

"Making Children Perfect"

Lady Constance Richardson, the Titled Dancer, Gives Her Unusual Rules for the "All-Around Development" of Boys and Girls

By LADY CONSTANCE RICHARDSON
I AM bringing up my three sons to be perfect men. If I am so fortunate as to have other children I will bring them up in the same way, be they boys or girls. I am glad to bring to the attention of intelligent American mothers my plan for rearing perfect men. If they adopt it I believe one branch of eugenics will have taken a long stride in America.

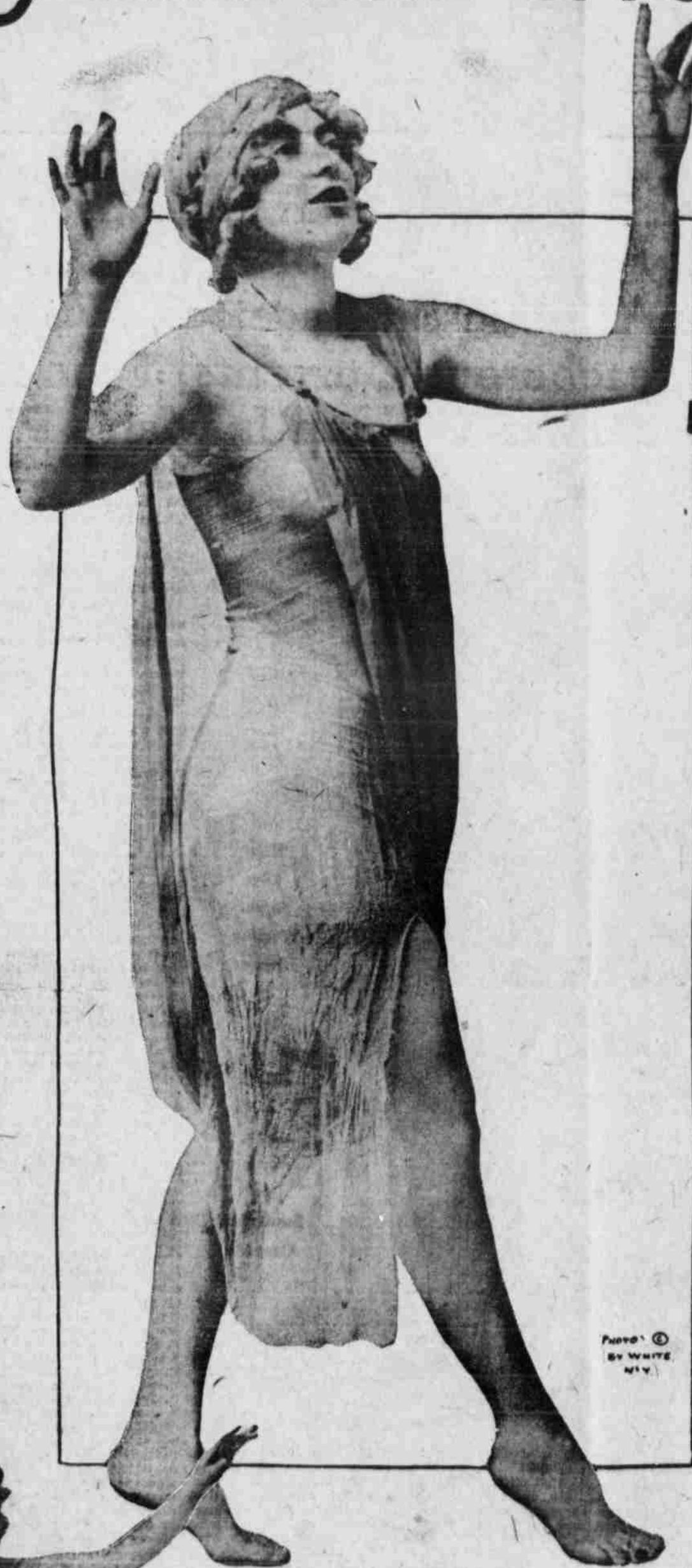
Bringing up children is a striving toward an ideal. Before I begin telling you how I am training these little men of mine I would better tell you what is my ideal of the perfect man.

The perfect man is one whose brain and body and character are equally strong. The perfect man is Nature's best example of balance. His body is strong and handsome, with no muscle developed at the expense of others. His brain is active and well trained without the extreme intellectual activity that makes an overdraft upon the body. His character is clean and fine and immovable as to principle. Such is a harmonious individual, a perfect man.

I went upon the stage for one sole reason—to educate my boys according to my ideas. My husband and I have very little money, and to establish this group-school, which is my aim, for ten boys, including my own, will require an income of \$5,000 a year. When I have earned that I shall retire permanently from the stage. I hope to retire in two years at most and give all my time to bringing up my boys.

The school will be in the country, near our home, a beautiful spot in the Highlands of Scotland. There I shall have carried out on a larger scale the ideas embodied in the present education of my three little lads—Rory, nine; Hamish, six, and Torquil, four years old.

I make my boys take exercise every morning for fifteen minutes in a perfectly nude state, so that the air and sunshine may directly reach their vital organs. Whenever the season will permit, and that is from eight to nine months a year, for my boys are not afraid of the health giving, roses-in-cheeks-producing Scotch mists, I send them straight from their beds to the garden. There they



Lady Richardson's Three Sons at Their Home in Scotland. Exercise Every Morning in a Perfectly Nude State Is Part of the Novel Training Their Mother Is Giving Them.

the sculpture and paintings in the Louvre and other great galleries of the world. If I let them look at the picture books it is only after I have gone carefully through them and scissored every one that shows the human figure as other than perfect. Also I cut out every picture that shows killing. My boys have never seen pictures of Jack the Giant Killer, nor have they heard the story, nor the picture and story of the hideous witch riding a broomstick.

I am as careful in the selection of fairy stories for my children as I am of the pictures they see. I tell or read them only such stories as deal

I base my children's education upon religion. Not in the sense in which we usually think of religion, for I never go inside a church. But I teach them a religion that rests upon a profound faith in God and a sense of responsibility to other human beings. I teach them that it is their duty and pleasure to make people about them as happy as they can, that they must never make the world harder for any one.

I teach them to respect the human body and be unconscious of it, save to keep it clean. I do not believe in giving the body undue prominence in life by excessive athletics. I am training my boys only to be athletic enough to be healthy. But I train them away from sex consciousness. I teach them that it is wicked to degrade the human body to the level of the bedroom.

sori's method is the natural one. I am deeply interested in it.

I have planned that my home school shall be a small one, so that every child shall have special attention according to his particular bent.

I do not care especially what my boys learn. Beyond the mere rudiments I shall only see that they are trained well in whatever most interests them and in what naturally follows, that from which they derive most pleasure. If one sings well I

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Lady Constance Richardson, Whose Ideas on the Proper Rearing of Children Are as Advanced as Her Dances.

they wouldn't be clean without them. In the milder months they take these exercises before the bath. In the midwinter they take their exercises in doors and after the bath, first warm, then cool, then warm, then cool again—the famous Scotch baths.

A very important part of the education of my children is teaching them a love of beauty. If they love the beautiful they seek to become beautiful. We think of what is about us and we become like what we think about, so it is most necessary to see only beautiful objects. Keeping this principle in mind I am most careful about the selection of my children's toys. I never allow them to see anything that is maimed or distorted. Before I came to this country last month I went shopping in London to buy my children toys. To my surprise and disgust I found that the six or seven leading toys were all hideous distortions of human or animal bodies. Be sure my children received none of those toys. I never give them anything like your Billikins and Kewpies and your Mexican idol dolls that have huge abdomens and little legs and heads too large or small for the body. Your Teddy bears are not bad because they look like bears. But many animal toys are horrible travesties of the real animal.

My boys have never seen anything

A Particularly Alluring Moment in One of Lady Richardson's Classic Dances.

malmed. So clear a picture do they have of the perfect body that when my oldest son, Rory, saw a picture of the Venus de Milo he said, "I don't like it." The arms were missing and he thought her imperfect. He gave the same criticism of the Winged Mercury.

Their picture books are copies of

with beautiful themes. I go back to mythology for them. My children like the story of Theseus and Andromeda, for instance. And I draw many stories from our every day life for them, stories which they quickly understand and slyly recognize.

I never punish my children except by not speaking to them. When they do anything unworthy I say: "Gentlemen, don't do that. I don't wish to know you," and for any time from a day to a week I do not speak to them. It is effectual.

More careful than in any other respect I am as to who teaches my children. I am discouraged about the governesses and the teachers we can employ. I explain my ideas and they say, "Yes, madam," and I find afterward they haven't the faintest notion about how to carry out the ideas. What most teachers lack is the spirit of education. They know what is to be taught, but they haven't the faintest idea of how to teach it. I should have the teaching force weeded out and only those who love children and those who have the spirit of education would be allowed to remain. They must not only love children, but they must understand them. There should be a course in child nature in every school and every teacher should have a year of probation. After that, if she fails, she should not be allowed to teach our children nor any one's else. She should take up her livelihood-earning in another way. Madame Montres-

Lady Richardson as She Appears at the Start of Her Dances.

will have him trained to sing very well. If he paints well I will have him trained to paint good pictures. But I will not have their talents trained to the abnormal point of genius. Better that they should be farmers than Cabinet Ministers. They will be far happier leading their simple lives in the country. Far better that they should be good than great.

One of the Poses with Which Lady Richardson Is Earning the Price of Making Her Boys Perfect Men.

go through with J. P. Muller's fifteen methods of exercise. I have no favorite exercise. Unless one gets through the entire system one muscle will be developed more than another, and the purpose of the perfect man is defeated. I like the Muller system. It is the best system of exercises I know. But I should discard any artificial system of exercise if I were sure that my boys would always like in the country. In that case their natural play and work would be enough. I hope they will, but I mean to prepare them for the unfortunate emergency of living in town. In that case system of exercises perfectly learned, with the habit of following them fixed, will be better than a million dollars to their credit in the Bank of England.

Ordinarily fifteen minutes of play in their nakedness in the garden is enough. Children's instinct for play is an unerring guide. They do not loiter at their play. Instead they run about as playfully and tease each other as persistently as puppies. I never excuse my boys from this fifteen minutes of naked play unless they are seriously ill. I have trained them to believe that they are as necessary a part of their day's programme as brushing their teeth—that

Miss Edith Welsh Climbing a Perpendicular Wall Nearly 8,000 Feet High in the Swiss Alps.

Lift Your Hat and Bow When You Meet a Statue

ONE of the strangest societies in existence has lately been organized in London. It is called the Courtesy League. It has no headquarters, requires no entrance or membership fees, holds no regular meetings and has neither rules nor badge.

The distinguishing mark of a member of the league is that whenever he passes a statue he stops and faces the effigy, lifts his hat and makes a low bow.

This is being done consistently by the league's membership, which is confined exclusively to men. The result of this action is invariably to attract a good-sized crowd. As it gathers the league member mounts the curb or a nearby flight of steps and proceeds to deliver an address on the virtues the league is endeavoring to restore to popular favor.

These virtues are three-fold: Reverence for the great of all ages and all climes; respect for the dead, and honor for the living.

"Discourtesy is a far greater evil than might appear to the casual mind," says a charter member of the organization.

"It negatives all the virtues of courtesy. If persistently followed, courtesy invariably results in calmness of thought, equipoise of mind in times of difficulty, patience and general strength of character. All these things are being lost through a decadence of courtesy, and it is to arouse the community to a sense of the importance of this loss that we are following what may seem to some the senseless custom of lifting our hats and bowing to statues."