

leave of absence from legal affairs that is intended to fit all Europe, if desired."

Bessie could not help letting a smile peep out of her eyes, sad as they had looked; yet she tried to put a stop to such galloping plans on Mark's part. If he had a dry way with him, he could think and act at an effective rate of speed. That she did not dampen his spirits was proved by his pulling out an engagement ring of merry diamonds, which he told her to carry about in her pocket until she got used to it.

"If you ever fancy that you may consent to marry me," he went on, "slip the ring over your finger, and you will perhaps find your mind made up, miraculously, in my favor! But do not make that 'ever' much of a one. I have waited so many years, and I have followed you so far, you know!"

Bessie looked directly into his eyes as he still knelt by her side. What a quiet glow of gentleness she saw in them!

Did she hold out her hand for the ring?

Did she marry Mark White in a few weeks?

Did she see "a few Raphaels" with him in Italy?

Let each reader, for herself, analyze the love of this true American girl!

THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN

BY MARY HARRISON MCKEE

DAUGHTER OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES



MRS. MCKEE

IT is foolish and idle to speak of training or managing extremely young children. Their fancy precludes any such thing as moral suasion—the foundation of training—as their lack of reasoning faculties prevents any ability on their

part to distinguish between right and wrong. They can be taught only as young animals are taught—by withholding them as much as possible from temptation, and by the sharp and swift punishment of any wrong-doing. This, to be sure will open to them a philosophy that certain acts are to be avoided because of the suffering which surely follows them. But the foundation on which the philosophy is formed will be perceived later. The desired end, in attempting to prevent a child from doing things which are wrong or harmful, is to restrain them not only for the time being, but in the future also, from committing the indiscretion; and any means to this end must surely be wise. Swift punishment, not so severe as immediate, is advisable, it seems to me, with children too young to have any faculties capable of reasoning further than that some actions are followed by instant suffering. You must not delay, or the sequence is lost, and the reason for the suffering will not be apparent to the small infant you may find it necessary to chastise ever so slightly.

But as the faculties develop, and your little unreasoning baby drifts into childhood, with its incessant curiosity after the reason of things, and its infinite appetite and desire for knowledge of any and all kinds, your responsibilities of training actually commence. The knowledge of good and evil is yours to give to your child; your word is his trust. What has gone before in the care of your infant, as I have said—you may scarcely dignify it as training—has been as nothing; the little mind before you is a blank on which you are to make the impressions; the life which embodies it is in your care for much of its future happiness or misery. As this development occurs be very chary of punishment. When your small boy tells you, with unblushing effrontery, probably with crumbs on his face and apron, and a piece of the sweet in his hand, that he did not touch the cake forbidden to him—the fibs of childhood are always transparent—do not punish him. It is probably but the old Adam which is in us all, and which can be ostracised in children more firmly and successfully, as in grown people, by kindness than by punishment. Take the small offender in your lap, and convince him by logical question and answer, making use of the proof at hand, that he has told you what was not true. When he has acknowledged his conviction, as the most obstinate of children will if he finds that his convictor is calm and determined, show him, in some practical illustration, the serious effects of a lie, and then assure him of the sin of it. He has been told, doubtless, by this age of the Christ, and has, as children, and the extremely young children more particularly, are apt to have, a peculiarly vivid love and picture of the Saviour in his little mind. Then tell him that lies—I believe in using the real word, not disguising an untruth by any lighter designation, as "fib" or "story"—are grievous to Him, and ask the little one to say a prayer for forgiveness and help. All this will take more time than a "spanking," but it will be, I am sure, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, far more efficacious. When the fault is repeated have a second talk with your infant offender, dwelling more particularly on the necessity of his heeding the importance of what you have been telling him; and when it occurs the third time punish him as an aid to his remembrance, not as the result of his wrong-doing. Let him understand always what these results are, and that whatever punishment you may inflict is simply to remind him of the necessity for remembering to avoid the wrong-doing, and then there will be no rebellion or questioning in the childish heart at your right to so punish. The child is most truly the father of the man, and what man is there, who, having sinned, would acknowledge the

right of any human mortal greater in position or strength to punish him for the sin? He knows that it has consequences, and that knowledge and its realization is his punishment. So is it with the child; but, as the consequences of the wrong-doing are not so keenly felt here, because of the smaller scale on which all things appertaining to childhood are formed, so it becomes necessary that there shall be a sharp reminder; hence the punishment is reasonable, and no one will appreciate this more quickly than will a child.

But make your distinction evident, and be assured that the little one appreciates your position in the matter; else is your punishment but in vain, and can but cause incalculable harm to the character of your child. Justice is one of the strongest feelings of childhood; and any violation of it, especially where they feel such violation an injustice to themselves, generates hard and bitter feelings. The most obstinate and unreasonable of children will acknowledge its parents' claim to see that it does what is right, and will acknowledge, too, that if this can only be secured by punishment, that the punishment is just. But the most amiable and reasonable of children will, with swelling, angry heart, question your right to flog him because he has told a lie. The flogging is not, to his mind, in any direct way the result of the untruth. That he will see in your disappointment and in his own discontent of conscience, and perhaps in the disaster which may follow; but, if the lie was the result of forgetfulness, he will acknowledge your right to aid his memory; if it was the result of a deliberate choice on his part between right and wrong, he will acknowledge equally your right to punish him, so that in the future it will be to his advantage to choose the right. But let him see the justice of the case if you desire your punishment to be effectual.

If, at this important time of life, a mother should be chary of punishment, she cannot be too prodigal of encouragement and rewards. See always the best side of the action of your little ones; by which I do not, of course, mean that you are to gloss over any carelessness or inaccuracies; but that when there is an opportunity for praise, give it, and do not take all the little generousities and self-denials of childhood, and they are many, too entirely as a matter of course. You will not spoil the child by this if you are careful to have your praise and commendation founded upon reason; for I believe thoroughly that children see the justice and injustice of things, in miniature, precisely as do older people, and appreciate and resent it in like proportion. Do not praise indiscriminately then, but be just always, and while you are just be also generous. Do not let the one wait for the other, even if the proverbial advice is to this effect, but combine them and see how much of happiness it will bring to you.

Of course, there is a great difference in children, and the peculiarities of disposition often found in a single family must be respected. Do not attempt to apply precisely the same rules in half a dozen different cases, and do not have so many cast-iron rules that your children will live in constant dread of breaking them, and be, in consequence, nervously predisposed in that direction. Emulate nature here as elsewhere; and in your emulation notice that while there are a few great natural laws which are scrupulously observed in the management of the universe, there are also innumerable variations in treatment. So let it be in your training. Let the fundamental laws of justice, love and kindness be always existent, and you can vary your treatment of individual character as much as is necessary to secure good results. Your responsibilities are so much greater when your family is larger, and the necessity for the study of the different dispositions which compose it, that you may minister to their best interest, so important that many a woman has reason, if not excuse, for feeling a little appalled at the task before her. Of course, this feeling is only transient, and but seldom recurrent, but that it must not be encouraged I need not urge.

One word more of advice or opinion and I have finished. It concerns the necessity for having a reasonable foundation for your demands or requests to your children. Do not test their obedience by foolish or unnecessary commands; be careful always that there is reason in what you request, if you would increase their respect for you. But once having made your request, insist upon obedience. That and truthfulness are the two most important qualities to be discovered and developed by mothers.

"In all things be reasonable," would be, I think, a good motto for mothers to base their training upon; for a child old enough to be trained at all is a reasonable, thinking mortal, with a mind capable of understanding and an intellect competent to appreciate justice; and it is most surely your duty to this mind in miniature that its glimpses of the government of this world shall behold a government founded on truth, liberty, justice and reason.

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