

Your Boy!—Will He Be a Leader Or a Leaner?

Teach Him Self-Reliance—It Is Essential If He Is To Succeed

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MR. SHORT—we will call him Mr. Short because that is not his name—Mr. Short was a University graduate. He had been a teacher of Classics. He was sober and industrious. At the time of our story he was employed in the shipping department of a young Canadian concern.

The manager, a man of progressive ideas, was taking stock of his human assets, and had called in the assistance of a specialist in Character Analysis. That gentleman, in course of time, prepared a report of his findings. We will quote a paragraph:—

"Mr. Short is religious, deferential, and tactful. He has a good deal of courage. He has plenty of physical energy and driving power. But he will not be a first class success in managing men until he learns self-confidence. The hardest lesson Mr. Short has to learn is to assume responsibility, to exercise authority, to command obedience. He lacks seriously the element of dignity, the feeling of self respect and of his own importance that makes a man independent, that makes a man prefer to give orders rather than take them. Mr. Short, by natural disposition, would rather take orders. He wants to lean on someone else. He is acquiescent. He likes to say 'yes'. He is so fond of obeying that there is danger that he will be bossed by his subordinates unless he makes it his business to hold up his head, straighten his upper lip, stiffen his spine, and say 'I'."

Before the Manager had had time to study the report, he was called away for a few weeks. During his absence, the head of the shipping department proving unsatisfactory, was dismissed, and Mr. Short, was asked to take the position. From sheer lack of the feeling of self-confidence, he declined the promotion. The assistant manager, suspecting him of disloyalty to the firm, dismissed him.

Lack of self-reliance lost Mr. Short not only the promotion offered, but even the position he already held.

Exit Mr. Short.

Self Reliance Won

YEARS ago Walter Dean was employed in a small factory. Business, becoming slack, he was laid off. Yes, he says frankly to-day, he was "fired."

His decision was promptly made. He decided to go into business for himself, with the extremely limited capital he had been able to save from his wages, in opposition to his former employer. He decided to be his own boss.

"I must have worked twice as hard or more than twice as hard working for myself as I ever did for my employer," remarked Mr. Dean, the other day, "but as I walked home that night with that big decision, I seemed to walk on air. I felt I was a free man. I knew I would have to work hard, but I was to be my own boss, and I knew I could succeed in the end."

To-day the name of Walter Dean is known throughout the northern half of the continent among all lovers of canoes and pleasure boats.

The Power to Do

THERE are many good qualities desirable in a boy to assure his success, but one of the most frequently lacking is this quality of self-reliance.

Self-reliance is a feeling. It is the feeling of one's own worth, of one's own power to do and to achieve.

Why should so many people in this country, and in most English speaking countries be so lacking in this quality of self-confidence? Why is it that among our people, nine out of ten are afraid to undertake anything new, unable to assume responsibility, ready to admit inferiority to others?

Travellers comment on the dignity of the Turk, or the Indian. I have heard certain qualities of stability and reliability commended in Canadians, but I have not heard much of their self-reliance, except among the pioneers.

Diffidence, humility, and shame, are varying degrees of the lack of self-reliance. Arrogance results from self-reliance untempered by kindness. Conceit is self-reliance without worth, the feeling of worth without the worth itself.

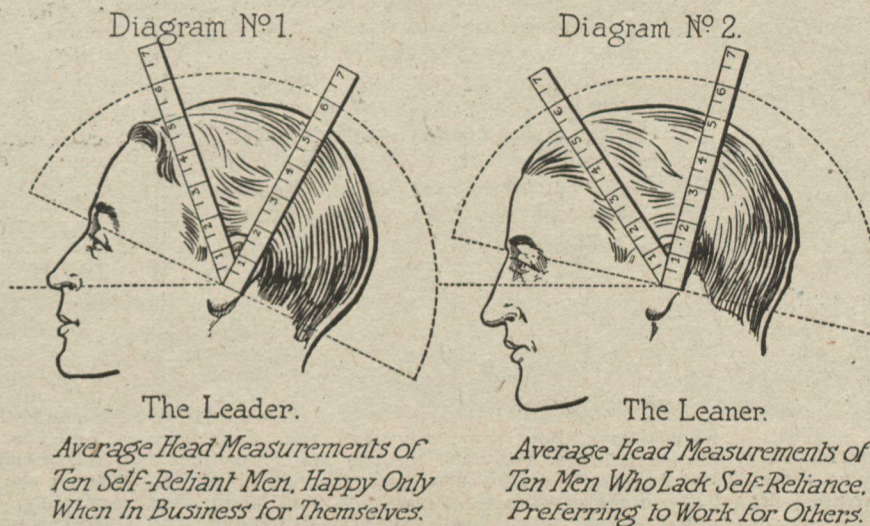
Folks lacking in self-reliance themselves often dislike to see this quality in others, and the diffident father too often considers it his duty to humiliate his sons whenever they show signs of self-confidence. Too often the quality which the boys most need to develop is stunted in its growth by the folly of the parents.

Mothers Often to Blame

EVEN before birth, many a boy and a girl too, is cursed with the feeling of diffidence or humility, with an inborn feeling of incompetence and inferiority

which ties them down throughout life to subordinate positions because—may I be permitted to speak right out?—because of that shame which Mrs. Grundy has so long decreed that even a married woman should feel for the "crime" of becoming a mother.

Self-reliance gives the power of domination, and the power of domination is the birthright of the sons of those mothers who realize the dignity of motherhood, and are proud instead of ashamed to be mothers. Subordination is the fate of those sons whose mothers were ashamed.



I knew a man who inherited from his father, a clever doctor, a splendid intellect, doomed for life to menial tasks through lack of self-reliance impressed upon him by the diffidence of his mother before his birth.

Which is Your Boy?

IT is easy to recognize the boy who is naturally self-reliant.

Recently I went through my records and selected ten business men who had found that they were happy only when in business for themselves, men who, like Walter Dean, felt free however hard they had to work when they were their own masters. I selected ten more who were so lacking in self-reliance that they preferred to work for someone else. I averaged the measurements of each set of ten, the self-reliant, and the diffident. The two diagrams show the result.

Is your boy's head like diagram No. 1? If it is, he will always tend to stand erect, he will carry his chin high as shown in the illustration.

If he belongs to the self-reliant type—thank God! I would almost claim that a high degree of self-reliance is more to be desired in this world than a high order of intelligence.

True, the self-reliant boy is hard to manage. He resents orders. He feels quite competent to decide and act for himself.

"What have I a think for, if you are going to do everything?" asked one self-reliant little fellow

when his father insisted on showing him how to build wonderful buildings with a new set of blocks.

"I will do it myself!" says a self-reliant little girl. Encourage that self-reliance, and do not—never humiliate such a child if you can help it.

Self-reliant children of all ages like to do things themselves, and when judgment is immature require tactful handling.

It was a wise woman who, finding that her butler was a man of great dignity and small intelligence, instead of ordering him with an air of authority, adopted the manner of consulting him. Instead of "James, do this" it was, "James, do you think it would be a good idea to do this?" James was really a faithful servant, his self-importance was satisfied instead of being offended, and he gave excellent service to the woman who knew how to handle him.

"But my boy is so overbearing, he wants to run everything!" did you say? Still, do not humiliate him. Show him, by precept and example, the wisdom of generosity and kindness.

Teach Him to Say "I Can"

IS your boy's head more like illustration No. 2? Then you have a boy comparatively easy to manage—too easy!

With this boy it is doubly important that you do not humiliate him. He will not resent it, as will the boy of the self-reliant type, but it will do him more harm, because his success in life depends largely on your assistance in helping him to learn self-confidence.

Whatever you do, never suggest to this boy that he cannot. Teach him

that he can. Teach him to try. Teach him to assume responsibility. Teach him to take risks. Teach him to say "I can." Teach him to carry his head high, as in illustration No. 1. This is the natural position of the head for a self-reliant person, and simply carrying the head in this position, helps to arouse self-confidence. Look ever for his good points. Remember his accomplishments, and never, no never—remind him of a failure. Teach him that by careful preparation, by doing a little at a time, day after day, he can accomplish big difficult undertakings.

"I cannot possibly earn more than four dollars a week on that machine," said a young woman in a factory.

"Yes you can" replied the forelady. "To-morrow you are going to time yourself on every batch of work, and do each lot just a little faster than the last. Do this and you will earn four-fifty next week."

The young woman who couldn't, did. Inspiring her in this way, in a few weeks the forelady had taught the girl that she could earn nine dollars a week. It was a matter, largely, of developing self-confidence.

Attitude of Self Reliance

NOTE the position in which the head is carried in Diagram No. 1.

Independence, self-reliance, leadership make one stand erect, straighten the spine, and carry the head so that the wing of the nostril is on a level with the opening of the ear.

It is as if the whole head and body were drawn up by a cord attached to the back part of the top head—just where the ruler crosses in the diagram.

When you tell your boy to hold up his head like a man, you are telling him to assume the attitude of independence, self confidence and leadership.

Arrogance will tilt the head farther back still. Humility, dependence or submission or any degree of lack of self confidence, allows the head to droop forward as shown in Diagram 2, so that the opening of the ear is on a level with the bridge or sometimes even with the root of the nose.

They Do Not Try

SHELDON says truly, the reason most people do not accomplish more is because they do not attempt more.

The reason they do not attempt more, is because they lack, through inheritance, prenatal influence and environment, that great quality of self-reliance.

I knew a man who at nineteen was unable to read or write, but who felt that he could do what he set out to do. He secured an education, put himself through the Medical College, and for many years practiced medicine successfully in one of our Canadian cities. He had self-reliance.

Better by far that your boy at twenty-one should have good health and self-confidence, even though he should then have to begin with the "three R's" in seeking scholastic education, than that he should have all the learning of the Universities and have together with it that inherent feeling of his own inferiority that made a failure of our friend Mr Short.

How to Help Your Boy Become a Leader

1. Commend his successes, forget his failures.
2. Show him his apparent failures are only incomplete successes—he can try, try again and succeed.
3. Consult rather than command him, treat his opinions with respect.
4. Cleanliness in person and dress help a boy think well of himself.
5. Let him train animals to obey his commands.
6. Teach him to command his own body as if it were an animal to be trained.
7. Teach him to carry his head erect, and to draw down and stiffen his upper lip.
8. Give him stories of achievement.