.

by Maurice Cranston

Among the philosophers of the modern world, John Locke has always been held in especially high regard in America. His influence on the Founding Fathers exceeded that of any other thinker. And the characteristically American attitude toward politics—indeed, toward life—can still be thought of as “Lockean,” with its deep attachment to the rule of law, to equal rights to life, liberty, and property, to work and enterprise, to religious toleration, to science, progress, and pragmatism.

Like the Founders, Locke had participated in a revolution—the bloodless Glorious Revolution of 1688-89, in which the English overthrew the despotic King James II to install the constitutional monarchy of William and Mary and confirm Parliament's supremacy. Locke had justified that rebellion in his writings with arguments against “unjust and unlawful force,” arguments that were cited as no less powerful in the American Colonies during the 1770s.

Earlier philosophers had theorized about justice, order, authority, and peace. Locke was the first to build a system around *liberty*.

Locke's chief works—*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, *Two Treatises of Government*, and his first *Letter Concerning Toleration*, all published in London in 1689-90—spoke in terms that Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and other Americans recognized. Men were created equal by God and endowed by Him with natural rights; the earth was given by God to men to cultivate by



John Locke (1689) by Dutch painter Herman Verelst.

their own endeavors, so that each could earn a right to property (“the chief end” of society) by the application of his labor to the improvement of nature. In the New World, Locke’s message received a warmer welcome than in crowded, feudal Europe.

The practical men who led the American Revolution and wrote the Constitution and the Bill of Rights recognized Locke as a Christian, like themselves, who had discarded nonessential dogmas and yet retained a pious faith in the Creator and in the Puritan virtues of probity and industry. Other European philosophers influenced the Framers’ thinking: Montesquieu (1689–1755) contributed a republican element and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78) a democratic element, neither present in the constitutional-monarchist system of Locke. But the French philosophers, though they worked in a field prepared by Locke, did not have his hold on the American mind.

But who *was* John Locke?

Paintings, including a 1672 portrait by John Greenhill that Locke admired, show a tall, lean, and handsome man with a dimpled chin and large, dark, languorous eyes. He had asthma; one of his teachers, the great medical scientist Thomas Sydenham, urged him to rest much to conserve the “needful heat.” A contemporary at Oxford called him a “turbulent spirit, clamorous and never contented,” who

could be "prating and troublesome." The earl of Shaftesbury, his long-time patron, thought him a "genius."

So, apparently, did Locke. His self-esteem shows in the understated Latin epitaph he wrote for himself before he died at age 73. The plaque at the Essex church where he was buried describes him as merely a scholar "contented with his modest lot," who "devoted his studies wholly to the pursuit of truth."

Locke was never a candid man. He had an almost Gothic love of mystery. A Tory spy once wrote that at Oxford Locke "lives a very cunning unintelligible life"; he was often absent, but "no one knows whither he goes." In his letters and notebooks, he used ciphers and a shorthand system modified for purposes of concealment. Yet a picture emerges from these and other sources: Locke was one of the most adept, compelling, and idiosyncratic "new men" to rise in what he called "this great Bedlam," 17th-century England.

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John Locke was born on August 29, 1632, at Wrington in Somerset in the west of England, where modern commerce first began to challenge the old medieval order. His grandfather, Nicholas Locke, was a successful clothier. His less prosperous father, John Locke, was a lawyer and clerk to the local magistrates. His mother came from a family of tanners; she was 35 when her first child, the future philosopher, was born; her husband was only 26. The baby was baptized by Samuel Crook, a leading Puritan intellectual, and brought up in an atmosphere of Calvinist austerity and discipline.

England was Bedlam partly because of tension between the arrogant, authoritarian, and High Anglican King Charles and the increasingly assertive and Puritan House of Commons. In 1642, when Locke was 10 years old, the Civil War began between the Royalist forces (the Cavaliers) and the Parliamentary army (the Roundheads). The struggle was religious and social as well as political. The ultimately victorious Parliamentarians tended to be drawn not from the traditionalists of the Church of England and the leaders of feudal society, but from the Calvinists and Puritans, men from England's "new class" of rising merchants.

Among these were Locke's Devonshire cousins, named King, who rose swiftly from the trade of grocers to that of lawyers, and then via Parliament to the nobility itself. Young John, too, would

Maurice Cranston, 65, a former Wilson Center Guest Scholar, is professor of political science at the London School of Economics. Born in London, he was educated in England at St. Catherine's College and Oxford. His books include John Stuart Mill (1965), Jean-Jacques, The Early Life and Work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 1712-54 (1982), and the recently reissued John Locke: A Biography.

benefit from England's great upheaval.

During the Civil War, his father was made a captain of Parliamentary Horse by Alexander Popham, a rich local magistrate turned Roundhead colonel. Popham became fond of his captain's son. When Westminster, the country's best boarding school, was taken over by Parliament, Popham found a place there for the boy.

That was the *first* stroke of fortune that would assist Locke's rise from the lower- to the upper-middle class—a group whose aspirations he may have reflected when, as a political philosopher, he gave the right to property first priority among the rights of man.

At Westminster, Locke was influenced by headmaster Richard Busby, a Royalist whom the Parliamentary governors had imprudently allowed to remain in charge of the school. By the time Locke won a scholarship to Oxford's premier college, Christ Church, which he entered at age 20, he was well ready to react against the rule of the Puritan "saints" at the university.* By 27, Locke had become a right-wing monarchist; by 1661, when he was 29, and the Restoration had put the deposed king's son Charles II on the throne, Locke's political views were close to those of the conservative thinker of the previous generation, Thomas Hobbes.

In a pamphlet Locke wrote at that time, he said that no one had more "veneration for authority than I." Having been born in a political "storm" that had "lasted almost hitherto," he had been led by the calm that the Restoration brought to value "obedience."

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By his early 30s, Locke was less interested in politics than in medicine, a new subject at Oxford. During the summer of 1666, he chanced to perform a small medical service for a student's father, Anthony Ashley Cooper, the future earl of Shaftesbury and leader of the Whig party, champion of the rights of Parliament over the Crown.† Even then Shaftesbury, a wealthy Presbyterian, was a vocal political "liberal," the chief foe of measures designed by the Anglican majority to curb the freedom of religious Nonconformists. If Locke had not already come over to Shaftesbury's views, the earl must soon have pulled him across the last few hurdles.

At 35, Locke went to live at Shaftesbury's London house as his physician. After he saved the earl from the threat of a cyst of the liver, Shaftesbury decided that Locke was too talented to be spending his time on medicine alone, and work of other kinds was found for

*The Oxford routine was still medieval. Undergraduates had to rise at 5:00 A.M. to attend chapel, and do four hours' work in Hall before supper at noon. Conversation with tutors, and among students in Hall, had to be in Latin. Students had to hear at least two sermons a day, and visit their tutors nightly "to hear private prayers and to give an account of the time spent that day."

†The name Whig seems to have come from *Whiggamore*, a term for "horse thief" used by 17th-century Anglicans or "Tories" to express scorn for Scottish Presbyterians.

him. Thus began Locke's 15-year association with a powerful patron.

Gradually, Locke discovered his true gifts. First he became a philosopher. At Oxford he had been bored with the medieval Aristotelian philosophy still taught there. Reading French rationalist René Descartes first opened his eyes to the "new philosophy" that was providing the underpinnings of modern empirical science. Discussions with Shaftesbury and other friends led him to begin writing early drafts of the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, his masterpiece on epistemology, the study of how we know what we know.

Shaftesbury, short, ugly, and vain, shared Locke's interest in philosophy and science. He was pragmatic: Though anti-Catholic, he thought that religious toleration would help unite the nation, the better to pursue the kind of commercial imperialism that was proving so profitable for the seafaring Dutch.

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Charles II, though he favored toleration primarily for the sake of Catholic recusants, agreed with Shaftesbury. In 1672, the king made Shaftesbury his chief minister, lord high chancellor. But the two soon fell out. Shaftesbury came to believe that England's main rival in trade and her potential enemy was not Holland but France, while Charles II remained strongly pro-French. Ousted as the king's minister, Shaftesbury became his leading adversary.

Later, when Charles II refused to deny his brother, a professed Catholic, the right to succeed him as James II, Shaftesbury tried to get the House of Commons to make the succession illegal. The people, he said, had a right to say who should rule. When Charles resisted, Shaftesbury called on his allies to rebel. The plot was nipped, and in 1682 the earl fled to Holland, where he soon died.

Locke, too, went to Amsterdam. One year later he was expelled *in absentia* from his "studentship" at Oxford by the king's command. The next summer, after Charles II's death and James's accession to the throne, the duke of Monmouth led a failed rebellion against the new king. Locke, named by the government as one of Monmouth's agents in Holland, went into hiding as "Dr. van der Linden."

Locke's friends in Holland included many of those who plotted with the Dutch prince William of Orange to topple James II, who was indeed deposed in 1688. We do not know how deeply Locke was involved, only that he returned to London in 1689 with William's wife Mary, the new English queen.

These were the events behind Locke's most famous works.

By the time the *Two Treatises of Government* appeared, Englishmen had come round to Shaftesbury's view: They justified deposing James II not just because he advanced Catholicism, but also because he had tried to be an absolute monarch like France's Louis

XIV. In his preface, Locke said that he hoped the *Two Treatises* would help “justify the title of King William to rule us.” But he did most of the writing when Charles II was king. Then, the question of whether a people had the right to rebel against their ruler was not a backward-looking moral issue but a forward-looking moral challenge.

Thomas Hobbes wrote *Leviathan* (1651) to provide new reasons for men to obey kings. In the *Two Treatises*, Locke used Hobbes’s “social contract” to justify revolt against despots.

Hobbes’s social contract united men, whom he viewed as natural enemies, in a civil society with a common purpose. Locke did not see men as enemies. He took a Christian view. He argued that men were subject, even in a state of nature, to natural law, which was ultimately God’s law made known to men through the voice of reason.

Hobbes’s theory had simplicity: Either you are ruled or you are not ruled, either you have obedience or you have liberty, either you have security and fetters or you have chaos and danger. Neither condition is ideal, said Hobbes, but the worst government was better than none at all.

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The Lockean analysis was less pessimistic.

Locke believed that men could be both ruled and free. While subject to natural law, men also had natural rights—notably rights to life, liberty, and property. These rights were retained when men contracted to form political societies. Instead of surrendering their freedom to a sovereign, as Hobbes suggested, men had merely *entrusted* power to a ruler. In return for justice and mutual security, they had agreed to obey their rulers, on condition that their natural rights were respected. Natural rights, being derived from natural law, were rooted in something higher than the edicts of princes, namely the edicts of God. They were “inalienable.”

Locke’s “right to revolution”—to reject a ruler who failed to respect natural rights—thus derived not only from the social contract but also from the supremacy of God’s law to man’s. People who might have misunderstood, or been unimpressed by, the social contract in abstract philosophy could appreciate the principle that God’s law is higher than that of kings. And while Locke based his politics on religion, his was not the astringent faith of the Catholics or of Calvin, but that watered-down Christianity later known as Modernism.*

Locke’s writing during his stay in Holland included a travel journal. It revealed how he would visit some great cathedral or chateau, but then take an interest only in working out the exact dimensions.

*Locke rejected original sin. He maintained in *The Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695) that Christ had come into the world not to redeem wrongdoing man, but to bring immortality to the righteous. Locke, a professed Anglican, here argued like a Unitarian, though he felt that word conjured up the unpopular image of a skeptical dissenter.

LOCKE'S 'SHATTERED AND GIDDY' ENGLAND

The tremors that rocked John Locke's times echo in his letters. England's fissures—between Crown and Parliament, Anglicans and Dissenters, aristocrats and achievers, rich and poor—had left a “shattered and giddy nation,” he wrote at age 27. Few men “enjoy the privilege of being sober.”

During the century before Locke's birth in 1632, England's population almost doubled, topping five million in 1640. But with growth came several woes: rising prices, falling “real” wages, and poor harvests and frequent famines caused by a miniature global ice age that lasted from about 1550 to 1700. While England was a naval power, as the 1588 defeat of the Spanish Armada had shown, the Dutch were far ahead in turning maritime prowess to profit.

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But business was becoming important: Retail shops created by a new breed of merchant began to replace the old market fairs. Abroad, firms chartered by the Crown traded English woolens and African slaves for West Indian molasses and sugar and American fish and timber; the East India Company (est. 1600) dealt in textiles and tea. Commerce had not (yet) remade England; if Locke's home county, Somerset, prospered from new industries (notably clothing), it was also plagued by such poverty that people, wrote one chronicler, “hanged themselves from want.” But, slowly, medieval England was becoming the mercantile nation that, by the 18th century, would create the British Empire.

Authority was eroding. The Roman Catholic Church's supremacy had been broken by the Protestantism that had arrived via Martin Luther's Germany and Huldrych Zwingli's and John Calvin's Switzerland, and by King Henry VIII's 1534 creation of the Church of England. And while the peerage was still dominant, the expanding landed gentry and the new commercial class now had to be heard. By the early 17th century, as historian Lawrence Stone has noted, “respectful subservience [to aristocracy] was breaking down.”

King Charles I (1625–49), was besieged by troubles. Suspected by his Protestant subjects of “popish” leanings, he waged an unpopular war in Europe and, later, failed to secure Parliament's support in his effort to quash rebellion in Scotland, leading to the Civil War in 1642. The pro-Parliament Roundheads tended to be Calvinists (Presbyterians), Puritans, or Protestant

He detested ceremonies and show, which he thought irrational and wasteful, and was pleased to find that one of the best Dutch universities had nondescript architecture. It proved “that knowledge depends not on the stateliness of buildings, etc.”

“Knowledge” is the key word. Locke's philistinism was no aberration. He wanted to get away from the imagination, from the vague glamour of medieval things, from unthinking adherence to tradition, from enthusiasm, mysticism, and glory; away from all private, visionary insights and down to the plain, demonstrable facts. This was central to his mission as a philosopher and reformer. His antipathy to poetry and imaginative artists was coupled with scorn for ivory-tower

Nonconformists—the rising merchants and the gentry. The royalist Cavaliers were High Church or Catholic aristocrats. The 1648 triumph of the Parliamentary Army under (among others) the ardent Puritan, Oliver Cromwell, was to an extent a victory—and not the final one—of the “new” middle-class England. Soon after, the English did what most Europeans then considered unthinkable: They beheaded their king and established a commonwealth.

Within five years, Cromwell assumed absolute power. His Protectorate was austere. Fancy dress, amusements such as alehouses and horseraces, and lively arts such as theater were discouraged. The Puritan zealots who controlled Oxford, wrote one of Locke’s contemporaries, enjoyed “laughing at a man in a cassock or canonical coat.” They would “tipple” in their chambers, but would not enter taverns or permit such diversions as “Maypoles, Morrisies [folk dances], Whitsun ales, nay, scarce wakes.” So unpopular were Puritan efforts to impose moral discipline that most Englishmen joined Locke in hailing the Restoration of Charles II in 1660. But the monarchy would never be the same. After Charles’s successor, James II, was deposed, William and Mary became England’s first constitutional monarchs. Merriment returned to everyday life. At Oxford, nearly 400 taverns flourished, as did, said one critic, “easy manners, immorality, loose language, disrespect.”

While Protestantism—particularly Puritanism—played a large role in 17th-century politics, its influence went further. In the arts, it infused the epic poem *Paradise Lost* (1667), John Milton’s eloquent attempt to “justify God’s ways to man.” In science, the mental traits fostered by Protestantism—individualism, skepticism of authority—were central.

Early in the century Francis Bacon had called for close scrutiny of the natural world, for the adoption of the experimental method, and for an inductive style of reasoning. Among those who heeded him were Isaac Newton, Robert Boyle, and William Harvey, the pioneering anatomist. All helped dispose of scholasticism, the medieval system of inquiry that proceeded, in Aristotelian style, by deduction from untestable assumptions. The “new science” that they espoused encouraged a radical reconsideration of all areas of thought—in political theory, in economics, and in philosophy itself. It was, of course, an upheaval to which Locke himself made vital contributions.

scholars who talk “with but one sort of men and read but one sort of books.” They “canton out to themselves a little Goshen in the intellectual world where the light shines . . . but will not venture out into the great ocean of knowledge.”

Locke’s venturing made him a polymath, but he was in no sense a smatterer. True, his expertness was not equal in all the subjects he chose to study. Compared to his friends, chemist Robert Boyle and Sir Isaac Newton, the great physicist, he was an amateurish scientist. His knowledge of the Scriptures was questionable. Although he wrote influential essays on monetary policy, he could not appreciate the subtlety of other economists. But what was important in Locke’s case

was not his versatility, but that each department of knowledge was related in his mind to all the others.

In the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke says in the opening "Epistle" that in an age of such "master builders" as Boyle, Sydenham, and "the incomparable Mr. Newton" it is "ambition enough to be employed as an under-laborer in clearing the ground a little and removing some of the rubbish that lies in the way of knowledge." Locke did much more than that: The *Essay* provides the first modern philosophy of science.

A recurrent word in the work is a Cartesian one, "idea." Locke's usage is curious. He does not merely say that we have ideas in our minds when we think; he says that we have ideas in our minds when we see, hear, smell, taste, or feel. The core of his epistemology is the notion that we perceive not *things* but ideas that are derived in part from objects in the external world, yet also depend to some extent on our own minds for their existence.

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The *Essay* attacks the established view that certain ideas are innate. Locke's belief is that we are born in total ignorance, and that even our theoretical ideas of identity, quantity, and substance are derived from experience. A child gets ideas of black and white, of sweet and bitter, *before* he gets an idea of abstract principles, such as identity or impossibility. "The senses at first let in particular ideas, and furnish the yet empty cabinet." Then the mind abstracts theoretical ideas, and so "comes to be furnished with ideas and language, the materials about which to exercise its discursive faculty."

In Locke's account, man is imprisoned in a sort of diving bell. He receives some signals from without and some from within his apparatus, but having no means of knowing which if any come from outside, he cannot test the signals' authenticity. Thus man cannot have any certain knowledge of the external world. He must settle for *probable* knowledge.

Locke's general philosophy has obvious implications for a theory of morals. The traditional view was that some sort of moral knowledge was innate. Locke thought otherwise. What God had given men was a faculty of reason and a sentiment of self-love. Reason combined with self-love produced morality. Reason could discern the principles of ethics, or natural law, and self-love should lead men to obey them.

Locke wrote in one of his notebooks that "it is a man's proper business to seek happiness and avoid misery. Happiness consists in what delights and contents the mind, misery is what disturbs, discomposes or torments it." He would "make it my business to seek satisfaction and delight and avoid uneasiness and disquiet." But he knew that "if I prefer a short pleasure to a lasting one, it is plain I cross my

own happiness.”

For Locke, in other words, Christian ethics was natural ethics. The teaching of the New Testament was a means to an end—happiness in this life and the next. The reason for doing what the Gospel demanded about loving one’s neighbor, etc., was not just that Jesus said it. By doing these things one promoted one’s happiness; men were impelled by their natural self-love to desire it.

Wrongdoing was thus for Locke a sign of ignorance or folly. People did not always realize that long-term happiness could usually only be bought at the cost of short-term pleasure. If people were prudent and reflective, not moved by the winds of impulse and emotion, they would have what they most desired.

The preface to the English edition of the first *Letter Concerning Toleration* says, “Absolute Liberty, just and true Liberty, equal and impartial Liberty is the thing we stand in need of.” Many people assumed these words to be Locke’s; Lord King, a relative, made them an epigraph in a Locke biography. In fact, they were the words of the translator of Locke’s original Latin, William Popple.

Locke did *not* believe in absolute liberty, any more than he believed in absolute knowledge. He thought the way to achieve as much as possible of both was to face the fact that they were limited and then to see what the limitations were. As he did with knowledge in the *Essay*, Locke focused on the liberty that men cannot have, to show the liberty they can achieve. The limits are set by the need to protect the life, property, and freedom of each individual from others, and from the society’s common enemies. No other limits need be borne, or *should* be. Locke set men on the road to the greatest possible liberty by the method he used to set them on the road to the greatest knowledge—teaching the impossibility of the absolute.

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Locke guarded his anonymity with elaborate care. The *Essay*, which made him famous throughout Europe in his own time, was one of the few works that appeared under his own name. Most were published anonymously. When an English translation of the first *Letter Concerning Toleration* was issued in London, Locke protested that it had happened “without my privity.”

Some of his secrecy stemmed from his days of hiding in Holland, some was for fun, some plainly neurotic. Some added a needed touch of romance to his relations with his women friends.

While Locke never married, he sought female affection and courted a formidable lot of professors’ bluestocking daughters. Once, when he was 27, his father wrote to him of a Somerset widow who was “young, childless, handsome, with £200 per annum and £1,000 in her purse,” but Locke would not settle down. His closest relation-

ship with *any* person developed in 1682, when Locke, then 50, met Damaris Cudworth, the 24-year-old daughter of a Cambridge philosopher. They exchanged verses and love letters (signed "Philander" and "Philoclea"); he called her his "governess," a role that he was oddly fond of inviting his women friends to assume. Yet no union resulted, although the two were to remain close, even years after she married a nobleman and became Lady Masham.

Locke, as he wrote to an old friend, considered "marriage and death so very nearly the same thing."

Locke was careful with money. His detailed accounts show that during his 30s he had a modest income of about £240 a year from rental property in Somerset, in addition to stipends from Christ Church and profits from investments.* Once, when going abroad, he asked an uncle not to let his tenants know, "for perhaps that may make them more slack to pay their rents."

Locke's attentiveness to important people brought him not only lodgings—he had no home, being always the guest of various admirers—but job offers as well. He was once the Crown's secretary of presentations, a £300-a-year job involving ecclesiastical matters. He refused an ambassadorship in Germany, saying that the duties there more befitted someone who could "drink his share" than "the soberest man" in England. Shaftesbury made him secretary of the Lords Proprietors of Carolina, in which role he advertised for settlers (people who could behave "peaceably" and not use their "liberty" for "licentiousness") and helped write a constitution for the colony.†

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In his mid-60s, Locke became the dominant member of a new Board of Trade. Though the post paid £1,000 a year, Locke complained to a friend: "What have I to do with the bustle of public affairs while sinking under the burdens of age and infirmity?"

Among other things, Locke's board made linen-making the "general trade" of Ireland (partly to keep the Irish out of England's wool business). When pauperism became an issue, Locke argued that the problem was not "scarcity of provision or want of employment," but indiscipline and "corruption of manners, virtue, and industry." He urged (unsuccessfully) new laws for the "suppression of begging drones." Healthy men between 14 and 50 caught seeking alms

*Though no plunger, Locke did speculate with some success (as Shaftesbury had) in the slave trade and in sugar plantations in the Bahamas. He wrote at least some books for money, among them a volume on French grape and olive cultivation (something good has "come out of France"). The estate he left, worth close to £20,000, was no fortune, but not a pittance either.

†Rejecting a "numerous democracy," the document prescribed legislative power balanced between citizenry and a local aristocracy; freemen had to "acknowledge a God." Locke received membership in the Carolina aristocracy and some land. But the colonists, who began arriving in 1669, repudiated the Lords Proprietors; the aristocracy was never created, and Locke's land appears to have yielded no rent.

should serve three years on navy ships "under strict discipline at soldier's pay." Boys and girls under 14 should be "soundly whipped."

Lady Masham explained that Locke was "compassionate," but "his charity was always directed to encourage working, laborious, industrious people, and not to relieve idle beggars, to whom he never gave anything." He thought them wastrels, and "waste of anything he could not bear to see."

Locke was 68 before he retired, to the Masham country house, to spend his last years writing a commentary on the New Testament.

Although Locke has sometimes been dismissed as an ideologue of the age of bourgeois revolutions, he is in many respects the 17th-century thinker whose teaching is most relevant to the concerns of our own time. During the 19th century, that great age of nationalism and imperialism, Locke's individualism seemed narrow and dated. But in the presence of the kind of despotic and totalitarian regimes that have emerged during the 20th century, Locke's defense of the rights of man has taken on a new immediacy. During World War I, Woodrow Wilson looked to Locke to justify the use of force against tyranny. When World War II posed an even more intense challenge to democracy, Winston Churchill proclaimed the aim of victory in Lockean terms, as "the enthronement of human rights."

Numerous declarations and covenants of human rights have since expressed the principles through which the West has sought to formulate its demand for freedom under law. That is something we have claimed not only for our fellow citizens, but (as Locke did) for all men—not an ideal of perfect justice, but a minimal standard to which any government can fairly be called upon to conform. We no longer expect every nation to govern itself as democratically as we do ourselves, but we do demand that they all respect human rights, and we can still look to Locke for the classic formulation of the philosophy that informs that demand.

Modern opinion has often sought to add to assertions of the rights of individuals, pleas for the rights of groups, economic, ethnic, racial, regional, or whatever. But again, that was anticipated by Locke when he argued for the toleration of dissidents and minorities. In his time, religious persecution was at issue; in ours it is political. But persecution as such has not changed its character, and the case for toleration that Locke worked out 300 years ago is no less pertinent today than it was then. It is, if anything, more urgent, since progress has made persecution more common, efficient, and cruel.

The "storm" of change in which Locke was born continues. So, remarkably, does the value of his ideas on how to deal with change, maintaining the maximum liberty and justice for all.
