
What Price the Modern Boy? I.

"What is the matter with the modern girl?" The modern boy. If there were no modern boy there would be no modern girl," suggest a score of others. "Why don't you publish something on the modern boy?" query the girls of a young ladies academy in which the modern girl series circulated; "the boys are lots worse than we are." There is a demand for information on the modern boy, and the demand will be met, cost what it may.

Is there a modern boy? Oh, yes, in spite of the protests of the Rupert Hughes school of thinkers. There is a boy today who is quite different from the boy of twenty years ago, and he is quite a problem. Aren't all boys modern? Oh, no; there are still unfashioned boys -- lots of them right here at Notre Dame. There are boys who have resisted the things that have made the modern boy, boys who are a Godsend to a decadent civilization. Are you a modern boy? You can settle that for yourself after reading this series of Bulletins.

What are the earmarks of the modern boy? He has some or all of the following:

1. Sophistication. "A little too smart, and not enough wise."
2. Mental inertia. Thinking is obsolete; you can hire a man to think for you.
3. Lack of discrimination. He believes what you tell him, provided it's not bad.
4. Physical decrepitude. The automobile and the elevator have atrophied legs.
5. Softening of the memory. If he can remember when to eat he is happy.
6. Cramping of the imagination. There ain't no Santa Claus.
7. Inaccuracy. With seventy per cent you get by.
8. Dishonesty. His word is far from being his bond.
9. Recklessness. A stunted sense of responsibility is not courage.
10. Selfishness. Like Cain, he is not his brother's keeper.
11. Flippancy. Respect for sacred things is unmanly.
12. Frivolity. The pocket comb has replaced the pocket rosary.
13. Religious antipathy. The things of God are as apples of Sodom.
14. Fatheadedness. Placid self-satisfaction makes reform impossible.

Perhaps he is much more than all of this, but we have here enough material for an analysis of his ineptitudes and for a horoscope of the future which lies in his hands.

No study of a problem is satisfactory without a view of its background. The modern boy is not instantaneous product of magic; he is a logical outgrowth of a certain condition of modern society, of our industrial imperialism, of our paganism. For his addled ideals, his silly prattle, his wanton lust, his impudent philosophy, his sheepish mediocrity, his arrant bumptiousness, you may blame the following factors:

1. Goofy parents;
2. Untutored educators;
3. Independent philosophers;
4. Dishonest statesmen;
5. Devilish inventions;
6. Crooked amusements;
7. Sappy literature;
8. Adoration of money.

The modern boy is nothing new; of course not. Cain was a modern boy; there were modern boys kidding Noe while he labored at the ark; there were modern boys in Sodom and Gomorrah; Core, Dathan and Abiron were modern boys, so were the worshippers of the golden calf; Absalom was a modern boy, so was Julian the Apostate, so was Henry the Eighth. The world has always suffered for the sins of the modern boy; we want to stave off catastrophe if we can.