

ON RAISING A CHILD: THE PRINCE OR THE VALET?

The fate of a man is determined by his childhood. In present times, we see the plight of civilisation. As men turn their backs to common sense, cloying ideology has taken its place. Assumptions are populating the fields once peopled by facts and reason. On the one hand, the hedonists who take base pleasure as their *modus vivendi*. On the other, the socialists who assume all men are equal under a limited criteria. Most men in these times flit between the two. Amongst this crude red sea of ideology, the raising of children has been drawn into its cold sprays.

Within the raising of children, two processes have come about. The prince raises its banners for ideology: with parents doing and allowing all for their children. The contrary of this is the valet; where the child, like an apprentice, learns the foundations of life from his parents and works out the rest from there. It is the former who often fail in life, and the latter who succeed. And so, parents have a duty to raise their children in the right manner; a manner which gives the child the means to happiness, and at length, the happiness of the state.

Let us begin with the prince. Many parents have come to agree that a child must be given all it wants (that is, within the power of the parent). A child who wants a toy from a shop must have this toy. A screaming child in full tantrum who wants an iPad must be given an iPad. A child who wants to avoid a rule because he dislikes it must be exempted from this rule: from having his dinner to hitting another child and coming second in a game. This approach to child rearing is a failure of parenting. It is failure because boundaries are absent. Without boundaries, a child, a man, a state is without restraint. Rules exist, not as Marx would have you believe as a process of slavery, but as a compass to life. They tell you what you can do, and what is forbidden. *Can* is highlighted over *may* as rules are a question of possibility rather than permission. That is, if happiness is the aim of men, and to achieve happiness is the maximisation of the quality and quantity of one's competencies. Of course, a common argument is rules limit the freedom of a child and so are best avoided. On that, there are two points to make. Firstly, happiness, rather than freedom, is man's aim; freedom is a constituent of happiness and so in practical terms aiming for freedom is like aiming for one's bed when returning from a trip (when it is the house that one truly wants to return to in all its splendour). Second, this interpretation of freedom is equitable to anarchy. It is rule of the base passions over reason. Without reason, without a common ground of understanding, society literally becomes divided in thought, and it is this division, this conflict of interest, which ultimately leads to the state of nature. And so, unless you want your child to grow up to have the psychological disposition of a wild dog, the prince model of rearing is a process to avoid.

Now that we understand the prince model, let us look at the valet model. The valet model is an apprenticeship between a child and his mother and father. The mother teaches her child how to run a household and nurtures him with property management. The father teaches the child to acquire new property to expand the wealth of the family. And this wealth is as spiritual as it is physical. We need only look at human nature to see that this is so: a woman, with her vulnerabilities and a man with his flexibility. Nature reminds us that this is so, from lions to bees to pigs. Following the natural law, the child learns from his parents how to grow and protect his family, and his state, rather than live to satisfy his immediate pleasures. And once the child has learnt his lesson, his parents can focus on the more pressing matters of the family whilst the child is delegated with an aspect of its

responsibility. This can start with entertainment, then move on to cleaning his bedroom, then the house, then the motor car, then the family accounts and, before long, the child is equipped to manage his father's house as if he were the chief minister to his kingdom. In this way, the child is equipped for his happiness and the happiness of his state. Therefore, to use the valet model is, on the whole, to give a child happiness.

The valet model is the greatest means to raise a child. It exposes the child to the dangers of life, and safeguards his confidence against its many alarms. The prince model is a sloppy path to personal and social chaos. And this explains much of society's present chaos. Look at your children. Are you raising them to be princes or valets? For it is by raising them as princes that they become slaves, and by raising them as valets that they become princes. The choice is yours. And society and your child will be defined by it.