

Impossible American Children

A Sound Spanking, the Duke of Manchester Recommends, as the One Thing Needful for Young America
"The Wonder, Despair and Pest" of All European Observers

By His Grace the Duke of Manchester
 Written Especially for This Newspaper.

HERE are two excellent phrases in the Bible which could be taught in America with excellent results. The parents should be taught "Spare the rod and spoil the child," and, if necessary, by carrying out this rule every child should be taught this Commandment, "Honor thy father and thy mother." These two should be framed and hung each side of the "God Bless Our Home" in every parlor.

The American child is the wonder and despair of all Europeans, and an incomprehensible pest to Orientals. I am not for a moment suggesting that it is not of the first importance to allow a child as much healthy liberty as possible, or that it should not be encouraged to develop its individuality, but intelligent discipline is as necessary for the comfort of the child as for the comfort of its elders.

This world is a crowded place, and getting more crowded every day, and there is no room in it for any form of unbridled license. If there were room for each person to have the road to himself or the sidewalk there would be no necessity for traffic regulations.

The child of any nation has sooner or later to learn to consider to a greater or less extent the feelings of others, and the difference between America and elsewhere is that they seem to start the teaching later.

Now, this is an unkindness and an injustice to the child, for it is increasingly hard to learn as we grow older. The pang the youth suffers who has had the adulation of its elders, and no restraint, when it goes out into the world and finds that its impertinences, far from being thought smart, are viewed with an extreme and if necessary uncomfortable resentment, must be intense.

I am not advocating return to the old Spartan discipline of the seventies and before. In my father's time he and his sisters and brothers were not allowed down to dinner till they were grown up, never sat in the presence of their parents without being told to, and were taught to put up with what was handed out to them. Believe me, it was no round of luxury.

In my time such indulgence as maintains among even English boys was unimaginable, and my father never dreamed of sparing the rod. Would to goodness he had lived long enough to complete the education.

The Tragedy of an Ill-bred American Boy.

Manners are a simple thing to acquire when one is young, and sometimes impossible later. The motto of Winchester College is not only about five hundred years old, but it is also true. "Manners Makyth Man."

Manners are the traffic regulations of social intercourse. Everybody has got to learn them or have a smashup or fall foul of the police traffic squad. Isn't it far better to learn it on the quiet country roads of youth than in the middle of the city traffic of grown up life?

Goodness knows, I am not advocating turning boys into smugs or girls into prigs. Nor do I believe in crushing out individuality in children, but it is possible to gently smooth off the corner of a child's rambunctiousness where in the case of a young man it needs a chisel and hammer.

I remember as a small boy going with my mother to call on a lady in New York who was a great friend of hers. The lady had a son, a bright, pleasing lad of about twelve, and she was a widow. My mother told me he had a playful habit of running at ladies and pinching them, but that this time she was ready for him. And so it proved.

The moment he saw us come into the drawing-room he uttered a hoot of joy that sounded like a train coming out of a tunnel and bore down on my supposedly defenseless mother. He never quite got there; there was a twinkle and six inches of hatpin were interposed between joyous Jimmy and his victim.

Less than half an inch of it was enough to halt Jimmy, and I never shall forget the look of pained surprise on his face before it fell open to let out a noise like a yacht siren gone mad. Little Jimmy was no quitter, though, and the next time my mother called he kindled a nice hot fire under the sofa where the two ladies were sitting. No one was hurt, luckily, but the sofa.

I took great pains afterward when I returned to America next time, some twelve years later, to find out what had become of him. Well, it appeared that Jimmy had a sensitive nature—one of that kind that dotting mothers think shouldn't be thwarted; so, to spare him the degradation of mixing with common boys who didn't understand him, he was educated at home until it was



The Old English Idea of Not Spoiling the Child by Sparing the Rod—from an Early English Wood Cut.

time for him to go to college. Then he went to one of your great colleges, than which there are no greater institutions anywhere, and what they did to James was a pity.

Now, as I have said, he had no experience in horrid rude fellows, so James took it hard. Naturally the harder he took it the harder he got it, and it ended in his taking to drink, and he died of red juice at the age of twenty-three. Of course, I don't cite this as a typical American boy; far from it. But I give it to illustrate what may be the result of lack of early discipline.

Some years ago there was a lot of excitement about hazing in American colleges and ragging in the army here. While it was all no doubt very reprehensible, I could not help having a sneaking sympathy with the hazers, and I could not help noticing that the hazed was nearly always a boy who had been brought up at home. It was the chisel being applied where the trowel would have done earlier, before he had begun to set.

In my experience the duration of ragging and hazing is entirely a matter of how you take it, and the boy who takes it well is not the undisciplined boy. There is nothing that breeds consideration in others for your feelings as much as having consideration for the feelings of others.

I need not say that this, like every other theory, can be carried too far, and I have seen cases where a boy who afterward became a man, as boys will, was so busy working on the theory of "you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours," that he wore his finger nails away, so to speak, and had nothing left with which to scratch for a living. Still, as a general axiom you may take it that you will catch more flies with honey than you will with vinegar.

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The Late J. Pierpont Morgan's Granddaughters. This Curious Photograph of the Two Daughters of Mr. Herbert Satterlee Can Probably Not Be Matched by Any Photograph of Any Well-Bred Young English Girls.

The Duke of Manchester and One of His Children. Is This Youngster Being Brought Up as a Little English Gentleman or an American Hoodlum?

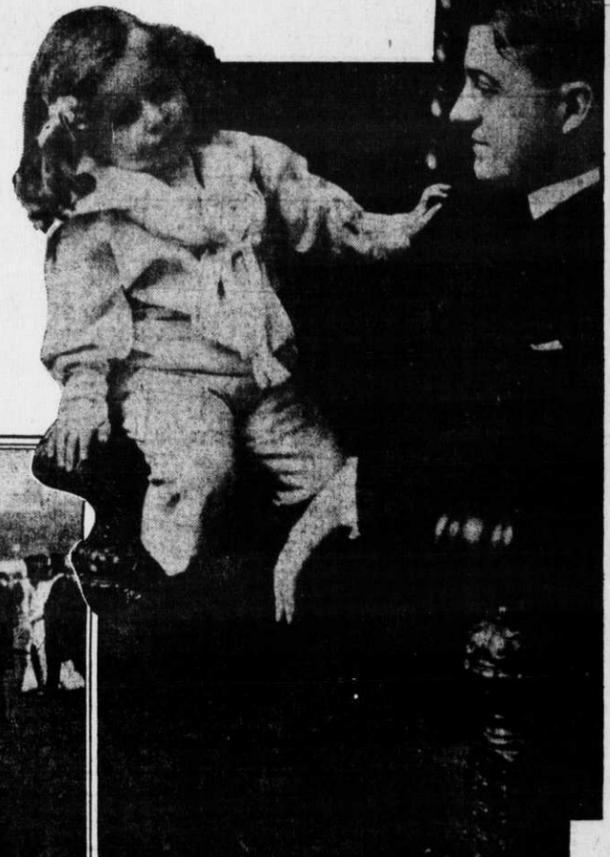


PHOTO © BY SVAR MCINTOSH.



The Cricket Field Just Before a Game Between Eton and Harrow. For Many Long Years the Famous English Schools of Eton and Harrow Have Been Looked Upon as the Nursery for Training the English Gentleman.

The average healthy boy is and should be as lively and mischievous as a flea, and is singularly uncomplex. His moral attributes are carried low; later they often rise and are located in the head and the heart, but during boyhood mostly his emotions are centred in his tummy, and the seat of his conscience is contiguous to the seat of his pants.

And, arising out of this, we come by easy stages to know it is our duty to prevent either from getting torpid and especially the conscience. Directly the boy's conscience goes to sleep, or, as I believe, even dozes, wake it—stir it up—and there is no better conscience rouser than the good old-fashioned trunk strap or its equivalent.

I am told the barrel stave is used with excellent results in parts. The means to the end are immaterial; what is essential is that the end should be reached (or Great Britain Rights Reserved.

otherwise dealt with).

One thing more. One word of warning to the inexperienced spanker. Never embark on your pious task in a temper, or you will do more harm than good. Children, above all other animals, have a deep rooted instinct about justice.

They will take, remember and profit by a licking given for just cause clearly understood, but woe to the father or school master who smiles on a thing one day because he himself is feeling good tempered, and the next day grabs a cane when he's mad, and gets to work. He is laying up for himself trouble in the future and doing the boy no good.

For all the above reasons I call upon the manhood of America to arise in their might and by unearthing the long disused hickory twig, restore to the American home that peace which is the inalienable birthright of the Anglo-Saxon father, and rouse that conscience in the boy, while it only drowns, which, if allowed to sink into coma, may one day suffer the fate of the suddenly roused somnambulist.

Next Week the Duke of Manchester Will Write Another Article on "How Sentiment and Science Are Upsetting Nature's Law of the Survival of the Fittest"