NEW HORIZONS

for

THE CHILD

BY

STANWOOD COBB

Author of
"The New Leaven," "Discovering
the Genius Within You," etc.

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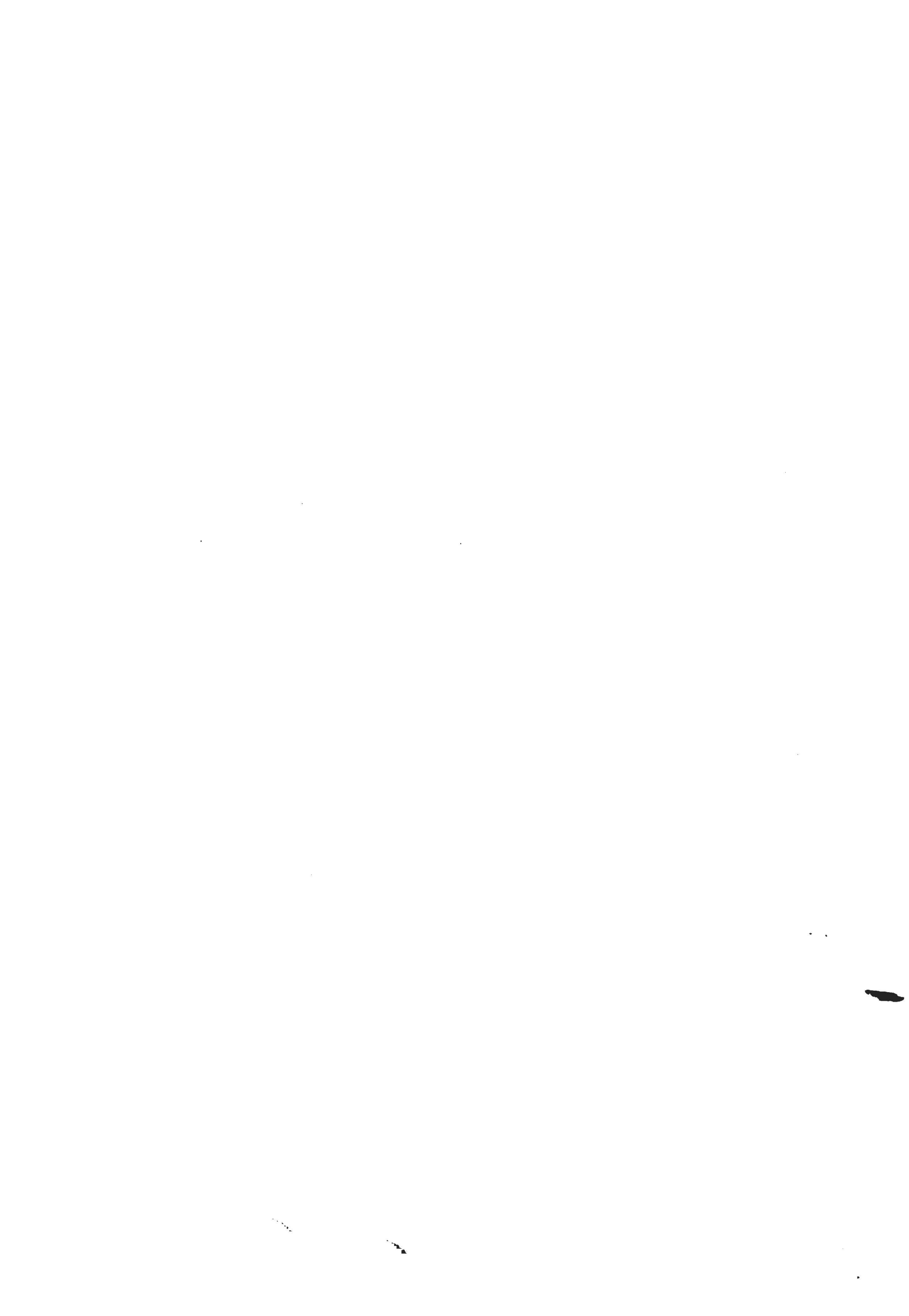
Dedicated

to

QUEENE FERRY COONLEY

teacher, parent, educational organizer
esteemed comrade in the cause of progressive education
magnanimous and significant contributor
toward the expansion and enrichment
of the school life of the child.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

STANWOOD COBB is one of the best known writers and educators in the field of the new child training. He was the founder and organizer of the Progressive Education Association of which he was for some years president.

Stanwood Cobb's *New Leaven,* published in 1928, has become one of the leading books on the subject of the new education. It is used widely in teacher's training schools and colleges, by teachers, and also by parents.

In 1919 the author founded his now internationally known Chevy Chase Country School in order to put into practice his advanced theories of education. Five years later he started his Mast Cove Camp at Eliot, Maine, as a summer extension of his school. In *New Horizons for the Child* he embodies the results of years of close sympathetic study of the child in these two institutions.

Stanwood Cobb is the author of—in addition to *New Horizons for the Child* and *The New Leaven—Discovering the Genius Within You, The Wisdom of Wu Ming Fu, The Essential Mysticism, Ayesha of the Bosphorus, The Real Turk, Simla—a Tale in Verse.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE:
A New World and a New Child 1

CHAPTER TWO:
Understanding the Child 23

CHAPTER THREE:
The Behavior of the Child 37

CHAPTER FOUR:
Character Training 49

CHAPTER FIVE:
The Child at Home 63

CHAPTER SIX:
The Child as an Individual 85

CHAPTER SEVEN:
The Child as an Active Being 103

CHAPTER EIGHT:
The Limitations of Activity Education 115

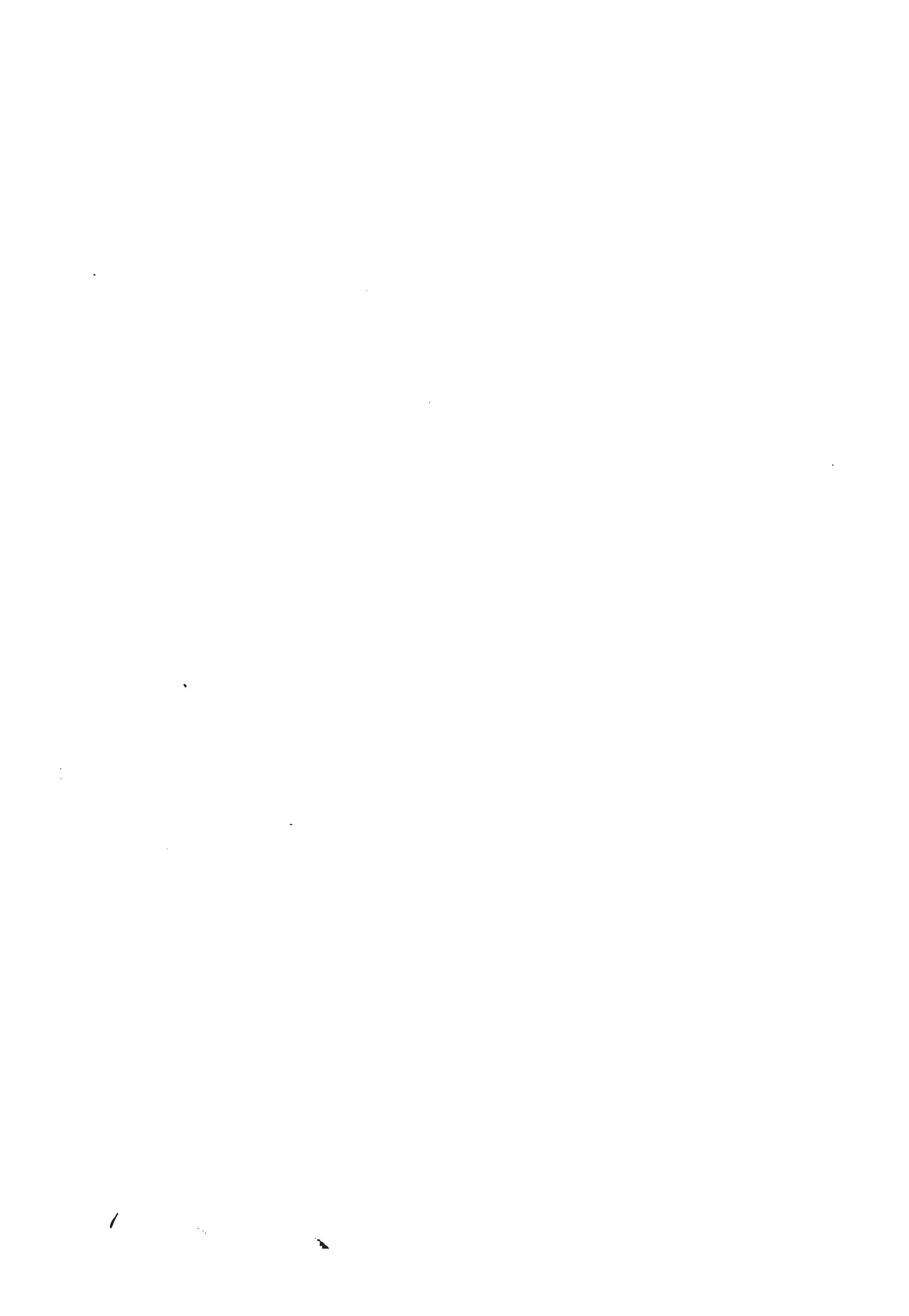
CHAPTER NINE:
The Child as a Creative Being 125

CHAPTER TEN:
Training Children to Think 143

CHAPTER ELEVEN:
The Eternal Battle Between Romanticism and Classicism 161

CHAPTER TWELVE:
Builders of a New Civilization 181

APPENDIX 197



THERE is one movement above the educational horizon which would seem to show promise of genuine and creative leadership. I refer to the Progressive Education movement. Surely in this union of two of the great faiths of the American people, the faith in progress and the faith in education, we have reason to hope for light and guidance. —*George S. Counts.*

THE question of the New Education is of the utmost importance at the present time. It is, and ought to be, nothing less than a profound reform of life, similar to that of the Sixteenth Century—a potent heresy which is renewing the vital forces of humanity. —*Romain Rolland.*

EDUCATION: THREE CARDINAL PRINCIPLES

THE universities and schools of the world must hold fast to three cardinal principles:

Whole-hearted service to the cause of education, the unfolding of the mysteries of nature, the extension of the boundaries of science, the elimination of the causes of ignorance and social evils, a standard universal system of instruction.

Service to the cause of morality, raising the moral tone of the students, inspiring them with the sublimest ethical ideals, teaching them altruism, inculcating in their lives the beauty of holiness and the excellency of virtue.

Service to the oneness of the world of humanity; so that each student may consciously realize that he is a brother to all mankind, irrespective of religion or race. The thoughts of universal peace must be instilled in the minds of all the scholars, in order that they may become the armies of peace, the real servants of the body politic—the world.

Excerpt from a statement made by Abdul Baha to President Bliss of the American College of Beirut, Syria, at Haifa, Palestine.

CHAPTER ONE

A New World and a New Child

"WHAT changes do you think the New Order will necessitate in education?" recently asked a high government official as we were discussing various phases of the new economic state. "Education is bound to be affected by this amazing epoch of transformation when men's minds are working, the world over, toward progress and reconstruction. Why, we have never known such a stupendously transforming, romantic, and creative period in all history!"

"With the exception of the Elizabethan Age," I interjected, "for then was added to the vast expansion of culture and intellectual power wrought by the Renaissance the discovery of a whole New World, with apparently limitless possibilities of exploration and new wealth. But certainly this is, next to the Elizabethan Age, the greatest period of adventure the world as a whole has ever known."

And we went on to discuss what might happen to education as a result of this searching for truth, this expansion of mental horizons, this quest for social and economic El Dorados which is rapidly fusing not only government officials but also the vast body of citizenry into a united vehicle for new and valid creations adequate to the needs of the new humanity emerging from the ruins of the past.

Certainly two things will happen in education—already are happening, in fact.

The first thing happening is that the romance of contemporaneous affairs, acting as a great stimulus to youth, is beginning to transform curriculums from archaic forms of the dead past to vital human forms of the living present. Educators everywhere are quick to see the need and the advantage of making educational capital out of the potency and thrill of this vast current of change and transformation that is affecting the organized life of humanity to its very foundations.

Having once bridged the gulf between school and life, will education ever lapse again into out-moded curriculums and methods so divorced from the appeal of life itself? I do not think it will. And that was the first point my governmental friend and I agreed upon.

Secondly, not only education but society as a whole is beginning to call out to the youth of the world—"Prepare yourselves now, so that when you take the reins of power you will be better builders of civilization than have been your progenitors."

What a stupendous responsibility, then, falls upon the world's educators: that of helping the youth of today make themselves adequate to the tasks of tomorrow.

The major problem now facing education is not:—"How can we improve the teaching of Latin and Greek and mathematics?" But rather:—"How can we set forth to youth the political, economic and

social problems of today in such a way that youth shall become not only ardent students of, but also creative contributors to, the progress of civilization?"

These two great changes are impending in education as inevitable corollaries of the New Order.

2

Education, however, was undergoing an immense change, before the New Order started—a change compelled and guided by the structural expansion the new technological civilization has been making in the psychology of childhood. Even more than adults, children have been sensitively responding to the changing environment which modern science and industry have been creating.

The world our children are living in today is a very different world from that in which we adults grew up. It is a world packed with dramatic events—international activities, inventions, scientific discoveries—which are conveyed to the child on the front page of newspapers, on the movie screen, by radio, and through the conversation of adults.

When I was a boy I never thought to look at the family newspaper. I should not have found much of interest and value to boyhood in it. There were then few of the recordings of inventions, discoveries, and progress which find so much space in the higher-class newspapers of today.

Living in the suburbs of Boston I led a childhood life quite simple and primitive compared with the

life of today. There were in our family life no electric lights, no telephone, no radio, and no automobile. A train took us into the city, nine miles away; and from there we would for summer diversion frequent by boat or narrow-gauge the numerous charming beaches of Greater Boston. This was the farthest I ever got from home until the bicycle came into vogue. Then I found it fascinating to explore the surrounding country within the radius of forty or fifty miles. When at the age of seventeen I went to Dartmouth College, one hundred and fifty miles from Boston, it was a great adventure, a widening experience of travel.

Such in chief part was the town life of the average boy or girl in the nineties.

3

Contrast with that simple life the childhood life of 1934. How full of excitement, of travel, of constant stimulus is the life of the child who enters today upon his education career! And this is the significant point to notice: the vast majority of these vivid impressions and stimuli come to the child from sources other than books.

Today the life external to the child, surrounding him at every turn, is vastly educative at the same time that it is vastly interesting. The town-dwelling child is daily accumulating, without the aid either of school or of books, a great amount of knowledge regarding the highly complex and constantly pro-

gressing civilization of his contemporaneous world. What will be the psychological pull exerted upon him by school books and school lessons, in comparison with the call of that infinitely vivid and complex environment of his life with which modern artifice confronts him outside the school?

Today—and here is the situation which all educators must face—the school, if it is to win the interest and earnest effort of the child, must be vivid and inspiring. It must definitely show some connection with this outside life which is so exciting, so mentally as well as psychically stimulating.

4

Not only is life different today, but it would seem that the child is different, too; he is more eager-minded, more sensitive, more nervously active, more intensive, more versatile. Especially is this true in America. It appears that a new type of race is forming here—due to selection by migration of ambitious pioneering types, to stimulating climate, and to the complex environment of urban and semi-urban life. Whether or not acquired characteristics can be handed on by heredity, certainly it is true that the higher education of women during the last generation has made an enormous difference in motherhood. Children born and reared in such college-parented homes have susceptibilities, tastes, and needs new in the history of childhood.

How are we going to educate these new children of a new world? The old folk-ways will not suffice. The routine drill methods of former generations are out-dated. Let us hope they soon will become obsolete.

In the days before printing it was necessary to make of the scholar a walking encyclopedia. Today with the world's knowledge on tap all around us it is as unnecessary for us to overcram our minds with factual knowledge as it is to overcram our stomachs with food like savages who know not when their next meal is coming.

What the child of today needs is to have the school open up in him rich cultural tastes and appetites, and develop his individual abilities and personality to the fullest possible extent.

In our haste to get millions of children educated through grammar school and high school, we have developed mass education to a high point of efficiency. Quantity production is assured in our schools. But *the quality of education* needs to be improved. It is not by any means what it might be; or what it *can be,* as demonstrated by experimental schools of the progressive type. "We need to make infinitely better the average education which the average child receives," says Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The general poor quality of mass education is not to be wondered at when we realize that universal free public education has been in vogue only about a hundred years; that the art of printing has been applied for only four hundred years; that our Anglo-

Saxon race and most of the races of Europe have known and practised the art of writing for only about twelve hundred years.

When this intellectually awakened period of the European races is compared with the six thousand years of recorded history and the fifty to one hundred thousand years of prehistoric life in Europe, is it any wonder that our schools are not yet perfected to the point of developing children into cultured individuals?

5

The chief criticism of the typical school of today is that it does not enough grip the life of the child, seizing and maneuvering it into intellectual interests and cultural habits.

Because the child has already been seized and possessed by the rich human and scientifically progressive qualities of his environment, he passes through the standardized text-book school life almost immune to academic enthusiasms.

A most notable document to this effect recently came into my hands (evidence from a representative of that group least able to analyze and express their dissatisfactions with the current educational system, i.e., the children themselves). A lad of fourteen years, attending a public high school in Baltimore, writes me the following rather extraordinary letter:

"Dear Mr. Cobb:

"I first met you through the medium of your book, *Discovering the Genius Within You.* Since the first reading of that volume, however, I have perused it so much that now I almost feel as if I were writing to an old friend.

"To come to the point, however, this book has been making me, among other things, 'sit up and take notice' of what is happening during the six hours I spend in school every day. (Perhaps I had better explain right here that I am in the low tenth grade at ——— High School, ———, fourteen years of age, and of a somewhat inquiring nature.) For the nine and a half years I have been attending public schools in various parts of the country, I have taken school largely as some sort of a necessary disease, not in any way to be confused with such interesting things as chemical experiments, interesting books, etc. In fact, until quite recently, it never occurred to me that I was really supposed to be learning. However, when I read your book, I began seriously to try to analyze my school, and compare it with your description of 'New Education.' I found that my blindness as to the purpose of school is almost universal. The sole object in going to school is to get good marks so your parents will reward you handsomely. If, incidentally, you happen to learn anything, you tell it to your parents, who then say, 'What a bright boy!' After which you proceed to forget it, as it serves to clutter up your mind. In my experience in school the things I have learned

best are how to 'stuff' for innumerable tests; how to get by with not doing my homework; and how to pay as little attention as possible to the teacher and allied objects. However, I sympathize strongly with the pupil, who, I think, is not to blame. The system of teaching at this school is one to get such results. It is one in which the teacher is a feared, and sometimes hated, martinet; in which the slightest offense brings down showers of threats of the 'office,' and bad marks; and in which particular emphasis is laid in teaching 'obedience.'

"One other thing, however, I feel I should mention; that is the extra-curricular activity of the school. This is really superlative. There are some thirty clubs and many athletic teams. As none of these are compulsory, most of them have interested members. In fact they probably do much more for the cause of education than the classes.

"All this, Dr. Cobb, is what is bothering me. Since I first thought the situation over, I determined to try to improve on it. I have thought of many ways; most of them, however, unsatisfactory. Of course, what I would most like to do about it, is to switch over to some really progressive school.

Respectfully yours,

B— C—, Jr."

6

The traditional school succeeds in somewhat training the mind; but it does not enrich the soul. It

crams in a lot of facts (many of them useless and soon to be forgotten); but it does not maintain, increase, and direct into fruitful cultural channels the child's natural thirst for knowledge. It forms mental habits of a routine nature; but it does not sufficiently teach how to analyze, differentiate, and independently judge.

If we look about us to see what form of mental life the vast mass of average youth enjoy as a result of popular education, we find it to be of a *sensational* rather than of an *intellectual* order.

Look at the magazines that flood our newstands; the books that fill the shelves of lending libraries; the movies that scream their attractions to devotees of the screen. In all of these we find the basic satisfaction to be the arousal of sensations rather than the emotional and intellectual upliftment which emanates from the beauty and suggestion of high art.

The school life of today is very little modifying the primitive, the sensational, the barbaric in man. Habits of reading have enormously increased the vogue of pulp magazines; but have, if anything, only wrought injury to former magazines of culture. The ubiquitous neighborhood screen affords fresh sensations of a lurid type tri-weekly, but has it widened the scope and appeal of great drama such as entertained the populace of Athens? The spread of public libraries and lending libraries has furnished reading possibilities to the millions, but has it increased literary taste?

7

Children have an innate aversion to abstract thinking. In fact, mankind in general has no natural proclivity for using the brain for the purpose of ratiocination. Boys have an instinctive and deep-seated proclivity for running, for playing, for fishing, for swimming, for activities of all kinds. But in order to lead children to *think,* we must lead them from where they are to where we want them to be. We must take hold of natural interests and use these in such a way as to help children develop into intellectual beings.

If we analyze the average personality of those who have met successfully the requirements of secondary or collegiate education, we find it quite evident that not even the intellectual aims of education are being attained. Our higher education is not succeeding in turning out thinking beings—men and women able to read aright the signs of the times; able to direct not only themselves but others along paths of progress. As I look about at my fellow alumni as well as at other college men and women, I wonder how many of them are really thinking deeply, unselfishly, and disinterestedly about life. How many of the college men and women that you know are making a sincere effort to understand the life of the contemporaneous world and to help to better this life? Many are, and it is to their credit. But the number of those who are leading thoughtful lives in comparison with those who are not is too

small to prove any general efficacy of college training along even intellectual lines, not to speak of emotional and moral gains.

Now, as never before, we need consecrated leaders of humanity. Men and women with creative minds, with just and righteous minds not subverted by self-interests but dedicated to great public needs. Such mentalities do not result from the routine mental discipline type of education which rather enables individuals to intelligently carry on the *status quo* than to improve the world's situation. The exigencies of a changing civilization call for a creative type of education which will arouse students to think for themselves upon world problems; which will help them to analyze, to judge, to discriminate.

8

Not only does the life of today call for creative personalities to guide humanity into new paths in which we must walk if we are to arrive at a livable civilization; but also, since mechanical progress is plainly destined to bring a great deal of leisure to the average person, the modern age calls for cultured personalities capable of putting spare time to worthwhile uses. Unless humanity is able to turn leisure into cultural values, it would better be kept in the harness during all the daylight hours.

In the past only a privileged few have had leisure

which would bear fruit in cultural enjoyment of life, while it took almost all the energy of the average individual to supply his physical needs.

This leisure of the few, though unjustly built upon slavery or economic exploitation of the masses, has been of immense advantage to the world's progress in the fine and practical arts. Without this leisure there could have been no flowering periods of culture such as those of Athens, of Rome, of Florence; no aristocracy of taste such as has created in Europe and more notably still in the Orient a refinement of aesthetic feeling which both evokes and rewards the work of great artists.

Now we are on the eve of a vast economic revolution which guarantees to every individual, even of the laboring class, many hours of leisure daily.

Rightly used, this universal leisure can become the foundation of a vast and stupendously beautiful democratic culture expressing the aspirations and creations of the many rather than of the few.

But how shall we prepare the future race for such an epochal use and enjoyment of leisure? If there is to be an intrinsic cultural taste in the masses, there must be aroused in the child during the course of his education that side of his nature which pertains to the eager acquisition of knowledge, the creative development of the intellect, the rich enjoyment of culture. Youth is the time to develop cultural trends which will continue beyond the precincts of scholastic education.

9

If intellectual ability and cultural taste are to be formed into a habit during youth, it is quite evident that this development must take place in some way that will be pleasurable to the child from the beginning of his schooling. As Herbert Spencer has wisely said: *"So long as the acquisition of knowledge is habitually repugnant, so long will there be a prevailing tendency to discontinue it when free from the coercion of parents and teachers."*

When we look at education from this point of view, it is evident that the accumulation of facts is fairly unimportant compared with the development of habits, appreciations, and abilities. We must send youth forth into life already cultivated for the enjoyment of leisure, and imbued so far as capacity permits with the love of truth, beauty, and wisdom.

The proportion of life after school age is so much greater than those years subject to the duress of learning that we perceive it to be a poor pedagogic economy to so drive the memory-mind of the student that he reacts from learning and culture once he is free from scholastic obligations. Moreover, the years after school life—being more mature, more enriched and enlightened by experience—are years when intellectual and cultural activity can gather, if so inclined, treasures of beauty and wisdom impossible to youth. How foolish, how tragic, then, to apply a mere disciplinary system of education which fails adequately to arouse intellectual interest

and co-operation on the part of the pupil! In the support of this important pedagogic discovery lies the main emphasis of that new experimental education to which the name "progressive" has been applied.

10

The leading educators of our country are aware of these needs in education and are rapidly making changes in the direction of methods which awaken greater response in children. But it is of great importance that the parents also should concern themselves with the education of their children. This is a responsibility which parents should not delegate wholly to the professional educator.

A generation ago parents did not feel qualified to pass upon the education of their children. They delivered their children to a school and then washed their hands of the matter, trusting wholly in the educator because they did not feel capable of discriminating as to educational methods or educational goals.

But today things are different. Parents are not only deeply interested in the kind of education being given to their children, but they are frequently qualified to judge of educational policies, methods, and goals. Especially are they the best judges of the effect of the schooling upon their children. They know better than anyone else the child's reaction to the school—whether the child is interested or

bored, whether the child is being intellectually awakened or intellectually stultified by the school.

It depends upon the culture and insight of the parents what type of education is given in any community. For in a social democracy such as ours it is the parents who choose the school board, the school board who choose the superintendent, and the superintendent who establishes the general policy of education. Clearly it all goes back fundamentally to the parents in any given community whether the method of education there used is a progressive or a conservative one.

Therefore it is very important that parents should acquire some ability to judge of the values in these two opposing schools of education—the old-type, formal, discipline method; and the new-type stimulative, inspirational, creative method.

11

In the last decade there has been a most tremendous swing of general educational philosophy toward the new liberalism. This change has been due not to any single factor so much as to the general evolution of education in harmony with the developments going on in other phases of our social and economic life. The fact is that humanity is moving forward very rapidly these days. No single department of human thought or activity has been left untouched by the electrical stimulation of modernity.

Is it any wonder that education is becoming revolutionized? This world-wide movement for a new education—it is going on in Europe, Asia, and South America as well as in the United States—is part of the general progress which has become so marvelously accelerated since the beginning of the present century, in a world where all the old foundations are crumbling and the new order has hardly yet arisen out of the chaos of confusion which characterizes all institutions—religious, social, political, and economic as well as educational.

The principles of "progressive" education are but a part of the general progress of the times, as shown by hearty support which they receive from such movements as modern psychology, child study, mental hygiene and neurology.

The public school system is rapidly accepting these principles in theory, and beginning in many places to put them into practice. In a word, it is evident that the "progressive" movement in its main philosophy has come to stay. Indeed it no longer needs special propagandic efforts for its spread.

12

As an example of how the new educational ideals have permeated the educational thought of our country, let us examine a recent annual report of the public school system of Washington, D. C., wherein we find the superintendent of a large public school system not notably experimental making statements

which read like a revolutionary manifesto of "progressive" education ten years ago:

"There was a time when the public school concerned itself largely with book learning; when the course of study prescribed was largely in terms of academic instruction based on prescribed reading from books; and when the methods of instruction consisted largely of assigning lessons in books to be learned by pupils, with recitations during which teachers asked questions to determine whether the pupils had satisfactorily mastered the assigned lessons. Such a school was quite isolated, and existed apart from the current of public affairs.

"Today the public school is concerned with the development of the personality of individuals as completely as possible, both for the sake of the individual and for the sake of society. Its prescribed program of instruction consists not merely of mastery of books, but provides activities and experience for pupils by means of which they are to educate themselves through self-activity.

"Books are mastered by pupils to stimulate further thought and action on their parts. Skills in arithmetic, spelling, reading and other subjects are developed because children feel a need for them, and because they can make real use of them in their further education. The methods of instruction are intended to develop the initiative of pupils and encourage them in independent thought and action. Such a school aims to provide situations in which the pupils may develop those interests and exercise those

activities in which children of their age are interested. It is the function of the school to develop appropriate ideals of conduct and to substitute worthy for less worthy. Such a school, directed and controlled by trained teachers, aims to be a counterpart of child life outside of school."

13

However widespread have become the ideals of progressive education, it is undoubtedly true that education has been advancing much faster in theory than in practice. Many difficulties oppose the establishment of progressive methods in the public schools—difficulties of plans and organization, the lack of progressively trained teachers, and especially the tendency everywhere to have crowded schools with huge classes.

Also there is a good deal of controversy between the old school men and the new school men, between the conservatives and the radicals. This controversy is not so much over the general philosophy of the new education as it is over the more radical forms of its application. Conservatives claim that the really sound principles in the so-called progressive movement have been used in education for many years; and that the radical reactions from the mental discipline type of education result in disagreeable forms of individualism, in academic carelessness and

inefficiency, and in undue disorderly freedom of conduct.

14

There can be no question, however, in the minds of the unprejudiced who visit and compare the two different types of schools that this "progressive" method produces a remarkable effect upon the child. In schools using this method we find children earnestly and actively engaged in their intellectual development; eager-minded, loving their school and happy in it. These children feel no gulf separating their school life from the wonderfully stimulating life of the world outside their school. Such as these are the definite results obtained from the progressive method, results patent and observable to any investigator in the actual field of operation.

A distinguished principal of a hitherto rather conservative school (the oldest of the great American preparatory schools) pays this tribute to progressive education:

"It is certain that, with adolescent boys and girls, progressive education has justified itself. It has made them aware that school may be more of a pleasure than a punishment. It has eliminated the monotonous recital of case-endings and of mathematical tables. It has banished the hard, uncomfortable benches on which pupils used to sit bold upright, under penalty of reprimand. It has made them regard the widening of knowledge as a process to

which they may look forward for a lifetime and has permitted them to appreciate the importance of beauty in nature and art. To the influence of progressive educators our grammar schools have been succumbing gladly, and the country is everywhere the better for it."[1]

[1] "The Promise of Progressive Education," Current History, April, 1933, Claude Moore Fuess, Principal of Andover Academy.

Reach Down Your Hand

Reach down your hand!
The little one who trudges by your side
Is striving hard to match your grown-up stride;
But oh, his feet are very tiny yet,
His arm so short—I pray you, don't forget—
Reach down your hand!

Keep soft your voice!
For it was such a little while ago,
This small one left the place where tones are low;
His voice still holds the cadence of that land
Where no one ever gave a stern command—
Keep soft your voice!

Lift up your heart!
The little child you struggle so to teach
Has resource far above the human reach;
Lift up your heart!

Lucie Haskell Hill,
Parent's Magazine.

CHAPTER TWO

Understanding the Child

SUCCESS in dealing with children is due to a very simple quality in teacher or parent, the ability to understand the child. No amount of pedagogic technique or theory will take the place of this ability.

In fact, all successful human relationship is based on understanding. Executive and business men need to understand those with whom they deal, either as employees or as clients. Mutual understanding and sympathetic behavior are the chief factors of harmony and happiness in married life. In the field of politics we see that no matter how great a vision the statesman has, he will not be successful unless he understands human nature and knows how to guide it harmoniously toward desired ends.

Abstract principles are not sufficient; it is the way in which these principles are applied, with a psychological understanding of human nature, which brings success to all who deal with other human beings.

How essential, then, in the case of those who deal with children either as parents or educators, is *the quality of close understanding of the child.* Those who do not have this innate sympathy with children should not enter the teaching profession; they should choose a vocation which deals with inanimate objects

rather than with human beings in their most delicate and sensitive years.

2

It is not easy for the child to make himself understood to the adult world. At first he must use signs instead of speech. Only infinite love and patient consideration enables the mother to understand her infant's needs and wants as conveyed to her through this dumb effort toward self-expression.

The nervous exasperation produced in children through not being able easily to make their wants and ideas known is vividly demonstrated in the case of deaf and so-called dumb children. There is in the suburbs of Washington a remarkable school for such children, where I have seen loving sympathy and understanding care on the part of a unique teacher,[1] combined with the gradual acquirement of the art of speech, change querulous neurotics into happy, poised, normal children in the course of a year.

In this natural querulousness of deaf children before they have learned the art of speech, we can clearly see the effect upon a child's nervous system of not being able to command the comprehension of the adult world around it. Some degree of this disadvantageous nervous reaction exists, I believe, in

[1] Miss Anna C. Reinhardt, Home School for Deaf Children, Kensington, Md.

the case of all children, even those of normal senses, when the adult world with which they are daily in contact fails to understand them.

For years even the normal child is limited by language handicap—by his inability to equal adults in the art of speech. When it comes to discussion it is difficult for him to explain his point of view. The adult—so fluent of tongue, so quick of thought—has a great advantage over the struggling child who is endeavoring slowly and painfully to give his point of view regarding a situation that has arisen. How easy it is, because of this reason alone, for the adult to get the wrong impression of circumstances and motives that have entered into the child's action!

If children do not have confidence in an adult, they do not feel at home in his presence. They frequently become tongue-tied. "What is the use," they think, "of trying to explain things to this tyrant! He will not listen. He will not understand. Best keep still." So the child, in embarrassment before an unsympathetic adult, often fails adequately to present his case. This is tragic, for nothing rankles so much in the child's soul as injustice due to hasty, inconsiderate decision on the part of the adult.

It takes time and patience to draw out the truth from a child. Children's testimony is so unreliable that it requires a good deal of skill to unweave the tangled web which a group of children bring to a teacher. Sometimes I have narrowly escaped doing children an injustice from trying to settle too hastily a matter which has arisen between them.

3

The world of the adult importunes us too much. Matters of importance demand our attention, and so we frequently neglect to give due consideration to the needs of the child. If we would deal successfully with children, we must consider their affairs as of equal importance with our own; we must in all chivalry deem these weaker and more helpless human beings worthy of our most careful consideration, in order that justice may eventuate in all our dealings with them. Thus we may guide them, also, into paths of justice in their dealings with each other. Example is more effective than precept in developing a just and tender conscience in children in their behavior towards each other.

When once we have won the child's confidence, his attitude towards us becomes more intimate, more fearless. He does not hesitate to pour out his heart to us, to tell us what he really thinks. He ventures freely to explain to us his point of view as to what has happened or as to what he wishes to do.

What an important thing it is that in this relationship of the adult to the child there should be perfect confidence on the part of the child in the justice and integrity of the adult. When the child has this attitude toward the adult, this faith in him, the relations between the two are most harmonious and delightful. Indeed, I do not know of any human relationship so lovely, so near to that of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, as the relation of children

with each other and with adults in a group where perfect harmony has been established: where the adult understands the children and leads them into righteous ways; and where the love and confidence which the children have for the adult inspires in them a willingness to cooperate in every way toward the establishment of perfect group cooperation and harmony. Such a delightful atmosphere can never be attained in an organization where adults do not take pains to understand the children and to realize their points of view.

4

I look back with amusement upon an episode which occurred early in my teaching career, illustrating vividly what happens when a teacher does not understand the children she is teaching. A teacher of history in the high school of my native town was absent on account of illness, and I was engaged as substitute. In the first recitation I found that the children had a miserable preparation of their lesson. I tried to make the subject matter interesting to them; and giving them an assignment not too long for the subsequent lesson, I told them I hoped they would have a much better preparation next time. After class a girl with whom I was acquainted told me the quaint cause of this poor recitation. She said that the children disliked the teacher because she gave them too hard lessons and was not sympathetic. So they had all joined in an academic strike, agreeing not to

prepare their lessons well. To my pleased surprise they presented a much better recitation next time and they beamed with pleasure when I commended them for their improvement. During the two weeks in which I had the class we had a very pleasant time together enjoying and discussing the marvels of history, which cannot fail to interest any child when properly presented. When I met the absent teacher upon her return she said: "How did you get on with the children? Weren't they awful? I don't know what to do with them! They have such poor lessons!" I did not enlighten her, for I believed her incapable of enlightenment. But that episode has remained with me ever since.

I remember once seeing a mother helping (?) her child, a boy eight years of age, to study spelling. "Spell 'friend.' Spell 'country,'" etc., the mother shouted fretfully to the child, being a little angry at him because his spelling had been poor at school and she was trying to improve it. The scene was laid out of doors under a shade tree, in golden autumn weather amidst glorious mountain scenery. The boy's thoughts were rambling. Under her duress he managed to spell these words successfully, but so angrily and with such a flushed face that I had to laugh. It was like a dog learning tricks with a whip over him. Of course this was not the way to aid the child educationally, and yet the mother was doing her best within the scope of her knowledge.

How important it is that mothers as well as teachers should understand child psychology, should under-

stand how to win the child rather than attempt to dominate him by force.

5

How can an adult aid the child to develop to his best self? We must sense, as it were, his inner being. We must be able to look into the child soul and see the reality there. We must perceive the best to which he is capable of growing and developing. We must be able to diagnose the causes of unintelligence or of evil in the child's behavior, intuitively understanding those things that are obstructing normal psychological growth.

This cannot be done by intelligence tests, though such tests may help. It needs sympathy, intuition, and vision of the child's true nature. As the diagnosis of a physician determines the physical nature and needs of the child, so the educator must determine the psychological needs of the child. This means that teachers must be somewhat of adepts in psychology, though not necessarily as the result of technical training in that field.

There are many highly trained experts in child psychology to whom I would not entrust children for training. They have become too much institutionalized, too much crystallized in the doctrines of child psychology. They are technicians rather than artists.

On the other hand there are many teachers who, without any technical training in psychology, under-

stand children perfectly. The first requisite for understanding the child is love, the second requisite is intuition, and the third requisite is much contact and practice with children. Technical psychology can be a great help toward the requisites, but it cannot be a substitute for them. *Fundamentally, the adequate understanding of the child is a spiritual process.*

There is a natural talent or gift for each trade or profession. The born surgeon possesses sensitive fingers, quick and accurate mind. The man who loves horses knows instinctively the personality and character of every horse he deals with. Some people have a knack with flowers and all growing things and seem able to persuade them to their best growth. Some people have a knack with children, and they are the ones who should be teachers.

6

There is a growing recognition in our public school system of the need of maturity in those who deal with little children. A longer preparation insuring greater intellectual development and maturity is rapidly changing two-year normal courses into teachers' colleges requiring four years of study as a preparation for teaching.

In order to help secure excellent teachers for the first years of the child's schooling, where the greatest insight into child character is required, public school systems are beginning to equalize salaries, put-

ting the primary grades on a salary level with all the grammar grades—in some cities even on a level with high school grades.

In this country there is somewhat of a prejudice against married teachers. But why? The married woman who has had children of her own, who has learned to be patient and understanding with children, who is settled in her ways and willing to devote herself earnestly to the school work without too much dissipation of a social nature—we may well consider that such a woman is excellently equipped to handle children. In France the married teacher is much prized.

7

We cannot too much over-estimate the important necessity of *love* on the part of the teacher for the child as the means of perfect understanding. Maria Montessori lays great stress upon this point: "The educator so often fails to understand and love the child. It is not exaggerating to say that the school teacher is often the persecutor of the child—unconscious persecutor, of course. This warfare exists everywhere, even in the family. The parents are strong and the children are weak. The parents are dictators, judges without appeal. Everything these grown-up persons say is right. If the child is not of their opinion, he is surely wrong.

"We find ourselves as educators in a singular con-

dition, the origin of which is very primitive, a state of criticism which resembles hate. Certainly this is the opposite of love. What do we look for in the child? It seems we are looking for its faults, not only for the wrong things he has done but even for those which he might do. We are terrorized by this fear which becomes with us an obsession.

"This is why I say it is not love, but fear and hate that is the foundation of our attitude toward children. For one who loves finds in the object of his love all that is good, not only qualities that are visible but also hidden virtues. He who loves has, so to speak, the gift of second sight which enables him to perceive qualities which others cannot distinguish. It is when love begins to grow weak that one discovers faults in the being whom one has loved. It is when love is dead that one is astonished to have been able to love such a person at all.

"It is evident that education has not yet been placed on the plane of love, since it regards only the faults of children. It fails to establish the atmosphere of mutual confidence in which the child needs to develop to attain his best maturity. Too often the adult and the child do not know each other, do not understand each other, and a struggle arises between them.

"The essential requirement of education is so simple and yet very complicated. It is a question of hostility or of love. What we must do, in fact, is to change fundamentally our attitude towards the child,

and love him with a love which sees not his faults but his virtues; and which instead of condemning him encourages him and sets him free.

"Sympathy and good intentions are not sufficient. Love is dynamic. When we love anyone we want to do something for that person. And so, if we fail to love children, they become aware that they have been neglected and forgotten, in a world of the adult filled with the pursuit of superfluous affairs. It is necessary then that we pursue quite another path by which we not only render children happier, but equip ourselves with a new vision which will bring illumination and inconceivable riches into our lives."[2]

8

A very important point in dealing with children is that adults should conceive the child as an equal. Equal not in years nor in experience; not in attainment of technique and skills; not in ability of expression nor in acquired knowledge and wisdom. But equal soul to soul. Equal as regards earnestness about life. Equal in sincere desire for self-expansion and self-improvement. Equal in zest for enjoyment of the rich environmental culture.

Let us receive the child as seriously as we would receive an adult who approaches us. Whatever the

[2] "Education as a Social Problem," l'Ecole Nouvelle, November, 1932." Translated from the original French by the author.

child has to say should meet with the same courtesy and attention as if an equal in age were addressing us.

So many adults are apt casually to put off the child as if its affairs were worthy of no consideration; as if its ideas were of no importance; as if it were a talking doll instead of a human being. Children feel instinctively this attitude of an adult, even though it be disguised in formal politeness. Such an attitude on the part of the adult does not help children to develop, but makes them shy and causes them to seek retirement from the world of the adult in order to find their real selves. On the contrary, when one accepts the child as an equal on its plane of capacity; with entire seriousness accepts its confidences and answers its questions; jokes with it and gives one's self to it—then the child enjoying richly the society of the adult gladly seeks it as a means for mental and social stimulus and development.

The child finds in the adult a superior wisdom and a ripeness of thought; while the adult finds in the child a liveliness, a pristine beauty both of body and soul which conveys a distinct pleasure. Thus the social relationship between the child and adult may be mutually enjoyable and profitable. Each gives pleasure to the other and stimulates the other. From this charming child before us with its artless prattle and its quick bright ways, we derive as much social pleasure as we do from many adults who seek our time and attention.

9

I cannot too much repeat and emphasize this fact: that sympathetic social consideration on the part of the adult is an immense factor in the development of children. It encourages them to expression. It stimulates and sharpens their intellects. It causes their child souls to expand in a world of higher values than the one in which they are accustomed to be and move when with their coevals. So we find that children love the society of those adults who, they feel, love and understand them.

Parents who establish and maintain this cordial relationship with their children, this intimate confidential relationship, have the best chance of seeing their children grow up into sturdy wholesome character and develop into self-confidence without that rift between parent and child which leaves the parent helpless before the waywardness of adolescent youth.

Education is not mere instruction. It is training for adjustment to the larger and brighter life of the race. In the case of children there is apt to be too much instruction and too little education. The pressure that tries to induce extensive knowledge is in danger of lessening vitality without giving corresponding power, success or happiness.—*Henry Dwight Chapin, M.D., "Heredity and Child Culture."*

CHAPTER THREE

The Behavior of the Child

A GREAT change has taken place during the last generation in the philosophy and practice of child-training. The patriarchally exercised authority of the adult toward the child is passing. Modern child psychology has discovered many serious flaws in this age-long system of domestic autocracy. This kind of training does not produce, at least in the modern world, a wholesome personality. It is apt to develop complexes in the child which manifest themselves later in life in ways not to be desired.

Moreover, in this swiftly changing civilization of today we are beginning to question what right we have as adults to decide dogmatically upon the child's pattern of development. Is anyone authorized, even by the fact of parenthood, to determine the destiny of another? It used to be fairly easy to condition children into the path desired for them by society, but who will today venture to choose the path the child should walk?

The reproduction of past patterns of society has not resulted in a perfect world. Quite the contrary! Therefore we are beginning to wonder, even though

we might claim the right to dictate to the child the direction of its growth and development, whether it is wise to attempt to exercise such a privilege in this extraordinary, changing epoch.

2

Up to the present it has been an adult world into which the child was born, in which the child was trained, and for which the child was expected to qualify. The adult had distinct ideas of what the child should be trained for, and the child must be bent to this idea of the adult who is wiser and more powerful than he. The lack of submission to the ideals of the adult was considered badness on the part of the child and punished as such. Thus children on the whole were conditioned into behavior patterns designed for them by the adult.

Naturally, the behavior of children as desired by adults was of a type which would interfere as little as possible with the life of the adult. Therefore children were expected to be quiet; to speak little in the presence of adults; to practice tranquil and inactive behavior in the house.

Houses have been designed for adults only, although inhabited in past generations more by children than by adults. Everything in the world has been designed for adults. And into this adult world the child has had to grope its way until it was mature enough itself to function as an adult.

3

In recent years, however, both parents and educators have been prone to take a different view. They say: "Let us make a world in which the child will feel at home. Let us adults be considerate of the child, of its feelings and desires. Let us surround it with an environment adapted to its child-nature. And in this child-world let the child be supreme."

This new psychology of education has tended to create *a world of the child.* It has been a wonderful experiment, a wonderful creation—this world in which the child moves about as the normal citizen and in which the adult becomes the comrade and helper of the child. Very interesting results in child-nature can be noted from this reversal of ancestral situations. Children become fearless, independent, full of initiative, and develop quite early into maturity of thought and action.

But when we carry this new vogue of child-training to the extreme we get into a quandary. If the child is to be supreme and the adult subservient to his needs and demands, then we have merely reversed the old situation of tyranny. Now the child becomes the tyrant. He expresses his demands without any consideration for the adult. He wants what he wants when he wants it. If the adult yields to this imperiousness on the part of the child, we have a situation not only bad for the adult but bad also for the child.

It is quite evident how much confusion and disturbance the self-willed behavior of children brings

into the life of the adult. The American child has become a synonym for bedlam in hotels, boarding houses, and apartments in this country and abroad. Parents are worn to a frazzle. Many are brought to the verge of nervous prostration by the actions of their children.

We must look into this situation not only with regard to the comfort or discomfort of the adult. It *may* be an admirable attitude on the part of the parent to be willing to sacrifice his own beatitude for what might be beneficial to the child. But the important question is, whether this excessive freedom —this privilege of the child to dictate to the adult world—*is a good thing for the child.*

4

The power and opportunity to dictate to others is not good for children, just as it is not good for adults. The expression of such tyrannic power habitually produces serious flaws in character. The quality of tyranny exercised by an individual is good neither for that individual nor for any one he tyrannizes over. If it was bad for the child formerly to be the object of tyranny on the part of the adult, so now it is bad for the child to find opportunity to exercise tyranny over his protagonist.

Undue freedom permitted children does not make them happy. On the contrary, we find that such children are nervous even to the point of being neurotic. They are apt to be hectic in their be-

havior. Why is this? It is because, as in the case of neurotic society women, their desires become too numerous and too avid to find adequate satisfaction even with the utmost freedom of action. These children demand the attention of the adult in unnatural ways. They speak in raucous tones. They push forward and seek centerstage at all times. Such attitudes militate against a child's wholesome and serene development.

This abnormal expression of the child ego has been going on in America for almost a generation, and we can now study the serious results flowing from such a training or lack of training of the American child. These spoilt children, when they grow up, tend to have career obstacles because they have not been used to subordinating their own desires to the needs of a group or an organization. They find it difficult to harmonize in marriage, and so divorces are frequent. Their lives have not been rendered happy or successful by ill-advised license during childhood.

5

There is a fundamental difference between a wholesome freedom for the child, and a spoiling of the child by giving way to its whims. There should be, as we have previously indicated, the most delicate loving consideration for the child on the part of the adult, a consideration of its needs and normal desires; but there should be no permission for the expression of selfish whims and desire for power over the adult.

Children as well as adults thirst for power and tend to become tyrants when not subdued to a just and balanced behavior. A child, given any leniency, will inevitably increase its attempt toward winning the right of way; it will go as far as it can. *The tyrannous parent has become somewhat of an anomaly in this day and age; but the tyrannous child is now emerging as the fruit of an epoch which reverses the old order of things.*

These two things are plainly incompatible, freedom and tyranny. Freedom on the part of one person cannot mean the right to subject another person to tyranny. No! Freedom means the right of each individual to move in his own natural orbit; the right to have wholesome preferences; the right to exercise judgment and decision; the right to express normal individuality.

But what is normal individuality? It is the development and expression of individual tastes within the scope of cooperation with the needs and desires of other individuals. The key to it all is mutuality, harmony, non-infringement upon the normal rights of others—be they children or adults.

The behavior of children and adults toward each other should be one of mutuality. There should be a reciprocal respect and consideration. Parents and other adults dealing with children should neither be too selfishly demanding of, nor too generously slaving for, the child. Each group—that of adults and that of children—should duly respect the other's rights and needs.

The child has certain specific rights and needs that pertain to its nature as an immature but rapidly growing and developing human being; these rights should be respected by the parent. On the other hand, the parent has certain rights and needs as an established mature being with certain fixed habits legitimate to its mode of life as adult; these rights and needs should be respected by the child. *Mutual unselfish consideration and courtesy will solve all the problems of the home.*

The same principle equally applies in the school. Teachers should be considerate of children at every turn. They should make it realized that their whole aim is the benefit of the children; that they exist in the school only for the sake of the proper development of the child. On the other hand, the children must at every turn give due consideration to the teacher. In schools where this rule of behavior is reciprocally practiced we see developing a beautiful quality among the children—a quality of courtesy, of loving consideration for the adult that reflects the courtesy and loving consideration the adult habitually shows for the children. We find also in these children a poise and serenity such as are never found either in tyrannic or tyrannized children.

6

As regards the behavior of children towards other children, the same principles apply as in the case of the behavior of children towards adults—the prin-

ciples of mutuality, of cooperation, of reciprocity, of kindly considerateness. The more appreciation and sympathy a child has for the rights of other children, the more harmonious and happy will be the life of the group and the life of the individual child as well.

Harmony is undoubtedly the greatest factor of happiness in life. Where you find children harmonious, you find them happy and wholesome. On the other hand, where there is lack of harmony you find children irritable and inclined to be neurotic. Therefore the most important thing to be established in the relationship of children with each other is harmony.

In progressive schools a system of self-government or partial self-government is of great value in establishing an atmosphere of harmony. Children are generally willing, I find, to forego private revenge if they know they can have ready recourse to organized justice. And it is much better for the children to bring up points of dispute, discuss them and adjudicate them than for the teachers to handle these things. A child is much more impressed by the criticism of his equals than he is by the criticism of his adults. By discussing the social behavior of each other, by weighing and judging such acts and dispensing punishment if necessary, children tend to form an attitude of respect of law and respect of the rights of others. Finally this sense of justice becomes ingrained in their being, because they are not hearing it preached to them but are actually

practicing it in the working out of their own self-government institutions.

To this school court the pupils bring all their troubles. It is very interesting to be present at such a session. One sees a keen sense of justice expressed by children in their opinions and judgments about each other. Also there is a great deal of generosity, more so I think than holds in the relationship of adults with each other. Children are willing to wipe the slate clean and begin again on an equal footing of friendship, harboring no resentment of the past.

7

One thing which I try to eliminate from all children is the desire to tease each other. This is a quality which can be designated by no other term than evil. It has no valid excuse. There is little tendency to teasing on the part of a group which has been trained in these progressive methods of discipline. But sometimes a new child will come into the group from the outside world bringing with it a habit of teasing. I say to such children who have a tendency to tease, "What! Do you find pleasure in causing unhappiness to others?" This causes them to see their action in a new light. Then I say—"How did you get treated when you came to this school? Did the children tease you, or did they act kindly toward you?" "They acted kindly." "Then why don't you act kindly to them?" It takes a good deal of repetition, perhaps, and some punishment to

rid such a child of his acquired habit of teasing. But a school tradition and atmosphere of mutual kindness and consideration will revolutionize most of this anti-social behavior.

8

One delightful result of having a small school in which children of various ages mingle as if in one big family is the opportunity that the older boys and girls have to show consideration for the needs of smaller children. It is delightful to see how kind they are to their younger schoolmates—helping them upstairs upon their arrival, helping them to take off their things, running to them when they fall and are hurt, playing the big brother and sister to the little tots. Also it is delightful to see the kindly consideration which the children display toward other children who come into their midst handicapped in some way or other.

In such an atmosphere of kindliness and sympathy children rapidly develop to the best that they are capable of. Do we not find this true, also, of ourselves as adults? In an atmosphere of understanding and kindly consideration we can be at our best; whereas an unsympathetic or formal atmosphere chills us and prevents us from expressing our highest capacities of thought and feeling. How much more are children, sensitive as they are to every breath of their environment, susceptible to influences of psychological and spiritual nature!

9

That the child should be allowed to behave and express himself according to his own nature, untrammeled by adult direction—this Rousseausque reaction against authority in education is responsible for some of the extremes of behavior which have appeared in progressive schools. Children left to themselves are little savages and will retain more or less the bad qualities of savage nature.

All progress, all civilization is based upon the *perfecting* of nature, whether physical or human. True, there is a certain native charm to wild, uncultivated land, but man has not for that reason been content to let nature develop as it will. He has taken hold of nature and improved it tremendously. And so with human nature. It can be improved and *should be improved,* from the basic animalistic foundation which is the capital with which every individual starts life.

Children need training just as flowers and fruit trees need training. But here is an important point: this should be a training adapted to the needs of each individual; subordinated to, rather than seeking to restrain or warp, the individuality of the child. We do not wish an artificial product like potted plants or dwarfed trees. We want every child to become his own best self. For this undeniable goal is needed the wise guiding hand of the adult.

What the new education has very properly reacted against is the demand for mere docility on the part

of the child—the endeavor to mould the child into fixed patterns of behavior tending to reproduce the existing social, economic, and political order. If the chief purpose of society is to maintain its existing institutions without change, then the most important qualities of children are docility and obedience. If, however, we wish society to progress, to develop new and better modes, to establish more perfect institutions—then what we need is to encourage self-expression, initiative, and creativeness on the part of children. This cannot be done when too much emphasis is laid on mere docility and obedience.

To recapitulate: *We should seek from the child harmony rather than conformity.* Conformity means following a fixed pattern. Harmony means such adaptation to existing things as flows together with them without violating either their basic nature or one's own. The law of harmony permits much flexibility and variation. What we should prize in the child, then, is ability and willingness to harmonize, combined with a bold creativeness which supersedes conformity.

CHAPTER IV

Character Training

IN THE last few years a great deal of attention has been paid to character development. The need for this is obvious. The authority of the family and of the church over the life of childhood and youth has been constantly diminishing. The influence of ancestral morality and of religious precepts is about as feeble as in any period the historian can point to. Therefore the school is desperately turned to as a sociological and ethical as well as intellectual factor in the development of the child.

And this is as it should be.

Education cannot escape a definite moral obligation. Its responsibilities are not to the intellect alone, but to the full nature of man and woman. As humanity has been evolving from brute to *homo sapiens,* education has been the major factor of progress. But progress cannot stop with the arrival at man-intellectual. It must go on to the further development of man-ethical and man-spiritual. In this higher development, education has the same responsibility for furthering progress that it has always had.

It is folly to say that education is concerned only with the child's intelligence, and that his moral and

spiritual nature must be formed by the home and the church. The higher development of man is a major operation, requiring as complete an environmental conditioning as possible. The school, which has possession of the child for half its waking hours apart from meals, certainly has an equal responsibility with the home for the direction of the child's moral and spiritual nature.

If we analyze the time left, after school hours, to the home for the molding of child-character, we shall find that a great deal of that time is spent by children in unsupervised play. These play periods, and many other periods of the day outside of school, must be subtracted from the time which the home can devote to definite character development. Then, too, the home lessons, increasing proportionately with the age of the child, carry the shadow of the school into the home, preempting for its own use valuable hours of home life. What time, then, has the home to devote to the child in the way of moral instruction compared to that which the school has? Only a small fraction. And from that small fraction the child's mental vitality has been pretty well sapped by school hours and home lessons.

The school cannot avoid responsibility for the complete development of the child. It has taken the child from the home, by legislative power, for the better part of each day; and thereby it has assumed more than half the responsibility, whether acknowledged or not, for the kind of person that child grows to be.

Progressive schools realize this responsibility and cheerfully accept it. They deal not with the child as intellect but with the child as human being. They are concerned with everything that pertains to the child's development.

2

The progressive methods tend to produce a higher ethical quality than can generally be found in other types of schools. There are certain factors in progressive education which definitely make for the building of character.

Intellectual honesty, sincerity, and earnestness are the result, in the progressive schools, of the elimination of the old-fashioned marking system which offered rewards for scholarship almost wholly external to the actual development of the child. The new type of schools—with their motivation of academic work, their methods of arousing interest and desire on the part of the students, and their efforts to adapt the curriculum to the actual needs and nature of the individual child—produce a complete sincerity in all the work that children do either with their hands or with their brains. No longer do we find the former speciousness and intellectual cunning which seeks to elicit marks solely as a means of promotion. Instead of this we find uniformly prevailing among students in progressive schools an admirable quality of intellectual integrity.

Secondly, we find in progressive schools a truth-

seeking quality and a courage of conviction. The students find themselves in an atmosphere of intellectual freedom. They are encouraged to think for themselves. Their ideas are listened to respectfully by both teacher and fellow pupils. They can venture to differ from the text and from the teacher. And they find in the teacher a type of intellectual honesty and comradeship which is all too rare in the standardized type of school.

Thirdly, the social quality of progressive schools is strongly formative of character. The unsupervised recreation and social life of large public schools produce a certain type of character, that of aggressive independence; whereas the supervised, skillfully guided recreational and social life of children in progressive schools forms a character independent, it is true, but not aggressively so. Added qualities of kindliness, courtesy, cooperativeness and harmony are achieved in progressive schools by the way in which social situations, as they arise, are met by the children or the teacher.

The large atmosphere of freedom which prevails in a progressive school gives opportunity to the child for those decisions, self-restraints, and self-guidance which alone can create a sturdy character. Where decisions are too much made for the child, an artificial semblance of character is produced which has, however, no power of endurance because it is not deeply rooted within the soil of the self.

Lastly, the methods of discipline in progressive schools, largely by means of cooperative student and

teacher government, effect and change the child from within. It is extremely interesting to watch a child newly enter a progressive school with habits of mischievous anti-social and anti-adult nature well developed, and see the effect upon him of the admonitions and disciplines administered by the students' self-government organization. At first such a child is amazed that his behavior, instead of winning applause from his fellows, results only in disapprobation. The steady, continuous effect of student disapproval and punishment is very wholesomely transforming to such a boy or girl.

3

Parents, in their home care of the child, can profit greatly by these character discoveries and achievements of progressive schools. They should at all times be intellectually honest and sincere with their children. They should encourage their children in these same qualities. Above all, they should never deride or ignore sincere efforts at the expression of newly forming ideas. The dream life of young children is as real, as important, and as necessary for them as the creative life of the adult. And as the child matures and begins to reason about life, the father and mother should prove true comrades in this quest of knowledge. Here is the one place where the parents' influence with the child is stronger than that of teacher or preacher. Nature made the parent as the older guide and comrade of the child.

If this parental function is properly administered, the child will gain enormously. No other single influence can be so potent.

The social development of children in the home is much handicapped, in the modern family, by the lack of numerous progeny and the too great adumbration of the adult group. The social character is best formed in the relation of the individual with his peers. No influence of parents upon a single child can perfect that child socially as can the influence, under proper supervision, of other children. Hence the need in the home, as emphasized in the following chapter, of other suitable playmates, borrowed from neighboring families.

4

In matters of discipline, there is already a potent influence of the new freedom at work within the home. Children are helped to do the right thing by a spirit of reasonableness rather than by the authority of autocracy. When punishments have to be given, it is best, if possible, to have the child concur in the logical and necessary quality of this punishment.

The founder and owner of a very successful chain of drug stores once told me he learned from a former superior of his, when in the railroad business, a secret of human management which had proved of inestimable benefit. This superintendent never let a disciplined or discharged employee leave his office

without a clear conviction of justice rendered; and what is even more important, without a feeling of harmony and friendship toward his disciplinarian.

Is it too difficult to carry out such a psychological procedure with our children? It takes time, energy, and great self-restraint and calmness. Too often we punish children more because their escapades have proved disturbing to us than because of any intrinsic wrong. We punish in a spirit of irritation in which there is prone to be an exaggeration of severity. Such a kind of punishment is not justice; it is revenge. If we would seek always to be impartial and kindly administers of justice to our children and win their allegiance to the necessary disciplines, we should sow then on each such occasion the seeds of real character development in the conscience of the child.

Abstract preachment has little place in character training. Children are quick to detect insincerity or grandiloquence. It is rather the way in which adults and children together handle all emergencies of behavior which arise that little by little forms the character of children. Teachers should be spiritual and earnest in their lives. They should reflect to the children an integrity of character which calls forth the esteem and admiration of these younger souls seeking to walk the paths of right.

All adults who come in contact with children have a grave moral responsibility. They must serve as examples of justice, of consideration, of kindliness, of earnest and spiritual living. It is not so much

what we adults say as to what we do that influences children. Sermons to children are inadvisable except on rare occasions when some event brings forth a need of moral or spiritual discussion.

5

The concern of the educator today for the development of character in his pupils is not confined to benefits to the individual. Human society in its collective activities is in crying need of more earnest conscience and more ethical behavior. Of what use is it to train intellects for the purpose of exploitation? Better perhaps not to sharpen mental swords that may penetrate the vitals of society. If education is merely to increase the materialistic powers of man, leaving his moral qualities unchanged, we may well despair of civilization.

Dr. Arnold B. Hall, formerly president of the University of Oregon, gave me a very vivid account of how he became convinced, early in his educational career, of the necessity of developing character in proportion to the training of the intellect. In giving a course in political science early in his teaching career at the University of Chicago he made the subject unusually concrete and vivid by detailed references to politics at the state capital. Among other things, he gave so clear a picture of how graft works in state and city government that two of his students the ensuing year were able to put these methods into practice in their fraternity stewardships, to the tune

of several hundred dollars. Dr. Hall told me of his consternation, upon being confronted with these facts by the president, with the realization that these students had been actually helped to crime by the development of their intelligence without a correspondingly awakened conscience.

6

The value of religious teaching enters markedly into this matter of the training of character. Education has had to fight for centuries to free itself from medieval dogmas and concepts antipathetic to scientific discovery and to human progress. As a result of this struggle, we have arrived at the complete separation of education and religion. Is this to be the final settlement of the case?

We can do very well without religion when we are dealing with facts. But can we do without religion when we are dealing with character? Ethical concepts and the practice of morality in the daily life depend very closely upon the truths revealed in religions of the past. Character training without illumination of spiritual vision or enforcement by the conscience of religion is not as effective as it needs must be.

One generation can live on the ethical momentum inherited from a previous religiously-minded generation. But when that momentum is spent, beware! We are witnessing to-day, in the enormous spread of crime among our youth, the effects of a religionless

age in which the home and school have failed as agencies of character training.

7

Children pathetically need the assurance of those definite moral values that are in religion, and the motivation which comes from spiritual earnestness. It is not necessary that religion be dogmatically or creedally taught. Children, nevertheless, should at least realize that principles of right behavior inhere in the spiritual pattern of the universe. They should feel and realize in adults about them a spiritual consciousness that will help them grow into an instructive adherence to spiritual principles of right behavior.

Certain basic truths of the spiritual life could, I believe, be taught all children, even those in the public schools. First, that there is a divine Power which controls the destinies of the universe, causing not only the creation but also the evolutionary progress both of matter and of mind; and that this is a Power that one can have faith in and turn to for aid. Secondly, that every human being has, or rather is, a soul possessed of infinite energy; living during life upon this planet only a minute fraction of its eternal existence; continuing in activity and progress after it leaves this earthly scene; *and deriving its destiny directly from the actions it has built into its character.*

What we sow that also shall we reap. Every thought and deed has its effect upon the develop-

ment of the inner Self, and hence its fateful consequences upon one's future. In such truths as these, I am convinced, lie the greatest incentives for right action. To emphasize the great universal law of progress in the light of infinite growth and development presents ethics to the child from a point of view that strongly motivates right conduct. And this is a truth in harmony with the findings of modern science. It is not something that will have to be unlearned later in life.

8

One of the greatest services of religion to the individual is to give a concrete focus to idealism. The history of civilization shows this distinctly to be true. Although fundamentalist religion has, in doctrine and in practice, frequently proved an oppressive and retrogressive force, on the other hand it is clear that religion has proved itself to be the most definite and vivid focus of reforms. The abolition of gladiatorial combats in Rome, of human sacrifice among the Druids, and of slavery in modern times is traceable directly to the high idealism and zealous self-sacrificing activities of religionists. Hundreds of minor reforms in modern times are traceable to the same source. The reasons for this are clear to anyone who studies the psychology of religion.

What a pity, then, to reject from the schools all the vast appeal and deeply effective motivation which religion lend to idealism!

9

In intermediate grades of the Chevy Chase Country School we have established, as an effective focus of character training in the formation of idealistic concepts, what we call "The Order of the Kingdom of Peace." The statement is so worded as to be nonsectarian and applicable to adherents of any religion. These principles indeed can appeal to all earnest seekers for a more perfect humanity, whether religionists or not:—

MY BELIEF

I believe in, and desire to help bring about that perfect World Civilization wherein universal love and justice shall reign—the Golden Age to which philosophers, seers, and prophets have dedicated their lives.

I believe that the troubles in the world today are due to quarrelsomeness, selfishness, unfairness, jealousy, hatred, and cruelty.

I believe that in order to improve the world I must practice unselfishness, justice, non-aggression, kindness, love, and cooperation.

MY PLEDGE

To be just to everyone.

"To think not in terms of personal gain but in terms of gains to the human race."—*Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt.*

To do unto others as I would like them to do unto me.

To refrain as much as possible from anger and from quarrels.

To think of all people of the world as my brothers.

To wish and work for the prosperity and happiness of all peoples.

This program for a better humanity appeals very strongly to our children. Each pupil is presented with a simply-framed copy of its beautifully printed in blue on duo-toned gold paper. One devotional period a week is devoted to a ceremony built about this program. The Belief is recited by a boy and girl jointly, and then all join in reciting the Pledge. After this follows the recitation or reading of material bearing upon the progress or perfecting of mankind. Events also are reported pertaining to world peace, world conciliation, and world understanding. These concepts are often found cropping out later in class discussions, and in the discussions of the student self-government association.

I know of nothing better in all the history of human thought and endeavor than this concept of the Perfect Civilization—this utopian dream of world thinkers, of idealists the ages down. It furnishes a broader and more satisfying inspiration for idealism than any gospel of personal salvation.

This is a program to which anyone can dedicate himself. Indeed, it is seriously to be considered

whether the world can go on at all unless the individuals composing it are willing to dedicate themselves to this aim of a *perfected civilization.* The establishment in any school of such an ideal center around which to rally the spiritual and ethical life of the children helps to tinge all thoughts and actions of the school with idealism.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Child at Home

WHAT is this being that is given us as parents to care for, train, develop and educate? Sometimes we can see in the child hereditary reflections of our own gifts, temperament, and tendencies. Often we find (and this is the very crux of the foundation of human progress and evolution) a quality in the child superior to that of either parent, so that we are held in wonder before the still unexplained phenomenon of child genius.

Many children are geniuses, in more or less degree. Using the term in its broadest sense, we may say that every child has some quality or spark of genius in that he possesses some special gift or aptitude which makes him unique, setting him off as an individual different from all other individuals.

The primary derivation of the word "genius" fits this latter definition. As used by the Romans it meant "a spirit presiding over the destiny of a person." The broad usage of the word in English following this derivation is given by Webster as: *The mental endowment peculiar to an individual; that disposition or aptitude of mind which qualifies a person for certain kinds of action or special success; a special taste, inclination, or disposition; natural bent.*

2

I think every parent should study carefully this definition of genius, because there is implied in it the entire philosophy of the new education. We are dealing, in child development, with an individual being different from every other individual being. How can we help this child to develop to its fullest individual capacity? Surely not by attempting to mould it into some standardized pattern. Should we mould into *any pattern,* no matter how individual and adequate we believe that pattern to be, we might be acting as a misleading destiny for the child.

For the reason that the child is certain to possess some qualities and gifts different from our own and quite likely to possess a genius superior to our own, is it safe for us to attempt to fix a pattern? Will not that pattern partake inevitably of our own predilections and tendencies? Will it not tend to approximate a duplication of ourselves? But what we want is the fullest possible development of the genius of the child—and that genius is bound to be considerably, if not extremely, different from our own.

3

In static periods of culture, where the preservation of the existing order of things seems the chief desideratum, the genius of the child has to be subordinated to the genius of the race. Varients from the

racial pattern are not desired, and individuals are forced to develop according to fixed standards.

Only in turbulent periods of great discovery, of mental and emotional activity, of cultural renaissance or revolution, is the individual allowed and encouraged to be himself. Of such a nature was the golden age of the Greek art, science, and philosophy; the Italian Renaissance; the Elizabethan period. And is not every portent proclaiming today that we are on the eve of just such a great reconstructive period of the human race? Standing as we do on the strand of an unknown sea, shall we not man our ships with sailors and captains who are above all things intrepid, adventurous, true to their own selves and to the visions which spring from their own creative genius?

It is toward such a goal of development, I think, that we must direct our child training, whether in the home or in the school.

4

Every true mother tends to esteem her child a unique being—prizing it because of its very individuality, its special tastes, its gifts and powers. She longs to help this child be most truly itself. That is, she desires above all things in life to see her child grow and mature into the largest possible success. Her aim is: How can I help my child develop to the fullest capacity of his or her genius?

The lives of great individuals, as well as the na-

ture of great epochs, teach us that the maximum fruition of genius is attained when the individual is given freedom to grow and develop in accordance with innate tendencies, and encouraged or at least permitted to express innate predilections and talents.

How could Walt Whitman's father, carpenter, see any good in his lazy apprentice son, who spent whole days lying on the beach listening to the waves but very few useful hours with saw and hammer and nails? Walt, always the observer of life rather than the doer, later spent his days riding back and forth on the platform of Brooklyn horsecars talking to the conductor and to the passengers. "What a misspent life! what a failure!" thought the practical father. But the poet soul was destined to coin these hours of leisurely absorption into the gold of poetic expression—a treasure rejoicing all humanity for generations; whereas his utmost efficiency as a carpenter could have benefited but a few temporarily.

A dreaming inactive child may be just lazy, or it may have qualities of genius. Let us not decide this point too early in the child's life.

Intuition is greatly needed in sizing up a child. Woman is usually more gifted with intuition than the male, and is biologically of a *fostering* disposition. It is her very nature and function to nurse weakness into strength. It is she who perceives, by reason of her innate sympathy and intuition, the oak in the tiny acorn; the eagle in the fledgling; the swan in the ugly duckling; the man or woman of great achievement in the wilful sulking child.

5

If freedom for the child to follow the bent of its own genius is the foremost factor in the fruition of individuality, a second factor of almost equal importance is a rich and ample environment. "Full many a flower is born to blush unseen," sings the poet. Whether or not it is true that genius will meet with absolute frustration if deprived of a favoring environment, it is certainly true that the average individual needs both opportunity and stimulus if his native powers are to reach their richest development. Therefore it is evident that the more varied the environmental stimuli presented to the child, the better are his chances of really discovering the things he wants to do.

The average home is limited as to the variety of environment it can offer children. Parents should, however, endeavor to surround the child with as rich a cultural and as stimulative and broad a vocational environment as is possible. There should be books, music, art, carpentry, mechanical work, nature study, gardening, science—as much of such opportunities as the home life can afford and as the child may seem to crave and appreciate.

In addition to these opportunities within the home, parents should avail their children of the opportunities that exist in their civic and national environment in the way of museums, concerts, wholesome plays and movies, automobile trips to historic sites or to scenic splendors.

Very important, also, is the human environment with which the child finds itself in contact. Parents must constantly seek to enlarge the child's acquaintance with helpful and stimulating playmates and with adults who may prove inspiring comrades or guides.

6

The new principles of education help the child, in the home as well as in the school, to be more creative, more active, more joyous. This necessitates not only a considerable change of the traditional parental attitude, but it necessitates also a careful consideration of the child's needs as regards the planning and equipment of the home.

The modern school is designed for the sake of the child. There is plenty of sunlight for each schoolroom. Cupboards house material which the children will use in their activities. There are collections for nature study, growing plants, a bowl of fish; and in the school yard, perhaps some animals being raised—a family of rabbits or guinea pigs. There are school gardens planted by the children and cared for by them, where they may watch with delight the growing power of nature which they have assisted by the application of science and toil.

In the home, also, there should be adequate provision for children's predilections and necessities. How strange it seems, when we think of it, that

houses in the past have been planned wholly for adults. Architects, except in a few modern homes, have taken no thought for the needs of children.

On the farm there are plenty of play places for children, in the barn loft as well as out of doors. But in the modern suburban or town house there has been too little attention given to the needs of children. Every home should have, if possible, some place where children can keep their toys, their knick-knacks, their materials for creative work. Here they can spend happy hours in rainy weather. Often the unfurnished attic has been used in this way. Now with the modern automatic oil or gas heaters the basement can easily be fitted up as a recreation room for children.

In the yard there should be plenty of play equipment: swings, slides, seesaws, old automobile tires hung from trees. For those who can afford it I recommend the jungle-jim, a system of ladders built together vertically and horizontally wherein children can climb over and through with endless amusement and helpful exercise.

For growing boys there should be a workshop equipped with carpenter's table and simple tools. If the father has the inclination and the time to work with his boys, guiding them into interesting forms of woodwork and stimulating their creative endeavor, this is a great gain to the boys. If this is not possible, some young man can be engaged for Saturdays and perhaps other afternoons; and other neighborhood boys can be enlisted to form a woodwork class.

7

One of the great social needs for children in the modern home is the presence of other children. The old-fashioned family of five, seven, ten children furnished a social group which could plan and carry out endless amusement. But today families in towns and cities have often only one or two children; or, if more, there may be a great interval between their ages.

One of the reasons that children so love their life in progressive schools is because these schools furnish a social environment such as the single child craves. Here he finds other children of his own age, with ample opportunity during the school day for social contacts and for games and sports together. Often this single child feels a great difference in his social environment when he returns from the school to his home, which seems lonely to him because there are no other children to play with.

What can be done to remedy this loneliness of the single child—this domestic need for a social group? Many parents wisely solve the problem by inviting other eligible children to the home to play. A group of parents in the neighborhood may well join together in this way, taking turns in having groups in their homes Saturday, holidays, or for afternoons after the school period. By a cooperative fund it is possible to engage someone to supervise the play of such a group.

Even where there are two or three children in a family, we find usually that these children do not socialize perfectly together. This is a perennial source of amazement and disappointment to parents, who question: "Why can't my children play happily together? Why so many quarrels, troubles and disharmonies?"

The cause of bickering within the family group is partly biological, partly psychological. The children all have hereditary qualities in common. Being together too constantly is a form of psychological inbreeding. Children in the same family see so much of each other that there is apt to be no special charm for them in their association together. Then, too, the differences in ages and sex tend to produce dissatisfactions, disagreements, and hectoring. Therefore it is a very wise thing for parents even of two or three children to bring in children of other families, by invitation, to take meals and to play with their own children. Such arrangement should be reciprocal. The other parents should take their turn in such informal neighborhood play-parties.

I cannot emphasize too much the imperative need of young children for a social group outside of as well as in school hours. Parents of single children can contribute very significantly to their children's happiness and development if they will take the pains to furnish them with playmates by a system of rotating invitations between several such families.

8

There is another aspect to this combining of only children into supervised play groups. By cooperation a number of mothers can take turns supervising the children's play, either with or without a paid assistant. This plan will relieve such a group of mothers from spending so much of their time in playing nursemaids to their children, while at the same time assuring the children a happy and developmental social environment.

Recently a group of nineteen wives of Columbia University professors have announced such a plan of cooperative housekeeping. They have moved into a remodeled building near the university, where the experiment after a month was reported as running smoothly. The mothers take turns, with one paid supervisor, in the care of the twenty-five children of the group.

One apartment in the building has been converted into a nursery and play room for rainy days, and on the roof they have built a sunny, airy playground surrounded by a high climb-proof fence. Each mother takes her turn for half a day each week. The children of the pre-school age spend from nine to twelve o'clock each morning and from two to five o'clock in the afternoon playing together. The idea is being extended to include noon lunches and, at small additional expense, care of the children during the evening by a nurse.

This experiment will be widely copied when par-

ents come to realize how great a factor in the young child's development is play with other children under intelligent supervision. The era of entire home care of pre-school children is rapidly passing. The kindergartens and nursery schools have so abundantly proved their benefits to children (not to speak of benefits to parents), that the education of the future seems destined universally to extend downward the school age of the child almost to the cradle.

9

It must not be thought that parents should simply try to discover what they can do to make their children's lives happy. Children should also have responsibility in the home—plenty of responsibility. Psychology has pretty well proved the maxim of religion, that the happiest people are those who are doing something to serve others. The reverse of this can be noted in many homes—the quarrelsomeness and discontent of children for whom parents do everything and from whom they ask nothing in return.

Schools are beginning to carry out this dictum of psychology by assigning various duties which children individually or in committees assume responsibility for. Not only do children enjoy these responsibilities but they are developed in character by means of them. Rev. Frederick H. Sill of the Kent School, a remarkable educator, considers responsibility so essential to character development that he

has all of the work of the school, except the actual cooking of food, done by the boys. These boys come mostly from privileged homes where they have had no duties or responsibilities.

The modern home, with diminished opportunity for chores, must find some ways in which children can express service and responsibility. The providing of such work may be more of an inconvenience than a help to the parents, but it is of the utmost importance to the child.

10

There is another lesson that the home can learn from the school. The home may well adopt some of the principles of organization which keep a resident school running smoothly. There should be regular hours for meals. The meals should be eaten in an orderly cultured way, and not too fast. Children should wait for dismissal from the table. There should be regular hours for bed, and these should seldom vary. This bed-time rule should be observed automatically without habitual yielding to the ingenious pleadings of children for delay. Once such habits of delay are formed, bed time becomes an endless agony for both parents and children. On the other hand, habits of regularity can be made automatic, with great saving of wear and tear on the part of both children and parents.

Parents are handicapped as regards the discipline of children in comparison with a school organization.

In the school there is plenty of machinery to take care of any punishment which needs to be inflicted upon the child. But in the family life such organization is lacking. Let us take a concrete example: A mother is taking one or more of her children to some entertainment or on some excursion. One of the children, let us say, behaves very badly, in such a way that the just and logical punishment for him would be that he should be deprived of this trip. But how is he to be deprived of the trip if there is no one at home with whom he can stay? In such a case it may be better for the parent to give up the trip entirely and to remain at home in order to enforce the necessary discipline.

In the home discipline of children there is a great need of regularity of organized effort. It is a very frequent occurrence that children who have behaved badly at home soon learn to fit into organized life when they start to attend school. For here they find a discipline working smoothly—a discipline which they cannot escape, a discipline which they may be led to see is only for their own advantage. Rebelliousness is the more easily overcome when it is pointed out to the recalcitrant individual that the other children willingly carry out these rules, realizing that they are for their own good. This power of example has a great effect upon children.

In the home where there are only one or two children it is rather difficult to organize the life of the child in a definite way. Yet I feel it is of the utmost importance that this should be done for the sake of

the child's physical and psychological needs. It should not be necessary to argue and dispute with the child on every occasion, or to have to inflict frequent punishment.

Where the child's life is wholesomely organized it will be found that the child is more poised and robust, that his whole development—physical, psychological, and emotional—is better than in those homes where lack of organization leaves too much opportunity for wilful, capricious, and hectic behavior.

11

It cannot be too much emphasized that it is the sacred duty of parents to give the best of attention and care to the developmental needs of children. This is the first obligation of parenthood.

All of this requires a great deal of attention and effort on the part of the parents, especially on the part of the mother. If it is a job to bring into the world children, it is a still bigger job to raise them healthily and wisely. This is the major obligation of the mother for a period of many years, until her children have reached maturity. If a mother wishes to raise her children in the best way possible, then lunch parties, bridge parties, dances, movies, and other adult forms of recreation and social expression must hold a subordinate place in her life to the place which her children hold. These recreations and cultural activities have an important place in a woman's

life, it is true, and there should be some opportunity for them; but the responsibility for the children is primary.

A lady with three beautiful, healthy children playing around her was accosted in a Washington park by a childless woman of mature age. The second woman said: "My! what lovely children. I would give ten years of my life to have such children!" "Madame, I did," responded the mother.

Yes; ten, fifteen or twenty years is not too much to expect a woman to give out of her life to the profession of raising children, than which there is no human activity more pregnant with possibilities of good for the future world.

The faults engendered in children by luxury-loving, pleasure-seeking women who neglect their duties to their children are so vicious as to endanger the very stability of society. We note for instance in the history of Rome that when mothers were simple and dutiful in their lives their sons grew up to be useful and noble citizens of the commune and nation; that, on the other hand, when luxury crept in and mothers became pleasure-seeking and loose in character and behavior, neglecting entirely their duty to their children, the males upon maturity showed a laxness in their character, a self-indulgent, pleasure-seeking quality, which so weakened the moral fiber of the Roman race as to render it helpless before the onslaughts of the more virile and wholesome Nordics. Thus the decline of any civilization may be traced in definite degree to luxury and voluptuous-

ness creeping in and corrupting the women, vitiating wifehood and motherhood, and ruining the character of the growing generation.

12

The responsibility of training and bringing up children, however, does not rest solely with the mother. It is very important that the father take his part in this. Children need the influence of the father. Especially do boys need a masculine hand in their training—figuratively always, and literally sometimes. Women of mild disposition have a difficult time rearing male children of strong, aggressive personality. Frequently, perhaps in the majority of cases, a woman of gentle, yielding temperament marries a man of the opposite temperament. If the boys take after the father, and there are several boys in the family, the mother will have a very difficult job training these boys. She will need the father's help. He must stand back of her, reinforce her physical and temperamental weaknesses, and give such practical and psychological support to her discipline as the principal of a school affords his teachers. If the children come to realize that in all their misbehavior they are to deal with two, not one—with a virile male as well as with a gentle female—they will behave much better than if they have only the mother to cope with.

The American man is all too frequently a poor

father because he gives his vitality to his business and saves none for his family. How can he discipline or train his children when he has no energy to bring to the task? The result is that the training of the children is left altogether too much to the mother. In this lopsided training we find one of the greatest weaknesses of American culture. However wise and practical the mother's training may be, it is not able to supply those masculine qualities which growing boys, and girls too, need in their developmental environment. Let us hope that the New Economy, by bringing to pass a shorter working day, will release masculine energy for the due exercise of paternity.

It is not only a father's discipline that the boy needs. He needs also his father's companionship. It is difficult for the mother to be a perfect outdoor chum for her boy. This is a function the father can more easily and more naturally fill. Boys prize those fathers who are pals in this way, taking them on hikes, playing outdoor games with them, sharing with them the joys of recreation in the great out-of-doors. Such ties of paternal comradeship count for a great deal when the dangerous age of adolescence approaches.

13

What is the ideal organization of the family? It must be an organization suited to the new freedom

for the child, democratic rather than autocratic, yet so truly cooperative that harmony and order shall reign.

In the old patriarchal type of family the organization was very set. Such a type of family organization gave great stability to civilization. In China, for example, Confucius twenty-five hundred years ago laid down rules of behavior of wife to husband and to the husband's parents; of children to their parents and parents to their children; younger brothers to older brothers, and older brothers to younger brothers; of children and parents to their relatives of various degrees. These rules have prevailed in all relationships of the family life from then until the present generation. What has been the result? If we take the word of Occidental observers of Chinese life, the Chinese have attained to a remarkably poised social relationship. More harmony has reigned within the family group and other social groups in China than anywhere else in the world. There has been an absence of egotism, of aggressiveness, of rough and rude behavior. There has always been a courtesy, a considerateness, and a subordination of self to the social group. Consequently the life of the peoples of China has been characteristically more happily harmonious than anywhere else in the world.

It may be observed by critics of this system that it has not led to progress. Such a system necessarily produces stability rather than progress. In the face

of modern scientific industrialism this family system of China is now rapidly disintegrating. But what is taking its place? Chaos! Until some new mode of relationship is discovered and universally applied, China will be in a bad way.

In this country we see a somewhat similar transition from the stable system of family relationship of the past, founded a great deal upon religion, to the anarchic condition which characterizes family life today. What we chiefly hear from the youth of today is the right to self-expression, to freedom of the individual. There is too great a throwing off of restraint, rejection of authority, and denial of responsibility.

Plainly we can never return to the hidebound system of patriarchal authority with which our ancestors held sway. In this age of democracy, of freedom, of the right of individuals as well as the right of the group, the adult can no longer be the arbiter of the life of youth. But if the family is to exist at all, it must again become an organization. It must reorganize along new lines. What are the new laws that will hold the family together? In this new organization of the family, as I see it, the laws are of a kind to be derived from the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would like them to do unto you." Mutual courtesy, mutual understanding, mutual consideration on the part of the adult and the child—this is the rule which will again produce a harmonious unit of the family.

14

Already we see such a relationship between adult and youth being worked out in progressive schools in many parts of the country. We find here perfect harmony, perfect understanding and cooperation instead of arbitrary authority imposed from above. Whatever expression of authority there is on the part of the adult is in clear terms of welfare of the children, in such a way that the children themselves understand the aim and the method of the adult in dealing with them. They understand this aim and method to be entirely friendly, and they feel it to be considerate. They themselves, in turn, wish to exert a friendly and considerate attitude towards the adult. Mutual courtesy is the law that reigns, and it solves all problems. As far as possible the children are led to rule themselves by means of self-government associations and to restrain themselves by their own ideas of what is right. But when it seems necessary the adult does not hesitate to direct the children; and then the children, because they are convinced of the essential sincerity and fairness of the adult in his daily contacts with them, cheerfully and promptly obey.

Here, then, we see a perfect type of the new social group of adults and youth. It can be worked out and must be worked out in every family. As far as possible, children should be led to face their own behavior. They should accept the authority of the adult when it is necessary that this authority be ap-

plied to situations. They should see this authority as a reasonable authority based solely upon their own need of wholesome development. When they come to conceive perfect respect and confidence for the attitudes of their parents, there will be very little friction in the family life. And the children will be happier, healthier, and far more normal in their development when such a situation is built up.

15

It is important that children should grow up with high ideals if they are to be worthy citizens. Every individual, in addition to fulfilling the obligation of earning a living, should be of some service to his community and country.

All that we inherit of comfort and of culture, all our assurance of freedom and of opportunity—this has come to us through unselfish efforts of other men and women of the past. If we but take advantage of the labors of the past to enjoy life for ourselves, we have missed one of the most important values of existence. We should not be willing to live as pensioners on the bounty of those who have pioneered the way before us. We should desire ourselves to make some contribution to the progress of humanity.

The school can do much in this direction, but the home is the normal place for the absorption of ideals. Not only by precept, but by deed and example, parents should train their children to habits and ideals of integrity and humanitarianism. We

must not continue to bring up the children of today to be selfish oppressors and exploiters of the ensuing generation. Far better that a child had never been born or educated than that it should grow up to do injury to mankind.

We can reasonably expect that children should be so trained in idealism, so interdoctrinated with the values and needs of society, that they will at maturity voluntarily devote some of their energy to human life and progress. Almost, one might say, this is the most important single factor in the education of the child, important for the happiness and normal expression of the individual as it is for the welfare of society.

CHAPTER SIX

The Child as an Individual

EDUCATION, in the light of modern psychology, can mean only one thing, the development of the individual child up to the capacity of his talents and abilities. Not all of this complete development can be given in the public schools as constituted today. In fact, education in this larger sense never can be wholly the responsibility of the state.

But this at least is incontrovertible—the public schools should harmonize, in their aims and methods, with this developmental conception of education and not go contrawise to it. In other words, every effort expended by the schools should help forward the fruition of the individual, and not limit or mar that fruition.

2

The progressive educator sees each child as a unique individual. No two human beings are made in exactly the same pattern—not even twins. Variation is nature's method of development of the species—the most important step in natural evolution, as in human progress. Shall we in the educa-

tional process penalize variation, or shall we recognize and cultivate its values?

The inherent dowry of the child, the gifts with which it is born, that essence of the individual which we call personality—is not this the foundation upon which the whole educational structure must be erected?

Let us for a moment leave off looking at education from the viewpoint of how it can be administered as a mass movement, and look upon it as what it is meant to be—*individual development.* Let us bring home to ourselves this question: What would I, as an individual, have liked education to do for me? What would I today like education to do for me? Have I any undeveloped talents that I long to express? Have I a desire for the further pursuit of knowledge in an organized way under trained professional leadership?

3

When we look at education in this light, it becomes less an institution and more a means of human culture. To the leading youth of ancient Greece and to the aristocratic youth of the Renaissance this was what education meant. And with them education produced marvelous results.

But how can each individual be given such a cultural training by means of the free, universal public education which characterizes a modern democracy?

The problem we should consider is not, however,

whether the cultural education of the individual child is a feasible thing to accomplish today. We need only ask: Is this the ideal we should strive toward? For if we once reach a sound conviction that such a type of education is valuable both for the individual and society, we can and must begin to adapt present day education toward this goal, no matter how distant its ultimate attainment may be.

4

A general-in-chief with several million raw recruits to suddenly whip into shape for war must give them a type of mass-training in which the individual is completely submerged. From the reviewing stand a private citizen may see an army corps pass by giving evidences of a perfect military training. But let us imagine the plight of a cultured civilian—an educator or artist, let us say—among those transformed into parading soldiers converted by the process of militarism from individuals daily expressing individual tastes and abilities into indistinguishable patterned units of regiments. In such imprisonment of the self may be vividly realized some of the restrictive effects, upon sensitive children, of regimentation in the public schools.

5

Public education has become more institutionalized and regimented as the numbers of individuals

seeking this privilege has grown vaster. Such was to be expected. But it is not an ideal condition. This can be nothing more than a temporary measure of expediency in the effort to meet the gigantic responsibility of giving an effective education to every child.

When in England Joseph Lancaster, toward the end of the Nineteenth Century, conceived the idea that every child should be trained to literacy in order to be able to read that Sacred Book which was to him the guide of life, he devised a unique plan for making possible his vast and humanitarian project. By his monitorial system, in which older pupils helped the younger, he was able to assign one thousand pupils to one paid teacher; and by skilful economies, such as learning to write in sand, he kept expenses down to less than four shillings per capita per year.

It was because of these economies and the small capital required that Lancaster was able gradually to convert leaders in public life and humanitarian people of wealth to his unheard-of idea of giving free public education to every child.

"Why should we pay taxes to educate the brats of the lazy poor?" said the childless rich. And it took almost half a century of privately supported propaganda and educational activity before the first public grant of money was made in England for public education.

Later Lancaster was invited to this country to demonstrate the possibility of giving public educa-

tion at slight expense. And this visit marked the beginning of the great free public education movement in the United States.

We are still struggling with the Lancasterian problem—how to educate the greatest number of children with the least possible expense. In our great public school system with its some thirty millions of pupils we have accomplished much that is admirable. We have evolved a fairly satisfactory curriculum; have perfected methods of teaching; and have given more and more adequate attention to the hygiene of the schoolroom and the child. *But of the real possibilities of education as a means of full cultural and all-round development of the child we have hardly yet conceived.* We are too easily satisfied with things as they are because we do not yet realize how precious is the jewel of individuality and how easily its radiations can be dimmed.

6

If our aim in education is standardization, then we shall not want individuality. It would stand in the way. At the U. S. Naval Academy, where I taught for three years, I was set to musing one summer by the sight of a plebe drawing from the Library the poems of William Blake to read and report on. Here was a rare personality—a youth of sixteen reading the mystic Blake from choice. But such individual richness was not needed, appreciated, nor

wanted at Annapolis. It was only an obstruction to the duties that lay ahead of an incipient naval officer. When the plebe year began in the autumn the daily routine of the Academy would close down upon this youth and he would not have time to read Blake; would not have time to linger on the magnificent terrace of Bancroft Hall to enjoy superb sunsets. Moreover in the lingo of the mess hall, the dormitory, and the yard he must beware lest he express uniqueness. Let him not wear his heart upon his sleeve. Let him not dare to be himself. For what is wanted here is not an individual, but a machine-unit cast perfectly to pattern.

Now let us see how another government institution handles its personnel. In the Bureau of Standards one of the world's greatest geniuses in the theory and art of making glass is given a certain problem to work out. In such research and experimentation he is practically his own master. He makes no daily report nor keeps to any daily program. He is left absolutely to himself to bring in his report in his own good time. For it has been found that to put any time limit on him threatens the failure of the whole enterprise; but that if he is given free rein he will in time—it may be in a month, it may be in six months—bring in a uniquely successful solution.

Why the great difference in the methods used at the Naval Academy and at the Bureau of Standards? It is because the former wants and needs standardization, while the latter (in spite of the

implication of its name!) needs and wants individual ability, resourcefulness, and initiative.

7

What are the educational goals which we wish to establish for the thirty million students in our schools today? This will determine both our methods and our broad educational policy.

When an art student enters a great atelier in Paris he is left pretty much to his own resources—left to feel his way. Above everything, he must learn to be himself. Once he has discovered himself, the great master teaches him how to be more truly and more adequately himself.

Shall this not be our aim in education—to help children to realize their full and best selfhood? Or shall we determine a pattern for them and gradually mould them into it?

8

Education for the development of individuality is not mere theory, but a possibility already put into practice. Progressive schools for over two decades have been demonstrating that the child can remain *an individual,* even when a member of an educational group; and that in remaining an individual the child is able to develop admirable qualities of personality which hitherto have been neglected and inhibited in the process of education.

Progressive education not only allows for differences in personality, but it encourages such differences. It seeks to develop the individual child to the full extent of his powers, whatever these powers be. This consideration of the individuality of the child does not mean lack of training or discipline. But it does mean the careful adaptation of training and discipline to the personality of the child.

The progressive school is a new kind of school in which the genius child, as well as every other type of child, can feel at home. A parent and educator[1] writes me anent my book, "Discovering the Genius Within You:" "I have been an educator for fifty years . . . . I have come to the conclusion that every child (except the idiot) has some precious jewel which you call 'genius.' *An enormous amount of talent lies undiscovered.* I am the father of a genius—Deems Taylor, the composer and writer—and he had much difficulty with his early teachers. He was in *five* public schools and didn't get along well in any. I didn't know what was the matter. What he got in school had no nourishment. This boy finally was sent to a progressive school, where his individuality was respected and provided for; and there he remained for seven years happily and successfully preparing for college."

9

What do we intend in demanding that the school realize the child as an individual? Let us be explicit.

[1] Joseph S. Taylor—educator and lecturer.

We do not intend, by this, individual education. Private tutoring has been the recourse of well-to-do families for centuries. This type of education has its advantages. It has also its disadvantages.

Nor does educational recognition of the individuality of the child require, to my way of thinking, that the child make individual progress as in the Winnetka method; or that the child be free to do his work by the contract plan as in the Dalton method; or that the child be allowed to choose and build up his own curriculum.

To my understanding progressive education does not imply a "child-centered" school nor a "child-made" curriculum. These are radical experiments the results of which are everywhere being watched with interest. Yet it would seem that the prevailing opinion and practice even in progressive schools is not in this direction but rather in the direction of such an application of modern educational principles as will assure to the child the full benefit of the knowledge, wisdom, and guidance of the adult world.

To what extent shall the teacher stand by, and to what extent shall the teacher teach? This problem has not yet been answered satisfactorily even for "progressives," and certainly not for educators in general. It is the major problem now confronting progressive education and one for which the author will not attempt to give a solution.

The trend is certainly toward teacher-guidance, rather than teacher-aloofness. The crux of the matter is: What shall be the nature of this guidance and

how shall it be exerted? We do not wish to return to the teacher and text-book authoritativeness of the past. The intrinsic desires, the needs, the psychology of the individual child must at all points be considered. This is a matter for experience in the new education, rather than for theorization, to solve.

Of one thing we may be certain, that the individuality of the child should be held as more sacred than the curriculum. As Christ considered that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath—*so education, we may believe, is made for the child and not the child for education.*

10

Education for individuality does not mean neglect of the necessary academic training. The foundational subjects—reading, writing, and arithmetic, the skills and techniques upon which further education depends—these must be acquired by every child, regardless of individuality. The child can no more investigate the world of knowledge without these skills than he can explore his physical world without having learned to walk. But as in learning to walk, so in learning the three R's, consideration should be given to the child's personality, temperament, and ability.

But what a small part of education, as we moderns conceive it, these three R's constitute! They form but the ritual of initiation in the Temple of Learning. Education, apart from special vocational or pro-

fessional training, is supposed to be for the sake of culture. *But how can culture be anything else than individual?*

11

As education goes on, we should allow more and more for the expression of individuality, not only in choice of subjects but also in method of work within the field of any given subject.

Individual differences in the way of interests and affinities determine what aspects of a given subject will appeal and what details will be assimilated. The same reaction cannot be expected on the part of all students. This is neither necessary nor desirable educationally.

The extension of the research method, characteristic of graduate education, down to the very lowest primary grades is one of the most successful and important experiments of progressive education. By means of this the great discovery has been made that even a child may profit by the opportunity for the expression of predilections, initiative, and self-direction in the process of education.

This does not mean necessarily that each child need be free to work independently in any field of knowledge it chooses, as in the university. It means there may be some freedom of choice as to the subject to be studied by the class or group, and even more freedom of choice as to the separate topics of the subject to be undertaken by indi-

vidual children. Furthermore, there is provided opportunity for a wide range of interest, ability, and effort on the part of individual children in finding material to enrich the group-project. The research project, more than any other yet discovered, permits and encourages the expression of individuality. When supplemented by group conference and discussion, by further individual study and tests, assimilation as well as discovery of knowledge can be assured.

Even then it is not to be expected that all children will achieve uniform results. Just as different plants draw different nourishment from the soil, according to their constitution, so different individuals will choose and assimilate different materials from the field of knowledge.

This is where progressive education parts company with the old type education. Uniformity, standardization, precision of parts—these things are desirable in machines but not in human beings.

12

Let us see how a famous secondary school of the progressive type attempts to discover and aid each individual student.

"Every boy at Avon is placed under the special charge of a master who is known as his tutor, each master having a group of perhaps seven or eight boys. It is not the function of the tutor to cram a boy or make him do out of hours what he is sup-

posed to do in the classroom and study hall. He doesn't 'tutor' at all in the narrow sense of the word. His interest is the whole boy—his work, his recreation, his friends, his hobbies, his health, his home, his likes and dislikes, everything that has a bearing upon his life and progress at school. He constantly studies this boy, corresponds with his parents, talks with his teachers. Every Monday he sends a report about him to Dr. Kammerer and he, as tutor, is consulted whenever a question is raised concerning the boy. In a word, he is a specialist on the subject of, let us say, Bill Jones.

"Obviously, on the face of it, this is an example of individual attention. But let us go a little farther. The objective of this tutorial plan is not simply to find out all about Bill Jones. Information isn't the essential thing. The essential thing is the use that is made of information. If you want to see Avon's tutorial plan in actual operation, a good way to begin is to drop into a master's study almost any evening after dinner where you will find a group sprawled comfortably about a blazing hearth and you will hear a great deal of talk on a great many subjects. These boys are not invited; they just come. They come at all hours. They are always welcome. That's the way with good friends.

"The real objective of the tutorial plan, then, far from being merely supervision of a boy's work, is the cultivation of a personal relationship with him. And it rests squarely on the belief that boys are led to go forward in every line of achievement chiefly

because of just such a close relationship with some one whom they admire and for whom they feel rather than what they think.

"The thing that strikes me at 'Avon,' wrote a father after a visit to the School, 'is that I see there no faces that look troubled—or unhappy—or afraid.'

"It is no accident that this is so. Perhaps those words come as close as words can come to expressing the spirit of the place."

13

At this point a distinction should be made between the proper cultivation of individuality, and a form of individualism which implies aggressive, egoistic, or capricious self-expression. Individual development means the development of the best self of the child, not the inferior self.

The right education for individuality does not render the child whimsical and selfish; it rather helps the child to attain the greatest heights of character and achievement that it is capable of.

It is important in the modern society that the individual, however superior his endowments and training, should be able to harmonize with his fellowmen and to integrate himself in the machinery which society sets up in order to accomplish the world's work. Each individual must know how to be a loyal and cooperative subordinate, as well as how to play the part of a leader. Progressive schools,

therefore, pay great attention to the development of the individual as a social being. There are occasions for the expression of initiative and leadership. There are also occasions which call for cooperation; for harmonization of personal powers and predilections with group needs. It is the harmonious social self that is aimed at in the new schools—not that individualistic, egotistic self which in later life becomes such a foe to happy, harmonious, and successful living.

In every child the progressive educator sees the potential wage-earner, mate, parent, and citizen. These are the selves to be successfully developed. The development of the individual child, therefore, does not mean a child full of egotism but *a child all sides of whose nature are being harmoniously expressed in accordance with the essential and unique rhythm of his own personality.*

14

Was not this the kind of training that Christ gave? He treated every one who came to him as a distinct individual. He penetrated to the essence of their being and helped them to clear away the moral débris under which lay buried and inert the true beauty of their souls. He did not say to the courtesan or publican—"You have a right to live your life in your own way." Rather he held up to them a magic glass on one side of which they saw the selves they were then living and on the other

side of which they saw the true selves which they might become. This contrasted view, to souls ripe for reform, was sufficient to motivate and energize into transubstantiated lives.

Fundamentally, education is the spiritual unfoldment of the child. Therefore the educator should study the methods Christ used for unlocking the soul treasures of individuals who came within the radius of His benign influence.

15

The new education tries to avoid that egotism and personal vanity which the old education so strongly fostered with its competitive examinations and marks, its prizes, its public proclaiming of superiorities and inferiorities, of success and failure. The old education partook of the vices of that selfish competitive socio-economic system which now seems destined to yield ground to a more cooperative system of society. And for such a New Society a new education is distinctly needed.

"At present, education is limited to the aim of assuring personal survival in a competitive society, and the effect of this mental and moral strangulation is to leave the essential core of personality—its understanding of fundamental purpose and its motives—to the overwhelming influence of an already perverted society. As the expression of a collective social mentality, education can and must deal with basic human values.

"Spiritual education is the education of the whole being for useful life in a united society which derives its laws and principles from the universal law of love. It is education conscious of the modes of social evolution and hence subduing the means of life to its true purpose and outcome. One single generation raised by spiritual education above the false guides who rationalize class, race, national and religious prejudices can give humanity a definite foothold in the new age of cooperation and unity."[2]

[2] "The World Economy of Baha Ullah"—Horace Holley.

The first thing obvious to children is what is sensible; and that we make no part of their rudiments. We press their memory too soon, and puzzle, strain and load them with words and rules; to know grammar and rhetoric, and a strange tongue or two, that it is ten to one may never be useful to them, leaving their natural genius to mechanical and physical or natural knowledge uncultivated and neglected; which would be of exceeding use and pleasure to them through the whole course of their life. Children had rather be making of tools and instruments of play; shaping, drawing, framing, and building, etc., than getting some rules of propriety of speech by heart. And those also would follow with more judgement and less trouble and time.—*William Penn, "Reflections and Maxims."*

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Child as an Active Being

THE world has always realized that children are active. But it has remained for progressive education to discover that *children should be afforded scope for activity within the schoolroom itself*. In past education, activity has been taboo within the schoolroom. Learning was a sedentary process. Mental activity in physical passivity was the ideal of the old education.

Children at the age of six leaving their free play and the glorious outdoor life for the confinement of schoolrooms; fixed desks in long rows; five hours indoors, mostly sedentary; recesses all too short; enormous classes taught by hectic, overdriven teachers,—cannot this travesty and injury to childhood be abolished?

Yes! It can be, and is in fair way to being, abolished. The kindergarten pioneered the way, to show how children may be gainfully active and happy in the schoolroom. And now, thanks to Francis W. Parker, John Dewey, and Patty Hill, we find also in primary grades movable furniture replacing the fixed rows of desks. We find active blackboard work, educational games, activity projects enlivening the scholastic day. We find in some public school systems a work bench in every primary room. We find

rhythmics and dramatics introduced into the schoolroom. We find outdoor projects such as gardening or the building of miniature representations of group shelter from savage huts to modern villages. We find children making excursions to the neighboring stores, to the dairies and farms, to museums and to civic centers.

In fact, we find our whole educational system, both private and public, committing itself to leavening sedentary education with the yeast of Dewey's "learning by doing." And some schools have gone so far in the direction of activity in the classroom that they have taken the self-assumed name of "activity schools." So that it is hardly necessary today to argue that children need and should have some degree of activity within the schoolroom; that fact has already been fully ascertained by the psychologist, the physician and the child-welfare specialist. *Our problem, as educators, is to discover how the need for activity on the part of the child can be harmonized with its need for learning and for intellectual development.*

2

The young child needs some activity, even in the schoolroom, for the maintenance of its best psychic and physical health. But if this were the only reason for introducing activities into the schoolroom, such activities would naturally be limited to marching, simple gymnastics, rhythmics, and frequent black-

board work. There is another, much more important pedagogical reason, for introducing activity into scholastic work.

The young child is very much a sensory animal. He has not yet outgrown his babyhood method of exploring the world by handling things and by watching moving objects. To this desire for immediate contact with things and materials is now added a desire to construct. The will to learn by sensation, perception, and creation is strong; the will to learn by ratiocination or dealing with concepts is weak.

The human race started its mental training through sensory experiences. From the hand, the eye, the ear streamed many a nerve adventure to the brain, forming and expanding it. The child, repeating the history of the race, gets an important amount of brain development from manual skills and expressions. How large a proportion of our mind is gained in this way we may never accurately know—but enough, certainly, to justify the slogan "learning by doing."

Now if the child's natural desire for handling objects and for making things can be turned toward channels of academic achievement, then the educator has found a way to guide the child's activity-nature into paths that are as beneficial academically as they are pleasing and wholesome to the child.

One of the greatest innovations of Twentieth Century education is the so called activity project. Usually this is a group project chosen by the group

from among a certain number of possible projects suited to the age and educational advancement of the group. For this project the children make historical research with the aid of the teacher. They read about the subject of their project; gather pictures and materials for it; visit local museums in order to study exhibits; make sketches of the life of the given period; weave it into their dramatics and assemblies; and at last they construct and assemble their reproduction of past or foreign life.

Through group excursions the children in progressive schools learn about their neighborhood, their civic government, the operation of various industries, the nature of modern transportation, and the simple physical, chemical, and biological facts about the wonderful world they live in.

The construction of models to show the development of shelter and transportation; excursions for the study of local geology; nature trips, and the care of plants, aquariums and pets within the school; trips to museums and historical sites; modeling and painting of relief maps; the graphic or concrete construction of historical periods such as ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome, the Age of Chivalry, the discovery of the New World—these, with countless other projects, give scope for the child's expression of activity in terms of academic value.

In all of this preparation and in the final construction of a project the children are active; they are finding scope for their instinct to learn by means of movement and sensation. They are thus led to

abstract knowledge (for the knowledge of life at a chronological or geographical distance is abstract) by means of concrete experience. This method of direct experience has been used from the very beginning in the teaching of the modern sciences—astronomy, geology, biology, physics, and chemistry. It is now being successfully applied to almost all forms of teaching.

3

But, you may say, though all this is very stimulating to children, how much of real knowledge is acquired by activity experiences? This criticism of the project method will be dealt with in the subsequent chapter. But let us first realize this psychological truth—that experience may leave its teaching too deep-bedded for quick memory reproduction in the form of words, while yet the knowledge acquired by such experience is really functioning in the individual.

George Rommert of the Biologisches Laboratorium in Munich, Germany, who has been demonstrating in this country his use of micro-projection as a dramatic visual aid to the teaching of science to young pupils, asks and answers one of the chief objections to the activity method (with which his method would also be classed, since the children themselves gather from ponds the animalcules to be studied, and use no texts but only observation):

"Do the children preserve any clear recollection of this observation of the microscopic world of animals and plants? A science teacher of the old school would probably doubt that much knowledge would remain—knowledge, that is to say, as he understands it, of the type which makes a show in examinations. But, if this be true, has the actual observation of the microscopic world been valueless? Is it true that only those things which we retain so that they can be reeled off on demand become our mental possessions? Or is there another kind of learning, namely, the unconscious assimilation of deep personal experiences which are perhaps never again put into words but which, as imponderable values, are anchored none the less securely somewhere in our minds and influence our thinking and acting?"

4

How an activity approach to a subject will enliven it for children and motivate their attention and cultural reaction to it is strikingly demonstrated in the Chevy Chase Country Day School in the annual performance of Shakespeare plays by children. The play is cut down to about a third of its original length (all long speeches are condensed), but the original language of Shakespeare and the dramatic continuity are preserved. One period a week for half a year these children, aged eight to fourteen,

live dramatically the thoughts of Shakespeare and "body forth the forms of things unseen." When the final performance takes place, it has a perfection and a power that holds adult audiences spellbound for an hour and a half. Indeed, the beauty and sincerity of the acting at times compels to tears.

But the values of acting Shakespeare are not only histrionic in nature. There are important reactions from the point of view of literary culture. For months the children recite, and hear others recite, the great melodic lines of Shakespeare. They are getting an ear for rhythmic and beautiful language. By the time that they graduate from the eighth grade they have acted in four or five plays of Shakespeare.[1] These children grow to love Shakespeare. Many ask their parents to buy them sets of Shakespeare and they go on reading other plays not acted by them. One boy of ten, not of the bookish type, always carried a small volume of Shakespeare in his pocket to read when waiting for his father in the family automobile.

Contrast this early enthusiasm for Shakespeare with the unfavorable reaction of high school students obliged to study Shakespeare in a purely abstract method, and you will begin to perceive some of the values of the direct, experimental, activity approach to knowledge and culture.

[1] The plays that seem to lend themselves best to child acting are: Julius Cæsar, The Merchant of Venice, As You Like It, Taming of the Shrew, and Two Gentlemen of Verona.

5

Student activities and projects outside the curriculum receive a warm approval from educators. Such activities have increased much in late years, especially in the junior and senior high schools, where voluntary clubs carrying out many different cultural aims are fostered. These clubs, meeting at some hour outside the regular school program, do not conflict with the academic work. Rural schools in all grades admirably lend themselves to activity projects closely connected with the agricultural background of the child. The 4 H Clubs have become an inspiration and a notable guide to hundreds of thousands of boys and girls in rural districts. There are also the well-known extra-curricular activities long associated with schools and colleges:—school orchestras, and school papers, business management of athletic teams, glee clubs, dramatic clubs, modern language clubs, liberal clubs, and the like.[2]

These student activities outside of the curriculum, provided they do not absorb too large a proportion of the student's time, are an immense good, since they foster and develop in youth those very qualities which make for success in life. Prowess and achievement in such activities during the secondary school years have an important bearing upon selective college entrance; and the selection by the business and

[2] A bit of first-hand testimony as to the value of these clubs is to be found in the student's letter quoted on page 8.

industrial world from the annual list of students graduating from college is more affected by student achievement outside than inside the classroom.

6

Progressive schools have made a distinct contribution to the development of school sports. Instead of allowing these sports to be the monopoly of picked teams with the rest of the student body getting only vicarious exercise as spectators, progressive schools provide supervised sports for all and require all to take part. These sports, properly directed, are not only a physical but also a great psychological and social benefit to the child. Many an introvert—who in other schools would never be granted by his fellow students any opportunity for sports because of his poor coordination, absentmindedness, and general inefficiency—in a progressive school is developed and coached in athletics just as an extrovert who was poor and retarded academically would be coached along in his studies. Such children, with the proper sympathy and aid, become able to take a normal part in games and sports.

The progressive school concerns itself with the all-around development of the child, and leaders of progressive education know that the social development of the child is going to bear fruit that will in later life be of equal importance to his intellectual progress.

7

Whatever be the limitations of the activity project method, it is quite certain that education will not suffer if more activity than generally exists at present is introduced into it, from the kindergarten through the college. It is the balanced life that education must seek to bestow, and we have not yet reached the ideal in this direction. Too great a proportion of the scholastic day in our high schools and colleges is given to sedentary brain work of the most exacting type—a proportion which few adults repeat in their life work.

In respect to this sedentary nature of education, life in our higher institutions of learning is very abnormal, more so for women than for men. Better in the grammar school, in the high school and the college to cover less of the field of knowledge with an interest and zest that carries over into later years assuring a continuity of education and culture, than to attempt to crowd so much of knowledge into a small space of time that distaste and revulsion make book learning a thing to be forever dropped once the coveted degree is earned.

Certainly the progressive movement has made a great contribution to education through its conceiving the child as an active being. If it has done nothing else, it has eliminated the gulf between the school life of the child and the life outside of school. *It has made the schoolroom a place of joy, and learning the happy process which normally it should be.*

But progressive education has done more than this. It has extended the experimental laboratory method of the university down to primary grades. It has developed powers of observation, of comparison, of analysis and of expression. Most valuable of all, it has given scope and stimulus for powers of initiative, of leadership, of persistence and continuity of effort toward self-chosen goals. And it has in its group projects developed to a marked degree that spirit of cooperation, of mutuality, of service which the world needs today more even than it needs powers of individualistic achievement.

The modern school is an active school. Its pupils are doing things, making things. It must not be inferred from this that the acquisition of knowledge is deprecated or slighted. On the contrary, thoroughness and proficiency, whether in intellectual pursuits or in the arts and crafts, is one of the leading objectives of the new ways of teaching. But what one can *do* is considered more important than what he *knows*. Knowledge that does not function is of little value.—*Jesse H. Newton.*

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Limitations of Activity Education

THERE are so many clearly demonstrated values for the child in activity projects that this educational method is rapidly taking its place in the curriculum of elementary schools. Undoubtedly it is an educational device that has come to stay.

The tendency today is not so much that the activity method will not be used by teachers, as that it will be abused by them. As in every reform, there is danger of too great a reaction.

A common defect in the use of activity projects is the neglect to assure definite cultural results. If the project is allowed to remain merely a pleasurable activity for the child, it loses a great deal of its educational value. The project should convey at least a certain minimum of definite knowledge; it should lead to further voluntary pursuit of the subject illustrated by the project; and it should be made an inspiration to the definite development of cultural tastes and interests. In other words, the activity project should be a means toward definite educational goals and not an end in itself.

2

Apart from the misuse of the project, there are certain definite limitations to its use that should be recognized.

The tools and techniques of learning—such as reading, writing, and arithmetic—cannot be *learned* by the project method but only *motivated* by it. These skills must be made automatic by means of much drill and practice. It is the same situation in learning the three R's as in learning to play the piano. The beginning of piano can be made interesting and attractive to the child by means of a game, a project, an activity; but not until the scales, the fingering, the chords, and the reading of music are mastered by much practice can anyone perform effectively upon the piano. And so it is with the techniques of the three R's; they can be mastered only by repeated drills.

Lazy, unambitious, and slow-temperament children do not respond well to the project method. They learn very little by means of it. Such children cannot achieve their best academic results except by means of academic pressure and discipline.

Retarded children definitely above the border line of intelligence need thorough drilling in the techniques of reading and arithmetic more than they need activities. *Right here lies one of the most dangerous temptations of the activity method.* Mental work leading to the mastery of the techniques is what such children most need. Yet there

is a tendency in some circles to consider that these children are not academic-minded, and to solace them with practical activities. Academic handicaps on the part of normal but retarded children can be overcome by careful technical work on the part of teachers; but if such children are abandoned to manual arts and project activities they are thereby condemned to suffer throughout their academic career, and perhaps throughout life, from educational inferiorities which could easily have been overcome on the lower educational levels.

3

There are also important psychological limitations to activity education.

"Learning by doing" is an excellent formula for inducing interest and effort in children and for awakening in them a consciousness of how the human race has materially progressed. It is the best method of learning any trade, profession, or art. But has this formula any prominent place in the acquisition of the racial knowledge accumulated over immense periods of time, or in the development of abstract thinking?

The children of savages can be taught orally and through activities all the knowledge of their tribe. But the children of civilized races must acquire their knowledge of racial culture—so immense in its ramifications—mainly through the printed page. That knowledge which it took the human race thousands

of years to accumulate by activity and thought is stored in books. It would take any single individual centuries, nay, millenniums, to recapture this knowledge through actual experience.

Reading, rather than activity, is the way to erudition. It is of the utmost importance to the individual to attain, in and through the process of education, *the power to visualize from the printed page* and to thus make concrete the abstraction of print. When this power is developed, the book—so ubiquitous, so catholic, so friendly—stands ready to carry the reader into magic worlds of the past; or to distant events and places; or into illimitable realms of thought and fancy.

Consider how immensely the world's knowledge has grown and expanded since the invention of printing, the rise of universal education, and the wide distribution of books and magazines.

The world had had "activity education" for six thousand historical years and knew very little at the end of that period. But during the relatively brief period when the world has been practising education by means of book-learning, its knowledge has grown apace. Humanity has learned a hundred-fold more in the last three centuries than it had learned during the previous six thousand years.

4

In the Orient the traveler will see beautiful objects made by hand. The Orientals, through thou-

sands of years of practice in the arts, have acquired a marvelous dexterity. Similarly the peasant peoples of Europe and the American Indians together with other uncivilized races exhibit great skill in all their handicraft. These peoples have "learned by doing." In the things they have learned to do they cannot be surpassed. But their knowledge of the universe and of the world they live in is below the level of normal six-year-old children in civilized countries.

By far the greater part of education must come to us through abstract rather than through concrete channels. And even in those fields such as science where concrete methods are applicable and desirable, the extent of knowledge is so vast that most of the facts we want to know must be accepted on the basis of what other peoples have done and reported; must be gleaned, in other words, purely from the printed page.

We can learn by doing. Yes! But what is it we can learn by doing? Chiefly that thing which we are doing. And we cannot possibly *do* all the things we want or need to *know.*

Activity projects can be helpful in motivating our study and in preparing us to understand what we read. But nine-tenths—I would say ninety-nine hundreths—what we moderns know comes to us from the printed page. The creative imagination, feeding on material conveyed to it from books and other printed material, is busily at work expanding the field of individual and of racial knowledge; rounding

out our conception of the universe, of the physical planet, and of human society upon the planet.

Activities and experience, it is true, bear a close practical relation to the gleaming of knowledge from books. They point the way to truth from the firm basis of actuality; they stimulate interest, effort, analysis, discovery, and assimilation; they assure a constant correlation between the world of the ideal and the world of the real. Activity correlated with abstract thinking is the method par excellence of scientific discovery, in which observation and experimentation both inspire and verify ideas. We must grant that the educational functions of activity are valuable and indispensable. But we cannot afford to let activity crowd out the functions of abstract education. Certain things can be learned much better through doing than thinking, but other things can be learned only through thinking.[1]

5

There are some people who confer immense benefits upon humanity by self-chosen activities and projects. There are others whose achievements are in the realm of pure thought.

Alexander the Great, through constant doing, learned how to conquer the world and how to conceive vast schemes for universal culture which proved

[1] The author cannot agree with those educators who would classify book-learning and thinking under the term "activity project." This is begging the question.

to be of great importance to human progress. Napoleon, in constant active pursuit of conquest and glory, found time and inclination to start a college here and there, to organize the judicial system of France, and to broaden the basis of her economic democracy. Such men as Alexander and Napoleon think upon their feet. With them activity is not only a stimulus to thought, but almost, one might say, a mode of thought.

Aristotle, on the other hand, lived chiefly in the realm of the mind, and by so doing bequeathed to us an organization of human thinking about the world we live in that has guided humanity ever since. Plato, Bacon, and Emerson also made their great contributions to the world chiefly from the plane of the abstract.

6

There are two main types of personality—the concrete minded, practical, motor-active type; and the abstract minded, contemplative, bookish type. In the industrial civilization of today the former type predominates in leadership. Probably that type always has predominated.

It is the industrialist, the inventor, the engineer, the business man, the politician who have been building up our modern civilization. And if our contemporaneous civilization were satisfactory, the activity type of human would undoubtedly continue to lead and to rule. But our industrial civilization

does not today seem perfect. It reveals great faults and weaknesses. Therefore it may be that it is time to carry out Plato's idea of calling into leadership the philosopher ripened in thought and capable of more than action—capable of direction. Into the government of our country today such men are being called. And it is not unlikely that the *thinker,* from now on, will participate in the leadership of affairs and will take his place at least abreast of the motor-active type.

Let us not make the mistake of concluding that only activity is effective. Ideas are effective also. It was a man miserably ineffective in managing his own life but remarkably effective in creating and projecting ideas who became the greatest single influence in the evolution of modern government and education.[2]

7

If we want to educate for a motor-active civilization, then we should do well to educate chiefly by means of activities. But if we want other values of a more abstract and contemplative kind we should do well to insist on education striving to develop the power of abstract thinking:—the power of translating into concrete terms the magic symbol of the written word; the power of visualizing from the printed page conditions, situations, facts, and modes

[2] Jean Jacques Rousseau.

of existence beyond the possibility of our immediate experience.

There is a danger that the innovation of activity-education may be an expression rather than a guidance of our hyper-active American civilization. It is well adapted to the American type and therefore destined to still further successful development. Its contributions are vital and needed. But if we analyse our national character and the structure of our national civilization, shall we not discover necessary goals to which other than activity-education must lead us?

The new theory of education is not satisfied with the idea of mere adjustment. Man can control his environment. Therein lies all possibility of progress.

Control is more than adjustment. It is creation. The new theory of education finds in the child the creative impulse, which is capable of modifying the environment.—*Joseph S. Taylor, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, New York City.*

CHAPTER NINE

The Child as a Creative Being

OF ALL the contributions of progressive education to school and society, the most outstanding and most valuable is the recognition of the child as a creative being. "Release the creative energies of the child" is the slogan of the new education. Hitherto education on the lower levels has been considered as but a preparation for higher education or for a vocation, and the creative side of the child has had little place or legitimate opportunity for expression in such a scheme.

Indeed, so outside the main purpose of education have creative activities on the part of the students been considered that the special term "extra-curricular" (outside the curriculum) has been invented for them. This term in itself is sufficient revelation of the unimportance attached to creative expression in the minds of old-time educators. And in the colleges, where especially education should be creatively stimulative, it has been almost wholly of the passive-learning type. Even in the graduate school the final theses of those preparing for a doctorate have as a rule been confined to topics of such minutiae as to handicap those very creative powers which they were supposed to evoke.

In brief, educational institutionalism has not considered itself as dedicated to the development of creativeness in the child, and it has not known what to do with creative ability when discovered in its midst.

2

When the progressive educator sets forth to release the creative energies of the child, it is not merely the fine arts (such as modeling, painting, wood work, music, rhythmics) but the whole educational process which is considered.

Education, if it is to become of real value to life, must be a creative endeavor on the part of the child. For unless the child actually participates in his own mental training and is inspired to exert himself from the very depths of his heart and soul in the mental endeavors he is called upon to make during his school training, he will depart from the school neither a thinking being able to intelligently share in the life of society, nor an awakened being constantly striving toward further intellectual and cultural goals.

The acquisition of factual material for purposes of recitation and examination is not sufficiently educational. There must be digestion, assimilation, a functional use made of this material of knowledge. It were better to absorb but little and assimilate it perfectly than to absorb a lot and fail to make it function.

The progressive educator tries at every point, and in every way possible, to cause education to *function* in the life of the child—to function not only in his intellectual being but also in his emotional, psychic, and social being. And by the principle of adaptation to the individual (described in a previous chapter), progressive schools are able to bring about a proper educational functioning in slow as well as in quick students, in motor-active as well as in mental types.

This is a sort of educational miracle. It is so basic a contribution to education that as in the case of all great discoveries it will take a generation for society in general to realize its magnitude. And the only way to really appreciate this momentous educational change is to *study a progressive school in action and realize the earnest spirit in which all the children undertake all their work, whether mental or manual.*

3

President Lowell, upon retiring from Harvard University, made some trenchant statements[1] regarding latter day trends in education along the lines of greater correlation of knowledge, a recognition of the principle of self-education, and stimulation of more vivid intellectual interests.

"Feeding a living fowl," he says, "is a different thing from stuffing a goose with chestnuts. If the

[1] President's Report, 1931-1932.

object is not so much to cram a mind with isolated facts as to learn how to use them, the student must be brought to compare them, to discriminate between their relative importance, to verify them, and must try to combine them into a system more or less consistent with itself. 'Self-education' is based on the principle that, beyond the mechanical elements, *no one can really be educated against his will, or without his own active effort.* Unless the student desires, or is provoked, to learn he will profit little. He must be made to educate himself, working out things by his own effort. To absorb and give back the information and ideas of the teacher may win good marks in many courses, but for training and fortifying the mind it is less valuable than power acquired by voluntary exertion in pursuit of an object. In short, the essence of all institutions of higher learning should be self-education under guidance. 'Stimulation of more vivid intellectual interests' is the most important point of all. It has, of course, always been the aim and despair of serious educators; despair, because it is the most difficult of their problems in the absence of a strong vocational incentive. It is natural for teachers to pay most attention to the industrious and proficient students; and yet, while these usually obtain the greatest benefit, they are not always the ones that need attention most. This is particularly true of young men of superior ability whose intellectual tastes and ambitions have not yet been aroused; few of the entering Freshmen come

with an ardent thirst for knowledge of any subject. It must be acquired here."

4

Lowell reveals the gravest failure of the old-type education—that while it stimulates fairly successfully the book-minded student to acquire knowledge, it has failed lamentably to inspire the motor-active type, which is of course by far the predominant type in our public and private schools. *"Few of the Freshmen,"* he says, *"come with an ardent thirst for knowledge of any subject. It must be acquired here."*

But, President Lowell, need I remind you of what a gigantic, almost impossible task it is to take mentally-atrophied, intellectually-stultified youths eighteen or nineteen years of age and by any system of scholastic exercise warm them up to intellectual and cultural endeavor? The remedy comes too late. Like a case of infantile paralysis where the wasted limbs have been allowed to harden, little can be done but to furnish crutches.

The place to begin the development of cultural and intellectual interest is in the kindergarten and primary grades. This spark of curiosity and interest should constantly be kept alive and nourished, not dulled by mental routine and stifled by scholastic regimentation, as the child goes on through the grammar and high school grades. The spark should glow ever brighter from year to year until it reaches a clear flame that time can never quench.

5

If, as I believe it to be, true education is itself a creative process, then it is of vast importance that the creative nature of the child be awakened and maintained from the very beginning of school life. Progressive education pursues the psychologically sound course of developing young children along lines in which they are naturally creative—i.e., in physical movements such as rhythmics, in handicrafts, in music and modeling and painting, and in activity projects of various kinds.

If the creative side of the child's nature is not made to function, and kept functioning, from the very beginning, the routine school work of acquiring skills in the 3 R's and of later absorbing factual knowledge will be but a slavish, compulsory use of the intellect from which the child revolts more and more as its discrimination and will grow stronger and its suggestibility grows less.

The point I wish to make clear is that the purpose of the creative, aesthetic development of children aimed in progressive schools is not *art for art's sake,* but the emotional illumination of all scholastic work with that radiance which comes from an enlightened creative soul exerting itself from within, and of its own volition.

You have but to look at children at work on any subject in progressive schools to see this quality of *mental radiance* lighting up every face, as contrasted with the apathy, coldness or revulsion which char-

acterizes the faces of so many children in the old-time type of school.

6

The progressive educator considers creative expression to be one of the chief modes of human development, and creativeness to be one of the most important goals that education can aid the individual to reach. *The progressive school sets out to discover the creator in every child.*

All children are naturally creative. As far as that is concerned, all human beings have within them a divine spark which can be kindled into a creative fire. It is a spark very feeble in most of us, something that languishes for want of oxygen.

Everybody is a creator who applies his own ideas to the world about him in such a way as to create something new—whether it be producing flowers, fruits, and vegetables; erecting a sky scraper; manufacturing goods; making discoveries and inventions; expressing ideas and visions in the concrete form of art, or in the organization of human society.

Children show markedly the tendency to do and to create, for the reason that life has not yet imprisoned and stifled them, hampering that flexibility of soul which is necessary for the conception of ideas and their eruption into the plane of action.

The customs of organized human society in this age of mass production and standardized urban life tend to inhibit creativeness. This fact is apparent

when one sees the universal facility and originality in handcrafts and art expression which characterize savage or peasant peoples.

7

It is a pity that the natural creative powers of children in civilized countries should be glossed over and smothered by what we call education. As we approach an era of leisure created by the machine, we need more than ever a universal expressiveness and creative culture on the part of the people.

"There can be little doubt that one of the greatest difficulties which will develop as our economic and social order continues to change is the use of leisure time not only by the child but by adults as well," says the parent-teacher of a child attending one of the notable progressive schools—a parent who perceives the needs of education both as a mother and as a teacher.[2] "The problem is upon us and it will continue to become more acute. We should therefore give it every consideration. Some of us may not have mastered the art ourselves to our own satisfaction and, being parents, we hope, as all parents always do, that our children will do a better job of it. But if we expect them to overcome in themselves the inertia encouraged by being entertained rather than in entertaining themselves, it is up to us to devote ourselves specifically to that end.

[2] Lenore K. Bartlett, recently a teacher in the Town and Country School, New York City.

"The constant influence of radio, lurid movies, the funnies, and myriads of ready-made toys of every description make constructive use of our children's leisure time a most difficult problem for progressive parents. We are aware of the threat to creative ability which these passive activities hold for our children. We want to find a substitute which will foster in the coming generation the joy of emotional release through self-realization and the urge for new drives which comes from creative effort."

8

Though progressive education does not teach art for art's sake, yet in the teaching of the arts and crafts it has blazed the way to new techniques and methods. *The remarkable achievements of pupils in progressive schools have demonstrated the notable fact that all children are capable of interesting and worthwhile expression in the different art media; and that many (far more than would have been supposed possible under the old formal methods of art teaching) are capable of really artistic expression.*

In the realm of the pictorial arts I believe that expression can be made universal, just as literary expression has been made universal through modern modes of education. Art of any form is the result of emotionalized vision expressed through some medium. Any normal person can master any medium, to a degree. This is a mere matter of

practice. The chief question is, "What have you to express?"

It is the things you see in life and the intensity with which you respond to them, that make you an artist. The average person, when under deep emotion, may become artistically creative.

Love or bereavement tends to be expressed in poetry or song. The peasant, in the freedom of his fields and native heath, expresses his emotions in songs which become the chief source of themes for the great composers. We too could express ourselves in song—but we are held dumb because of what our neighbors would say of us.

In public speaking we find a wide and almost universal outlet of expression among Americans, otherwise emotionally self-conscious and restrained. What with all our church and school organizations, our clubs and our politics we are doing an amount of public speaking (and much of it good) not equalled elsewhere in history save in ancient Greece.

Just as anybody who has the courage and the will-power to undertake it can become proficient enough in the art of public speaking to express ideas with lucidity and adequate vocalization, even if not with force, so anybody can master the technique of any art sufficiently to express in it with some degree of adequacy. And of course such training in the arts is far easier to undertake and to accomplish when the individual is young.

9

"Children can learn to draw or paint as naturally as to write," says Florence Cane, art director of the Walden School, New York. *"Man is born with the creative impulse and this impulse may become the means of revealing and developing the self.* But infinite care must be taken to do nothing that may stifle the creative . . . . The greatest harm that teachers of art can do is to let the acquiring of technique postpone or exclude creation."

The work which children have done under such inspired teachers as Florence Cane, Cizek, Mangravite, and Carrethors gives ample testimony of the claim that the art impulse in children is universal and can be universally developed.[3]

In the field of poetry children in progressive schools have been led to produce interesting and in many cases artistically beautiful things. Hughes Mearns says: *"Children speak naturally in a form that we adults are accustomed to call poetry*—therefore it is not necessary to teach your children to compose poetry—it is only necessary not to destroy this divine gift and poetic insight by adult bureaucracy."[4]

[3] See "Creative Expression Through Art," Progressive Education Magazine, April, 1926.

[4] For remarkable collections of children's poetry see "Creative Youth," Hughes Mearns; "Singing Youth," Mabel Mountsier; "Almond Blossom," Sampson Low; and "Creative Expression through Literature," Progressive Education Magazine, Jan. 1928. Also, for examples of poetry-making by children of the Chevy Chase Country School, see Appendix.

10

Rhythmic dancing, the most expressive of all the arts, is something that appeals innately to children. In progressive schools children have daily rhythmics in which the boys as well as the girls take part.

Almost as expressive as rhythmics is the drama. Here also children are in their native element, for every child is innately histrionic. By beginning early and maintaining practice in dramatic expression, children keep open this valuable channel of mental and emotional expression.

In progressive schools the drama is given the important place which it deserves in the development of human culture. Children compose their own plays as group projects—around themes from Greek or Roman anthology, themes from the days of Chivalry, or themes from American History. They make their own costumes and stage settings. And in addition to these more ambitious presentations, dramatization of a simple and spontaneous nature has a frequent place in the classroom and in the weekly school assemblies.

Progressive educators make a quite different use of the drama from that prevailing in the ordinary school where casts for plays are selected by competition and only the ablest pupils (a very small proportion of the whole) are given parts. Progressive educators, believing dramatic expression to be essential to the all-around development of the child, see

to it that every child in the school has frequent opportunities for such expression.

In the Chevy Chase Country Day School every child takes part in formal plays given before an adult audience three or four times a year, in addition to informal plays gotten up for school assemblies.

I have found in the course of my dramatic work with children that every child of normal intelligence can be led to adequate and successful dramatic performance. It is necessary only to insist on four things: first, that the children speak their parts slowly; second, that they speak loudly enough; third, that they enunciate carefully every word; and last and most important of all, that they conceive the meaning of every word they say. These rules are simple, but their application to children requires a vigorous persistence on the part of the dramatic trainer. For children, as we all know, tend to rush their words, to speak to themselves rather than to the audience, to slur over many important sounds essential to distinctness of speech, and to mumble their words together in a sing-song way which prevents half the meaning from getting across the footlights. The time to train children correctly is from the very beginning. By insistence upon the simple technique above mentioned children can very early form habits of correct enunciation and diction which make them in the course of two or three years of such practice wonderfully proficient in handling any dramatic material within their range.

11

Here in this matter of technical training we come up against a very important question connected with the creative teaching of the arts. In general it has been found that it is better to let the child begin any form of art expression by creating freely rather than by being taught technique. Even in the teaching of the piano the best method in vogue today for young children is to help them to play real pieces, no matter how simple, before assigning practice work.

In experiencing the joy of actual performance, children push into any field of art with eagerness and energy; whereas the old method of prefacing expression with long tedious drills in technique made art distasteful to all but those inclined by special gifts.

So in a progressive school you will see children boldly and happily plunge into the work of modeling, of painting, of composing poetry—unconscious of technique but only conscious of creative desires and their free expression.

Yet somewhere technique must enter in. It is best if this technique be brought to bear upon the child as he becomes individually aware of its need.

12

The methods in vogue in the progressive schools are somewhat as follows:

1. Awaken in the child the desire to create something. Here suggestion is needed, whether of idea or by examples of other art work.
2. Aid children to conceive clearly what they are going to create, or how they are going to render a dramatic part.
3. Then leave children free to create as their own personalities, tastes and abilities dictate.
4. Gradually bring improvement in technique. At this point criticism is both legitimate and affective.

By these means teachers can get all children to freely and eagerly express themselves in various art mediums. But a creative type of teacher is needed for this. The artist type, rather than the administrative or technician, should directly handle children, leaving the technically-minded to discover and elaborate the scientific principles upon which the art of education is based.

The training of children is an art rather than a science. The ideal teacher is a comrade and a guide in the pursuit of knowledge and truth, not a taskmaster. He or she must understand children intuitively; must have delicate and subtle appreciation of children's efforts to think and create; must be strong in sympathy and encouragement; keen in understanding; high in moral sense and able to inspire children toward noble goals.

Such teachers are joyous, both by temperament and practice. They help maintain and increase the natural joyousness of children. Such teachers can be happy only when using creative methods in progres-

sive schools; and progressive schools can exist only by virtue of such teachers.

"Richer results may be expected of children than the standardized schoolmaster has hitherto considered possible," says Hughes Mearns, "and that richness will come no faster, I expect, than the coming in greater number of the gifted artist-teacher."

13

In creating, children are usually active; and, it goes without saying, they are expressing their own individual selves. Thus we can see that the threefold vision of the child as an individual being, an active being, and a creative being is in reality a unified vision. For the active child, the individual child, and the creative child all coalesce into that unique being —the child.

This kind of child you and I were once, but we did not have that delightful freedom of expression which the modern child has. Many a parent, witnessing the things done by children in progressive schools, has said, "Oh, how I wish I could have had an education like that!"

In the field of arts and crafts many a motor-active child, many a slow-minded or retarded child, finds for the first time the joys and satisfactions of successful achievement. This is an invaluable psychological experience. It is not necessary to excel others in such work in order to feel the thrill of success. Just to express one's self at all adequately

is a distinct joy. In the free expression of the individual there can be no such thing as competition, because no two individuals are alike. No one else can create just the thing that we can. It is our own past achievement that we should strive to surpass, not the work of others.

Creators are the happiest of people. They have what the psychologists call "the victorious attitude toward life." It is this *expressive being* which the progressive educator would evoke in the child. "In searching always for the child's deepest center and in assisting him to draw from that ever-living well lies the one essential service to childhood," says Florence Cane.

The factual examinations which have prevailed throughout the academic tradition do not test that which the universities profess to demand and foster, namely, superior powers of intelligence. They test persistence in acquiring information and factualistic technics, the patient, neutral, obedient readiness to accumulate data, which are the joy and pride of the drudge. They favor the mediocre mind; they offend and repel the superior mind. It is an essential characteristic of the superior mind, particularly in youth, to be impatient, hotly resentful of requirements which baffle its eager and stormy intellectual aspirations. These examinations would hitch blooded horses to a plow; they produce runaways and broken lives.—*Martin Schutz, "Academic Illusions."*

CHAPTER TEN

Training Children to Think

HIGHLY as we may value creative art expression, there is no question that *the creative use of the intellect* is of even more value to the individual and to the race. For while art is an expression of the emotions lending beauty and joy to life, abstract thinking is the necessary process by which human progress is attained.

Exact thinking, though it lies within the capacity of every human being, is not a widespread habit. Still rarer is the power and habit of thinking in abstract as well as in concrete terms. The masses of humans on this planet live a mental life very little above that of the animal. They do some thinking about their concrete environment in the endeavor to successfully satisfy their basic needs. But animals are also capable of this. Thinking in abstract terms concerning that which is distant in space or time; relating things or events into an orderly system of thought; making deductions and inductions leading to particular or general truths; conceiving the nature of existence and studying how to successfully adapt one's life to the universal laws of the Cosmos (whether we name this Nature or God)—this is what animals are incapable of. And precisely this is the crowning glory of human beings.

Yet the average man passes his life in "getting and spending," using only a small portion of his mental capacity and using that chiefly for concrete and self-centered ends.

2

Because a relatively minute percentage of civilized peoples have constantly forged ahead as pioneers into that world of abstract or applied thought which we call science, the whole human race has immeasurably profited. But these thinkers, the scientists, are not abnormal beings. They are merely human beings who have learned to think—some through their own self-impulse, some through impulses acting upon them from their human environment. What they have done, all men have some capacity to do; for men, as differentiated from the animals, all have the magic gift of intellection.

In the course of time humanity will arrive at an average ability of clear thinking equal to that of the ordinary scientist of today. This is the intellectual goal, therefore, which education must set for itself —to arouse children to think. *We educators must work incessantly and with the most effective methods to convert, during the long years of schooling, unthinking into thinking beings.*

The way to do this is not to cram facts into the mind. Not by drills in ancient languages can thinking beings be made. And while training in mathematics makes good mathematicians, it does not

necessarily make good engineers; certainly it does not develop the ability to think clearly and scientifically concerning the issues of life.

Some mode of education must be discovered that will develop the power of analysis, of comparison, of judgment, of invention, in relation to all personal or public needs. How can this be done?

3

Progressive schools, desiring above all things to arouse thinking power in their pupils, have worked out definite methods for accomplishing this. The first important step is the encouragement of children to express themselves freely and fluently. In the kindergarten and primary grades some time is given daily for free oral expression. The children tell of events in their daily life, describe things they have seen, and discuss with great interest and acuteness matters that thus are brought before them. Also, when projects are being planned, group discussions are necessary as a preliminary step. This oral expression and discussion stimulates enormously thought and thought-power. It matures children and sharpens their mentality.

4

Another important oral outlet for the questions and ideas of children is found in the type of class work which prevails in progressive schools.

In the old-style formal recitation conducted in most schools as an oral quiz for the purpose of assigning marks, there can be little opportunity for questions or ideas of the children to come forth. Their part is but to regurgitate the facts they have learned. Furthermore, in the immense overcrowded classes now so prevalent in urban public schools it is next to impossible to give opportunity, or to cultivate an atmosphere, for free questioning and discussion.

There needs to be not only time and opportunity for thinking into the subject of study but also a definite attitude of freedom and fearlessness on the part of the children. Children in standardized schools, where marks are all important, fear to ask questions lest they seem ignorant of the subject they are reciting on. And if they raise their hand to contribute a fact or idea, it is often for the specious purpose of impressing the teacher who holds in her power the dreaded tyranny of marks. Children in such schools also hesitate to make voluntary contributions to the recitation for fear of the ridicule of their classmates.

The result of all this is that gradually children in standardized schools become less and less expressive and ingenuous, and more and more secretive and insincere. Intellectual earnestness and integrity vanish by degrees. Thus the recitation, far from being an incentive to thought on the part of the students, becomes a deadly bore in which the bright students

who have learned the lesson well must submit to hearing it murdered by the poor students.

All of this situation, so disadvantageous for thought, is abolished in progressive schools. Classes are small. Teachers are not unnaturally driven by programs and supervisors, but are allowed to be creative and to take time to aid their children to think. Most important of all, the children are without fear either of their teachers or of their classmates. The atmosphere of mutual sympathy and consideration which reigns fosters intellectual sincerity and courage. Children are allowed freely to express opinions that may differ from those in the textbooks or those advanced by the teacher, and in doing this they do not expect sarcasm or ridicule. They are unafraid of marks. In such an atmosphere sincere discussions can take place. Children can ask questions on points that have puzzled them, or express their own particular reactions to the thing under discussion.

Thus every class session in a progressive school becomes a means of cultivating both intellectual interest and intellectual power on the part of the students. *There is time to think, inclination to think, and encouragement to think.*

5

Even with the large classes in public schools the free discussion methods of recitation can be ar-

ranged as follows:—Give a very brief written quiz (say of ten minutes) for the sake of securing marks, and also in order to avoid encouraging speciousness on the part of students who try to beguile the teacher into prolonged discussions. In ten minutes the formal work of the period is over and the rest of the time is open for discussion and elucidation. It is then up to the teacher to provoke and guide worth-while expression on the part of the students.

This open-forum method was used very successfully by a noted teacher of secondary school English, Andrew J. George, in my native high school of Newton, Mass. After ten minutes of written work the class became an open forum. "Andy," as we affectionately called him, seldom said a word. The students, however, said plenty! How we loved that English hour. Discussion ranged from the poems or essays assigned for study to almost any subject under the sun. Instead of seeking soporific alleviation from the boredom of others' recitations, we were alive and eager. Almost every brain working at white heat, a dozen hands were in the air at once seeking the privilege of the floor. By thus using his English classes as a means of encouraging thought and expression, combining with this a thorough system of written reports on home reading assignments, Andrew J. George achieved the reputation of sending out to colleges and universities the best prepared students of any Eastern high school.

This method can be easily applied to geography, history, sociology, economics, English—in fact to

almost any subject except foreign languages and mathematics.[1]

Teachers, I beg of you, use your class recitation as a means of getting your pupils to think. Cease to make the recitation a mere regurgitation of absorbed factual knowledge. Else, I warn you, you will stulify rather than develop the minds of the children and youth committed to your pedagogic care.

6

The research method—comprising direct observation, the study of sources, and the organization of material from different texts—is a valuable intellectual process. This method of study is rapidly displacing formal recitation work in progressive schools and colleges, thus eliminating a stupendous and archaic source of apathy and mediocrity in student work. The honors method, first used in this country at Swarthmore, is being used now in other colleges. At Princeton the application of this method to seniors has produced remarkable student zeal. One zealous senior, at the time of graduation, asked permission to continue study on the subject of his thesis for another year, and then succeeded in making successful arrangements for book publication of his senior thesis.

[1] The author has used this method successfully in both secondary and collegiate work. It is not necessary to correct all the papers. One set out of three will assure a just marking.

The research method has been very successfully applied in progressive schools to the grammar grades, extending down as far as the fifth grade where the art of reading has become proficient enough to permit of such a method.

Research methods demand and inspire on the part of children initiative, clear understanding, judgment, interpretation, evaluation and powers of organization.

The research method often reveals hidden powers. A boy who came to my seventh grade from public school, retarded chiefly by slight speech defect and consequent inferiority complex, did the best work of the class in history research where he could work long and patiently. He gained enough self-confidence and mental training in one year to enable him to return to the public school and make good in the eighth grade.

Another boy of fifteen, retarded by asthma and too frail to do regular full-day school work, brought me in a masterly piece of research work on the history of slavery (ancient and modern) in connection with the study of American History. He had typed the report and presented it neatly assembled in a loose-leaf notebook. I happened to meet this lad the other day. He is now twenty-two and a rather successful magazine writer. He told me that his first impetus and aid in the direction of literary work came to him when he did that history project for me. He had remained with me only a few months, on account of his health, yet one piece of research work well

done in that short time had been of inestimable value to him.

7

Another very efficacious method of stimulating children to think is by having them read different texts relating to the same subject and see wherein and why they differ. The mere memorization of printed facts and the submissive unquestioning acceptance of textbook authority is not conducive to thinking.

Children are forced to think for themselves when they find authorities disagreeing. At first this experience is very puzzling to them; for they, like the vast majority of humans, are prone to accept as truth anything stated in print. *The necessity of doubting one or all diverse statements about the same event or subject is the beginning of wisdom.* It leads children to investigate and to get to the bottom of things.

A very interesting situation is created, for example, in comparative history if the causes and incidents leading up to the American Revolution are studied in as many American and English histories as can be procured. In regard to the Mexican War, one would have to search in a great many American histories in order to discover that this was a war of aggression on our part.

How much more vital a way of studying history this is than the slavish acceptance, memorization

and regurgitation of facts as found in a single text-book! Let us lead the child to see the real need for investigating, for delving underneath the opinion expressed in a printed page. Says Edward Pulling: "We are slaves, many of us, to the printed page. It is the duty of the schoolmaster to free his pupils from this slavery."

8

A remarkable instance of the comparative study of history is that described by Josephine Maloney, eighth grade teacher of the training school of Milwaukee State Teacher's College.[2]

A magazine article, "A Plea for the Unvarnished Truth," intimated that some of the history text-books were not authentic, and that the account of the Boston Tea Party as found in the average text-book was not accurate. The group were shocked, and decided to investigate. After a prodigious bit of research in comparative histories, the children wrote a group letter to the author of the article asking the sources of his information. This he did not give, but referred them to a text-book which he said contained an accurate account. From the author of this text they secured a reference to his sources, and after studying the sources, decided that the writer of the article, "A Plea for the Unvarnished Truth," was himself only partly correct in his statements. Thus the whole class acquired an investigating attitude,

[2] "Progressive Education Magazine," April, 1929. "An Activity Program for the Early Adolescent."

and learned the need of verifying all questionable statements before accepting them as facts.

9

There is an immense sociological value in this comparative, questioning attitude toward all statements presented in books, magazines, or newspapers. Such a habit of mind would tend to safeguard a populace from subtle and misleading propaganda. Immense is the gullibility of the average human mind toward printed statements! In fact the literate populations of civilized countries are more susceptible to large-scale propaganda today than were the illiterate populations of a century ago (states Lord Bryce in his "History of Democracy"), for the simple reason that printed propagandic ammunition can be shot so far and so fast.

There is no safety or future for democracy if vast populations can be moved by insidious propaganda to the degree which the World War demonstrated as possible.

To my mind one of the most important types of intellectual training secondary schools and colleges could give would be the comparative study of books, magazines, and newspapers, with the aim of discovering any possible bias back of statements made.

Readers of newspapers or magazines should realize the particular *interest* backing such organs of purported information and wisdom. If we know the psychology back of every statement that appears in

print, we have at least a chance to weigh and balance varying opinions and arrive at some measure of truth. But if we are totally unaware of subtle self-interests dominating the printed opinions presented to us as truth, we are liable to be led by the nose by any propagandist who can wield a skilful pen.

10

A new method of thinking lately evolved and now being widely used in conferences and somewhat in schools is what is called "group thinking." Here the group unites with cooperative spirit in a free discussion, having as its motive neither forensics nor victory by argument but rather a sincere desire to arrive at truth.

Such a discussion tends to become creative. Several minds collectively and cooperatively bent upon ascertaining truth can often accomplish this search better than the same minds plying this search independently of each other. We see this illustrated vividly in the group-method of scientific investigation as carried on by the General Electric, the Bell Telephone Company, and other similar organizations, whose discoveries and inventions are mostly the results of organized group effort.

How far superior as a method of intellectual effort is this group thinking than the old-fashioned debate with its specious, insincere exaggeration of favorable points and its unfair attitude toward opposing points. *Debating teaches one not how to find*

truth but how to conceal it! Group thinking, on the other hand—since it concerns no particular, selfish purposes—trains in open-mindedness, sincerity, reasonableness, intellectual honesty and magnanimity. It is an excellent training for youth who are as future citizens to guide the destinies of a great democracy.

11

There has been a stupid dogma prevalent in pedagogy, to the effect that children before adolescence are not capable of dealing with generalizations and universal truth; and that during this period, therefore, they should confine their mental work to accumulating a store of facts to serve as a basis for generalization later on. This is as bad a pedagogic error as the college-preparation curse of secondary schools. The best way to prepare children for college is to give them desirable and stimulating education in high school. And similarly, the best way to prepare children for an earnest use of their intelligence in the secondary school is by training them to think in large terms during the grammar grades.

I have conducted some very interesting experiments, with my seventh and eighth grades in joint session, in courses requiring a great deal of broad logical thinking both of a deductive and inductive kind. One year I gave this group a modified course in sociology, using Elwood's "Social Problems" (a text frequently used in college freshman

classes). Another year I gave a course in what might be called universe knowledge—the story of the stars (astronomy); the formation and structure of our planet (geology); the evolution of life forms (biology); and a minimum statement of the physical and chemical structure of matter.

In these courses the method used was as follows:—A half-hour conference was held twice a week in which I used the Socratic method. I drew out as much information or thought as I could from the pupils before presenting to them a set of new facts. In the universe-knowledge course, field and museum excursions were made and many of the pupils brought in specimens. The children took notes which they copied out neatly and looked over before the following conference in order to refresh their memory. A brief oral review quiz was held at the beginning of each conference, but no marks were given nor was any memorization of the material required or any final examination. The purpose of the courses was to arouse interest in these important fields, broaden the cultural foundations, stimulate the children to think acutely on broad and universal problems. Questions and discussion were encouraged. The reactions of the students were thoughtful and earnest, and at times extraordinarily brilliant and intuitive.

There was ample evidence in these three courses that children as young as ten can begin to think in large and general terms, and are capable of making deductions and universal judgments. Not all the

children in the group were able to function in this way. Some comprehended only a part of the material presented and discussed. But all followed the courses with extreme interest.

There is no question but that the broader and more universal is the presentation of any subject the greater interest and thought it arouses, with children as with adults. Adults lose interest when an article, a book, or a lecture goes into unnecessary or prolific detail. And children share this same human nature to the extent of finding little interest in a lot of unrelated facts—or even in a lot of facts which may be related in the adult consciousness but not in the child's.

Therefore let us take this as a fundamental axiom of the psychology of thought, that *the larger the issue, the more earnest and attentive is the mental attitude.* Therefore, if you want to arouse earnest thought in children, in youth, or in collegians, present large vital issues to them in a dynamic way properly geared to their stage of intelligence, knowledge, and experience.

12

Shall we ever again teach geography as a study of isolated nations one by one? How can we study France as apart from Germany, or Europe as apart from Asia? I asked my seventh grade to color, on an outline map of the world, all countries red that were ruled or colonized by Europe; and all other

countries blue. The overwhelming proportion of red to blue called for explanation. This led to a study of the invention of gunpowder and printing, and of the Industrial Revolution. We studied the differences between countries which had evolved a technological civilization and countries living in the state of primitive agriculture or nomadic culture. When we listed the countries predominantly industrial we found that they were all of Nordic race. Is this an accident? Is it due to some racial quality? Or is it a matter of climate? What is to be the relation, in the future, of countries of low technological culture to countries of high technological culture? Will Occidental imperialism always prevail? We got in to lecture to us twice weekly a parent who had spent twenty years in missionary work in China and who had in the course of these years come to the conclusion that in many respects the Chinese were socially far more evolved than we were. We ended the year with a good deal of appreciation of Asiatic culture, and with some appreciation of the deepest problem of internationalism—how unity can be established between the enormously diverse cultures of the Orient and Occident.

Why wait till college to begin to study and think along these broad constructive lines? Educators, I warn you that if you postpone real thinking until college is reached you will get very little of it out of youth there, because their minds will have been stultified by chronic distaste of the abstract minutiae of the so-called "discipline" subjects.

With the social sciences there is some chance of our educating youth to be really *builders of civilization.* We can encourage them to think for themselves. We can confront them with the vital problems of the day. We can help them to develop a technique for criticising and evaluating contemporaneous institutions. We can free them of restraints of timidity and self-consciousness and inspire them to exercise whatever creative abilities they may posses.

13

The time to awaken the thinking process is before adolescence. Conceive what education might be if children entered high school with their native capacity for thought stimulated to the utmost, earnest and eager in all their approach to knowledge; and if they there continued to develop still further their powers of thought under a program and a method which stimulated instead of stultifying the intelligence!

Professor Freeman of the University of Chicago has pretty well demonstrated that the intelligence of the individual is not fixed in quantity, but can be expanded by the right environment. "Differences in schooling," he says, "are sufficiently large and important to modify differences in inheritance. Thus education is capable of bringing up the intelligence of the masses. It is important that we give children the opportunity and encouragement to think."

Amen to this, Professor Freeman! *Let us give children opportunity and encouragement to think!*

Economic and social crises in the past have been reflected by crises in the educational world. It is not surprising that it should be so at the present time. There are again periods of adventure and discovery in civilization when it seems more important to discover ways of dealing with the new and the changing than simply to learn the old conventional patterns.

There is not the slightest doubt that the progressive movement in education got rid of a lot of dead wood. There is no doubt that the whole educational world has been freshened by the emphasis on freedom, spontaneity, by the interest in the future rather than obeisance to the past. The revolt was revolt against the dead hand of the past, the paralyzing hand of fixed authority, the repressive hand of discipline for its own sake.

But there has been a failure to distinguish the difference between discipline for its own arbitrary sake, and that discipline of mind and habits which contributes the only effective freedom. In two senses there is a necessity and already the symptoms of the beginning of the return to a more adequate realization of the relation of the past to the present and of discipline to freedom.—*Irwin Edman, Professor of Philosophy, Columbia University.*

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Eternal Battle Between Romanticists and Classicists

MANY parents are perplexed upon hearing, on the one hand, strong praise of progressive education as a movement expressing the needs of our times; and, on the other hand, strong criticism of it as lacking the necessary disciplines. Such parents, even if they could visit a progressive school and compare it—from what they observe and what reports they could gather concerning it—with the schools of the old disciplinary type, would still not be in a position to evaluate progressive education.

The progressive movement, in this experimental stage it is now in, is not uniform or standardized. Observation of one school will not give one sufficient grounds for estimating the whole movement. Indeed, a single visit to a single school might give a distorted picture.

One is bound to hear many adverse criticisms of progressive schools as they exist in action today. Much of this complaint is well founded. What shall be our judgment, then, not of some particular progressive school in our midst but of the progressive movement as a whole?

We can best clarify our understanding of the progressive education movement if we realize it as a revolt against old established forms. It is but one example in our midst of the eternal battle between romanticism and classicism; between those who esteem spirit more than form, and those who esteem form more than spirit.

2

We shall perceive better the full value of this struggle going on in education if we look at the history of art. The fine arts are always fluctuating between periods of classicism and periods of romanticism. Every attempt to establish a new school of art —whether it be of painting, music or literature—is bitterly assailed by the contemporary classicists as destroying old values, as being loose-minded, as expressing the revolt of a group who do not have the ability or the disposition to undertake the serious disciplines necessary to adequate creative work under the already established forms. The romanticists, on their part, accuse the prevailing schools of dead formalism, of crystallization, of outmoded dogmas, of obstinate blindness to values hitherto unperceived but now being successfully expressed.

And what happens? The new, romantic school of art always prevails—in spite of its faults of excessivism and accompanying undisciplined fadism—provided this new school really introduces the expression of new creative values hitherto unseen and unrealized.

3

This is seen very clearly in the history of painting. When Constable began painting trees and grass as green he was hooted at, because the prevailing dogma of the then classic landscape school was that trees should appear as brown upon the canvas. Yet Constable was right and the classicists were wrong.

Again, there were hoots of derision for the artist who first painted shadows on snow as purple. Today, however, every artist knows and practices the truth that colors in juxtaposition affect each other in the eye of the beholder.

When Millet chose to paint humble subjects such as peasant girls, cowherds, bent and stupid men with hoes, he was more neglected than derided. But other French romanticists of his period were fighting also, and more aggressively, for the privilege of portraying on canvas any theme which life itself presented to them, whether beautiful or common or even horrible.

The English landscape school, the Fontainebleau school, the Impressionist school, and the ultramodern schools of the present century have introduced new visions and new values into art, and have left in consequence an eternal influence.

4

The same fact is apparent in the history of music. Hayden became angry and dismissed the shaggy-

haired Beethoven when the latter bumptiously declared that the greatest living master of music had nothing more to teach him. Yet Beethoven was right; and he lived to prove that he had values to give to music of which Hayden the classicist had no conception. Again Wagner met with classicist opposition and ridicule when he attempted to create new and unheard of values in orchestral and operatic music. Today those values which Wagner created have put him in the very van of musical genius. And so with the modern French musical school of imagism, the impressionistic Russian school, and the modernistic school of jazz in America. Each in turn has to fight its way to recognition, yet each succeeds in adding new values that break with old established forms.

In English literature the romantic movement introduced by Burns, Wordsworth, Byron, and Shelley brought new types of beauty into poetry and immeasurably influenced subsequent poets and prose writers. In America Walt Whitman made good his claim that poetry should be free to treat of any theme whatsoever; and his peculiarly formless yet deeply rhythmic poetry became the cause of modern free verse.

5

Romantic movements are usually closer to the spirit of life and to the vital pulse of the people than are the classic schools against which they revolt. On

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the other hand, romanticists are apt to go to excesses in their disdain of form and their negligence of that inwrought beauty which comes only from stern self-discipline.

The chief function of romantic movements is to breathe life into dead forms, to reinvigorate art with fresh vital impulses and with new vision, and to insure a close fundamental relation between art and the people.

In their first flush of youth romantic movements go to extremes in their revolt against the prevailing classicism. They repudiate old-established forms that are too fundamental to become destroyed even by excess in zeal of reform.

Romantic revolts win out because they are borne forward by incoming tides of evolutionary destiny. But this does not mean the permanent defeat of classicism. When the forces of change are spent a new humanism emerges—obedient to form, but to a form acceptable to the new age.

6

This preliminary consideration of the nature and destiny of romantic movements is essential to an adequate understanding of progressive education, which is essentially a romantic movement expressing all the faults and all the virtues of romanticism. This new education reemphasizes the fact that teaching is an art, that teachers must be artists, and that the art

that teachers practice must be appealing to their pupils.

Progressive education bases the art of teaching upon an adequate understanding of the child who is being taught—on an understanding of its psychology, its needs, its emotional responses. Learning, as a process, is brought more closely in contact with life itself than in the formal disciplinary type of school against which the progressive is revolting. The gulf between the school and the world outside the school, between the child and the adult, is eliminated. A new breath of life animates forms that had become devitalized. Old forms are destroyed, as new wine destroys old bottles.

Progressive education has all the élan which characterizes great romantic movements. It is a Cause. It enlists parents as well as educators in its loyal and aggressive ranks. It is willing to make sacrifices, to endure, to battle for what it considers right. If it is unduly vociferous, it evinces both in practice and in propaganda a depth of conviction and of zeal.

7

With all its merits and its splendid contributions to the art of teaching, progressive education—like all romantic movements—has certain definite faults. It tends to neglect discipline, form and technique in proportion as it insists on interest, vitality, expression, initiative and creativeness.

One hears many stories about progressive schools: that the behavior of the children is apt to be rude, or at the best self-centered; that there is not enough definiteness about the work of the children; that while the new method may be good for some children, it is ruinous to others; that children in progressive schools often fail when examined for entrance into other schools or colleges.

Let us grant that some of this criticism is true. If so, what conclusions shall we draw concerning progressive education?

8

In the first place, let us realize that there are great differences between individual progressive schools. This new movement is as yet unformed, unstandardized. It contains within its fold many degrees of philosophy and practise, ranging all the way from extreme radicalism to conservative liberalism. Its schools are well manned and managed in some cases, poorly manned and managed in others.

A world sitting in judgment cannot with fairness indict the whole progressive movement; for there is no organized unity to indict but only individual schools, some of which lack very much in regard to form and discipline, others of which would satisfy in these respects even the conservatives.

Secondly, we must realize that progressive education, as a *revolt* movement, was bound to go to an

extreme; and, as an *experimental movement,* was destined to make mistakes. The important point at this stage of development of the movement is for the progressives to take stock of themselves and of their work, to eliminate their mistakes, and to retrieve whatever of solid good in the old scholastic disciplines they may have been neglecting or wilfully rejecting.

It is inevitable that this second stage of growth should be reached by the progressive movement. In fact, there is every sign that it is now being reached. And it is indeed essential to the widespread progress of this vitally reforming movement that it should undertake critical self-examination in order to consolidate its gains and to rid itself of any impediments unnecessarily checking its advance.

9

In spite, however, of certain excesses and certain faults of commission or of omission *progressive education, far from being unscientific, is more scientific than the formal type of education it is displacing.*

Progressive educators are conducting careful research in the most advanced techniques for the teaching of reading and arithmetic. They are making valuable contributions in curriculum research and experimentation:—as to what subjects are best suited to the child at each age level; how children

and youth think, feel, and react to different learning situations; how young people can best be helped to realize and to meet the changing conditions of society. These are only a few of the many directions in which progressive educators are making careful scientific research.

In most progressive schools achievement tests are used to check up on the academic progress of the pupils. In this way the results of experiments in new methods of teaching and in curriculum changes can be intelligently studied in terms of standard formal requirements.

To the individual child, most careful scientific attention is given. *Never has education so concerned itself with the complete all-round welfare and development of children as in these progressive schools.* Medical experts are consulted for hidden health factors which might be the cause of academic retardation. The science of mental hygiene is evoked to aid in the emotional and social perfectioning of the child. Close touch is maintained with the home life and the parents of the child, so that the expert knowledge of the school organization may be at the disposal of the parents to aid in establishing a home training of as high an order as the training during school hours. Finally, the progress and development of the child—not only mental but also physical, emotional and social—is carefully watched and recorded from year to year so that a consecutive picture is formed, and disadvantageous trends can be corrected and advantageous trends encouraged.

10

Fundamentally, the whole concept of progressive education is more scientific than the fundamental concept of the old-style formal education. The latter is based on the assumption that the child can be mentally disciplined into a condition of educational culture, and that the learning process can take place by means of drills. This mental discipline theory of education contains one glaring fault. It does not take into account the psychology of the child. And learning is after all a *psychological* process.

To be best accomplished, education must enlist the sincere cooperation of the student. This psychological truth is thoroughly appreciated and utilized by every agency and organization dealing with adult education, but it has been woefully neglected by those authorities dealing with the obligatory education of the child. Because the truant office can always be enlisted the child has become helpless under the authority of the school. Its likes and dislikes, its needs and desires have not been sufficiently considered.

All the faults of exuberance committed in the name of progressive education are as nothing compared with this fundamental fault of the old-style education—the fault of neglecting child psychology, of ignoring child interests, and of failing to base educational methods on an approach to the child which would enlist his sincere cooperation in the process of learning.

11

The progressive school makes full use of the principle of interest. It enlists complete cooperation of the child in the process of education, and insures this cooperation in all the work of the school, whether in projects or in necessary drills.

Progressive education is in full accord with the findings of modern child psychology and of mental hygiene. Many a child who was suffering in mental and nervous health because of factors inherent in the old-type school system have become healed under the benign and scientifically correct atmosphere and environment of the progressive school.

Thus we may see that it is not merely because progressive education is a revolt that it is succeeding, but because it offers something of tremendous value to the child.

And is not this same thing true of all successful romantic movements? They succeed not merely because of robust enthusiasms, vociferousness, and iconoclastic methods; but because they contain some new and really valuable contributions to the science and art of living.

The progressive education movement does not contain all truth, nor is it the only field in which good education is being given. The acclamations of progressive educators may be annoying to some schoolmen. But the question before the tribunal of society is not: "Are these claims being too loudly vociferated?" but—"Are these claims true?"

Let us seek to perceive the new values, if there be any, which progressive education offers the world. Romantic movements are not to be condemned because they are lusty and youthful provided they bring—as so many romantic movements have brought—a contribution of distinct value to the evolution of civilization and of human culture.

13

On the other hand, progressive educators must realize—as indeed most of them do—that there are values in mental discipline and drills that can never be discarded; and they must realize that it is not revolution so much as evolution in education which they are effecting.

But did progressive educators ever claim differently? As far as the organized movement is concerned, progressive education was from the beginning aware that it was correcting and enriching rather than destroying previous systems. The first manifesto and declaration of principles issued by the Progressive Education Association ends with the following statement:—"*The school should be an educational laboratory, where new methods are encouraged, and where the best of the past is leavened by the discoveries of the present, and the result freely added to the sum of educational knowledge.*"

14

When we try to measure the values of progressive education in terms of old style drill-method stand-

ards of achievement, we are attempting an impossibility. For the new can be somewhat measured, but never altogether measured, by standards of the old. The very goals and methods of progressive education are so different from those of the old-style education that any comparison based on the same terms of measurement is difficult and unfair.

The old education has sought—by methods of mental discipline in the preparation of assigned lessons—to attain as goals a definite body of factual knowledge and the ability to carry out necessary tasks thoroughly and effectively . . . Whereas the new education—by methods of freedom, interest, and initiative—seeks to develop a desire for knowledge, a power of educational self-direction in the acquisition of facts, and the habit of creative expression.

It is difficult, therefore, to evaluate progressive education in terms of achievement such as constitutes the ideal of mental-discipline education, because the very achievements sought in these two systems are different.

15

The values of humanism (if we may so designate the mental-discipline type of education) are not by any means negligible—form, exactness, self-restraint, faithful effort in the accomplishment of set tasks, and an intelligent understanding of the past as a basis for comprehending the existing order of things.

Is the new Romanticism inclined to neglect these values? In so far as it does neglect them it lays itself open to just criticism. But the new education offers in addition *new* values not only fundamental in their own right, but today in relation to the needs of a changing society absolutely essential—intellectual eagerness, initiative, power of self-direction, love of cultural activities, courage and technique for questioning the present order of things, and creative ability applied to one's own life and to the building of a better society.

16

Humanistic education has proved its ability to drill a definite body of facts into the minds of students. But has this process developed a cultural society? Has it developed a society of thinking, creative beings?

As I look into the faces of groups of college alumni that I variously meet with, I often wonder if they have the ability to analyze correctly what is going on in the world. I suspect their cerebral functioning is limited to gleaning the surface of the world's news, and that their ideas are so tinged with self-interest as to be almost worthless for the reconstruction of a better world. I cannot see upon their faces any signs that they have learned to think honestly, acutely, and creatively about life—either about their own life or the life of the world.

Nor do I see signs that the almost universal

spread of secondary education has proportionately increased human culture in this country. It is shortsighted, to say the least, to use methods of instruction in high school and college which cause in students an aversion to thoughtful books, an aversion to anything that smacks of serious study.

It is not the period of schooling which stamps man or woman as cultured or uncultered. It is the use, rich or poor, which we make of our cultural environment after leaving college. The most cultured man I have ever known was not a college graduate. He had gleaned his culture through the study of books, of paintings, of music, and through human contacts.

Progressive schools are trying to bequeath as undying possessions to their students rich cultural tastes, intellectual avidness, habits of research and of creativeness. To the extent to which they accomplish these aims will they be judged by posterity.

17

Say what you will, pro or con, the new education was destined to arrive during this epoch of rapid evolution and of world upheaval. Romantic movements of human thought and culture inevitably characterize periods of adventure, change, and expansion.

The old drill type of education is outmoded. Modern youth will not lend itself to studies which exist in the curriculum for the mere purpose of mental discipline. Education must present subjects

that appeal in their own right, must show present as well as future values if it is to enlist the real co-operation of the children and youth of today.

In this dynamic age—vibrant with change and progress, full of explosions of old forms—can we expect our students to be satisfied to con pages of Latin and Greek? To derive pleasure from reading Johnson and Addison and Dryden? To find exhilaration in algebra and geometry? To have appetite for ancient history taught in ancient ways, when modern history is so vividly in the making?

18

Let us not be so credulous as to expect that youth will find satisfaction today in any mental-discipline type of education. Only a dynamic type of education will suit this volatile epoch—an education that concerns itself with activities, activities of the students matching activities of the world; accomplishing the necessary skills and knowledge through sheer pull of enthusiasm to get at the sources and meaning and values of activity.

And do not be too fearful of the gaps and rough edges in such education. Imperfections there are bound to be. But as desire is the most effective source of effort and accomplishment, so we shall see great achievement whenever and wherever students are set on fire.

Be patient, friend humanist. In a generation or two all this turbulence will die down. Then the new revolutionary education will have become the tradi-

tional education. The progressive will have become humanist. The erstwhile romanticist will find delight in form.

But never will education lose the values it is gaining from the progressive movement. The education of the future will not fail to recognize and cherish the child as an individual, as an active being, and as a potentially creative being. The education of the future, whatever else it does or does not do, will effectively nourish the expressive genius quality of childhood.

19

The new romanticism in education is more than a national movement. It is world wide. It flared forth simultaneously and indigenously on both sides of the Atlantic. With no connection or mutual awareness, the "Progressive Education Movement" was being put into organized form in this country while the "New Schools" of England and Europe were being organized into the "New Education Fellowship."

Experimental education along these lines is being carried out in every country of Europe and in most of South America. Russia, Turkey, and China have based their whole new educational structure upon the tenets of progressive education.[1]

[1] The present reaction in Russia was to be expected from the extremes to which she went in putting education into the hands of the child. Those who want to realize the dangers to which the new education is liable should study carefully the Russian experiment.

The country which has most intelligently elaborated and applied the progressive principles to mass education is Mexico. Faced with the problem of lifting a densely ignorant but (as time will show) a gifted race out of the medievalism of illiteracy, the national department of education has achieved superbly its intelligent plan of adapting education to the background and needs of the village communal life of the peasant. The rich artistic past of the Mexican Indian has been drawn upon, his racial pride touched, his ancestral crafts restored. And the three R's have found their proper and proportionate place in the midst of this creative and desirable program.

And now for our American Indians, through the Bureau of Indian Affairs which has fallen to the guidance of progressives, is being planned a similarly progressive educational system.

20

The day will come, and not far distant, when the whole world will modify its systems of education so as to adopt the clearly demonstrated values of the progressive movement. Much confusion there is bound to be in the process. But so is there confusion in many other departments of human thought and activity which are now becoming revolutionized under the stress of a changing destiny.

We cannot avoid going forward because of uncertainties "en route." On the other hand, we must

not be blind to risks and dangers. As educators in this romantic age we cannot fail to be adventurous. But we must beware of pursuing will-of-the-wisps.

The battle between romanticists and classicists is an eternal battle. The romanticists enjoy the struggle more than do the classicists. Is this because they think time and destiny are fighting with them?

The University should be a place where classroom experiences and faculty contacts should stimulate and train youth for the most effective use of all the resources with which nature has endowed them. Difficult and challenging problems, typical of the life and world in which they are to live, must be given them to solve. They must be taught under the expert supervision of instructors to approach the solution of these problems in a workmanlike way, with a disciplined intellect, with a reasonable command of the techniques that are involved, with a high sense of intellectual adventure, and with a genuine devotion to the ideals of intellectual integrity.—*Doctor Arnold B. Hall, Former President of Oregon University.*

CHAPTER TWELVE

Builders of a New Civilization

WE call upon our youth to build a better civilization. But how can they do this, unless in the process of their educational training they attain to new and superior powers of discrimination and creative vision? Is the prevailing educational system capable of giving them such development and guidance? Will drills in Latin and Greek, in algebra and geometry, do this? Will the routine study of English classics and rhetoric do this? Will the text-book system, with its implication of passive subservience to the authority of print, do this?

At present we are giving to the youth in our schools neither enthusiasms nor convictions. We are not training them in habits of intellectual initiative and judgment. We are not, except in some few departments of science, heightening their creative powers.

If education means only the compulsion to memorize and mumble with averted minds symbols and formulas, is it going to be able to fulfill the imperious need of the time—that of remaking the world?

2

The infiltration of progressive ideals and methods into elementary education is rapid and effective.

Such a headway of contagion is now at work that the organized propagation of progressive principles is hardly a needed enterprise at this stage of elementary school development. The leaven of the new education is doing its work effectively, although (it must be confessed) it has an immense amount of work still to do.

At present, however, the high school is almost untouched by progressivism. Even the outstanding progressive schools are not able to use a progressive curriculum or progressive methods on the secondary level. The demands for college entrance prescribe most of the curriculum and necessitate mental-discipline methods rather than creative methods. If even the progressive schools are necessarily non-progressive on their secondary level, what may be said of our average high schools?

Millions of parents can testify to the total lack of inspirational quality in high school education. Boys and girls pour daily through these portals, as clerks go to office. They do, or do not do, their obligatory tasks. On the average they work hard. A large percentage of faithful and slow-minded (though not stupid) students work much too hard. And what do they get out of it all? A diploma indicating the successful termination of their course, and a possible certificate of college entrance.

But of all the inestimable values of the new education already discussed in these pages, high school students obtain but a lamentably minute portion.

3

There are many causes of this defective educational situation in our high school system. The chief cause is that secondary education has not been permitted to develop as an independent unit. It has been held too much in subservience to college entrance. Strangely enough, even the general courses for the non-preparatory students have failed in the vast majority of high schools to make a creative use of their educational freedom.[1] The main energy and concern of every high school has been to effect and maintain success in college entrance.

The demand of progressive educators for the revolutionizing of the high school is this: Let us find out what studies and what methods will appeal to youth of high school age, and then build up our secondary system upon this scientific educational foundation.

There is little use of cramming our high schools full of young people, and then giving them things they do not want. That accomplishes little educationally. Far worse, it may even cause intellectual stultification and aversion to culture.

4

"But adolescent youth is self-willed and sophisticated," you say, "and rebels against all learning."

[1] A foundation research man looking for progress in high schools has stated that he could not find, even among high schools not committed to college preparation, a single school that is making a creative attack upon the curriculum.

Not true. Post-adolescent youth is sophisticated and blasé only as to pose. In reality there is nowhere in the life of the individual a more restlessly surging period—no period when enthusiasms can reach deeper into convictions, ideals, and conduct. But to arouse or maintain enthusiasms in youth the educator must seize hold of the normal interests of boys and girls at this vitally important age and lead these interests into wholesome fruition.

It is true that adolescent youths are wilful. And a good thing it is that they *are* wilful, else they would remain forever under the possessive rule of adults.

If adolescents are developing strong wills and critical minds, then why not make use of these very qualities in a system and method of education which will be fertile field for the aggressive, skeptical quality of youth?

5

The high school situation is bad, with its subservience to college demands, its antiquated methods, and its already huge quota of restless boys and girls to which now in the depression there has been suddenly an increase of an extra eight hundred thousand. But bad as this situation is, there are signs of rapid improvement. The night is darkest just before the dawn. And there is now dawning in the minds of our educators the idea that the secondary

school level imperiously needs renovation and reformation in order to adapt it to the present emergency and to the future needs of multitudinous youth who in the new industrial leisure will increasingly throng our high schools.

The idea is rapidly growing among educators that it would be a good thing if the high school could become an independent educational unit and solve its own problems, instead of servilely toiling for a group of absentee landlords (college presidents and deans of admission).

This is a bright idea, and it is already bearing fruit. A remarkable concession has been wrung from college deans of admission by a group of progressive secondary school men working for several years under a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. Some two hundred and fifty colleges (almost all the colleges of importance) have agreed upon a notable experiment devised for the purpose of allowing educational independence to the secondary school. A group of about fifty progressive secondary schools selected by the committee will have the privilege for five years, beginning in 1936, to send to these colleges any boys they recommend free of examination and free of the ordinarily prescribed preparatory program for college entrance. These schools will be allowed great latitude in the making of their curriculums. The whole experiment, covering eight years, will demonstrate (it is hoped) that a group of youth of normal intelligence, educated in high school along lines that make an inherent and

natural appeal to youth, will be able to hold their own in whatever colleges they may choose to attend.

6

While the Progressive Committee experiment has won only a liberalization of curriculum and methods, President Ellery of Union College, Schenectady, has made public his plan to *abolish all curriculum requirements except three units of high school English.* The only other requirement for entrance is that the candidate must have shown himself proficient in some one of four possible group of studies—fine arts, mathematics and science, languages, or social studies. "Union College no longer asks schools to fit students for a particular curriculum—a task contrary to nature and hence futile. Union College fits its own curriculum to the student whom the school sends—a reasonable process . . . . A normal boy by the time he is 16 or 17 years of age has given some indication of his individual intellectual bent. He is good at something; he is promising college material. He should be admitted to college on the basis of such proficiency, even though he may not have qualified in all the subjects hitherto prescribed for college entrance." President Ellery calls his plan "The Union College Plan for the Intellectual Advancement of Youth."

An even more radical experiment is announced by the newly appointed President Joseph H. Brewer of Olivet College, Michigan. Not only will he ad-

mit high school graduates on the basis of their needs and purposes, rather than on the basis of hard and fast entrance requirements, but once in the college they will take no test or examinations until the end of their second year. Then they are examined to see if they merit continuing their education for the A. B. degree, and at the end of the next two years will occur the only other examination of their college course. This experiment in self-education will be watched with great interest. "The only possible education is self-education," says Brewer. "It is inevitable that the lockstep of courses, time schedules, hours, points, credits, quizzes, grades, course examinations, all the elaborate machinery by which we conceal ignorance, should be broken up."

7

What studies have the power to fire the imagination and elicit the intellectual effort of youth? An excellent statement of what the youth of today need in our high schools and colleges (adapted respectively to each stage) is given us by Frederick L. Redefer, executive secretary of the Progressive Education Association.

"The greatest needs in education at the present time are: first, a clearer understanding of the perplexities of our civilization; and second, the development of a sense of social responsibility for the intelligent and effective solution. All people engaged in

education should definitely devote their attention to the task of developing social responsibility. This may be partially attained by including in the curriculum studies bearing upon specific difficulties which bewilder our modern world, studies which give a more comprehensive understanding of the individual and the collective efforts to solve these problems."

The social sciences have for years proved the most compelling of all courses offered college youth. When properly adapted to the secondary age level, they will prove to have an equal attraction to youths in our high schools—as indeed they have already demonstrated their strong appeal to children on the elementary and junior high school level.

The social sciences must be taught to pre-college youth in a very concrete way, with frequent application and inspiration from activity projects. They must be related to the life of the community and nation. They must also be related to and derive their chief motivation from the exciting events of the contemporaneous world. Historical backgrounds must be given only as the need is felt on the part of the students and not on the basis of the old pedagogic dogma—"Study ancient history for a few years, and you will then be competent to approach the study of history in the making.

8

The secondary school world is indeed all afire with

the spirit of reform. Everywhere committees are studying the psychology and educational needs of high school boys and girls; the possibility of reformed curriculums; the need and feasibility of building the secondary curriculum around the focus of community and contemporaneous life.

In fact, the nation's educators are beginning to realize the special responsibility of the secondary school to meet the present emergency with an inspiring and effective curriculum.[2]

Here and there a private preparatory school or a public high school is doing daring things in the way of actually trying to suit education to the clients' needs. One of the most striking of these rebellions against the old classicism is that staged in one of the former strongholds of conservatism, Andover, by its new principal, Dr. Fuess.

"Within a month after his appointment as head master," I quote from Porter Sargent's enlivening and informing Private School News, "Dr. Claude Fuess had formulated and announced a new curriculum for Andover, one that would have been re-

[2] A national committee on curriculum research is at present engaged in a thorough psychological study of adolescent people from twelve to nineteen years of age—how they think, feel, act, respond to situations within and without the school. This committee is also considering the import to education of contemporaneous society and its changes; how education can help young people meet these changes successfully; the development and needs of high school pupils in relation to their community and home life. All of this research is to determine what curriculum is best suited to adolescent development and needs.

garded as heretical and radical only a few decades ago."

In discussing the changes, Dr. Fuess has no hesitancy in saying, "The course of study in some of our so-called preparatory schools has almost no relationship to American civilization . . . . It should be the function of the preparatory school not merely to get boys ready for college but also to extend their interests beyond the entrance requirements and stimulate their intellectual curiosity.

"The school program now emphasizes the study of the world in which we live, physical and economic. Beginning next spring, boys may graduate from Andover knowing no Latin. But history is to be continuous throughout the four years, culminating in a comprehensive course in American history, civics, and current problems, dealing with the development of our nation and emphasizing opportunities for public service.

"Requirements in mathematics have been reduced to make more time for biology, physics, and chemistry. Required for the first time are courses in appreciation of art, architecture, and music. Many new elective courses will be offered—astronomy, philosophy, harmony, Greek Testament, American literature, geography, current history, social problems, etc.

The changes at Andover represent "a determination to keep abreast of genuine progress." Dr. Fuess' intent is "that Andover shall send out its

graduates even better equipped to play their part in a complex and exigent world."

9

More significant still are the murmuring of rebellion rising from secondary school administrators, supervisors, and superintendents the whole country over. Recently speaking before the commission on secondary education of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary School, a Mississippi State high school supervisor made a radical plea for a type of high school program that would really educate. He urged that the social and individual needs of high school pupils be met by a curriculum that was not a creature of standardized college-entrance requirements.

"The findings of science must be heeded, the demand of colleges for 'pattern' high school credits must be superseded, before we shall see a general response to the social demand for a shifting of emphasis to the social and individual needs of high school pupils, and, therewith, relief from the pressure of the social prestige of the academic pattern high school course. The progressive high school executive must emancipate his school from the rule of college preparation and set it free for community and social service. High school standards must be freed of unbending rigidity and picayunish provisions if they are to render the service demanded of them in these critical times."

10

The secondary world is changing! Where is it coming to? I predict that within two decades it will have arrived at the same universal tendency toward progressive principles and methods at which the elementary schools of the country have now arrived.

How could it be otherwise? The leaven of progressive education in the elementary school was bound to work upward into the secondary school. A type of education that has proved effective with children cannot be stopped at the portals of high school. It will inevitably accomplish its invasion.

At present education on the secondary level is just where twenty years ago education was on the elementary level. The reform there was just reaching up from the kindergarten and primary. Right on it goes.

And the college will not be the limit, either! There is the vast adult population of our country needing continuing education in the accruing leisure of our New Deal. And where can adult education better turn for guidance than to the psychologically true and proven principles of progressive education —*the principles of interest, self-initiative, and creative expression?*[3]

[3] A friend wrote me recently as follows: "There are evidences everywhere of spreading interest in progressive education. Yesterday a member of the National Board of the Y. M. C. A. telephoned me for information on these lines, for unemployed girls. They

11

The time is not far distant when each stage of education will ask of the prospective pupil not the bureaucratic question of the past: "Are you prepared for entrance here?"—but the socio-educational question of the future: "What do you need? What do you want? How can we help you in your educational development from the point at which you now are?"

A decade or two ago when Marietta L. Johnson repeatedly proclaimed in her walls-of-Jericho trumpet voice that the secondary school and college should accept any individuals possessed of capacity and earnestness and help them to get to where they wanted to go educationally, she was ridiculed by educators or ignored as not worthy of attention. Yet within a few years of rapid educational development we find the presidents of Union College, Olivet College, Bennington College, and others, publicly maintaining this very same standard of liberalism. In effect they say to the secondary school: "Bring your youth to us. If they have proven capacity, never mind what has been their past education. We will give them what they crave and need."

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had established some classes along old-type school lines, which seemed to bring no response on the part of the girls; they dropped out after attending once or twice. The Board decided that they would better get in touch with the progressive education schools and see if something could not be found more nearly fitting the needs of the girls."

12

Not only are colleges becoming more liberal as regards their admission requirements, but they are also boldly experimenting with changes in curriculum and methods. The aim of the progressive college is to find ways of really reaching the inner core of the student, thus enlisting his own sincere efforts in the great enterprise of education.

It is not necessary to go into detail concerning these experiments. They have been announced widely in the public press, and the whole educational world is watching their progress with deep interest. Any discovery that can transform the blasé, diploma-hunting attitude of the average college student into an attitude of interest and active intellectual participation will deserve to outrank the discovery of planets or of stellar galaxies.

13

Lincoln Steffens in his "Autobiography" points out the crux of the whole problem. If college youths could be led to see that intellectual and moral discoveries still await their adventurous attack and that the world calls out to them for revaluation and reforms, they might not be content to "specialize in football, petting parties, and unearned degrees."

Steffens believes that it is *"possible"* to get an education at a university. It has been done. But

the proportion is small of college students who get a start in interested methodical study.

"My expectations of college life were raised too high. I thought I would be breathing in an atmosphere of thought, discussion, and some scholarship; working and reading, and studying for the answers to questions which would be threshed out in debate and conversation. There was nothing of the sort. As for questions, the professors asked them, not the students; and the students, not the teachers, answered them, in examinations . . . .

"No one ever developed for me the relation of my required subjects to those that attracted me; no one brought out for me the relation of anything I was studying to anything else, except, of course, to that wretched degree. The relation of knowledge to life, even to student life, was ignored."

Things are a little better now. But not good enough. No one, I think, will dispute this statement, that colleges could do much more than they are yet doing toward correlating education with life, and toward stimulating their students to that self-effort in education which is the only possible foundation for culture and for real mental development.

14

Still more important, it seems at this critical epoch, is the duty of college faculties to help youth evaluate

the civilization of today and inspire them to creative intellectual effort.

With this revolution going on in secondary schools and colleges there is some chance of our educating youth to be really builders of civilization.

We can encourage them to think for themselves. We can confront them with the vital problems of the day. We can help them to develop a technique for criticising and evaluating the contemporaneous institutions. We can free them of restraints of timidity and self-consciousness, and inspire them to exercise whatever creative abilities they may possess.

More than this we cannot do. We cannot dictate to youth the pattern of the future world society, because we see it only in part, dimly, as in a glass.

But we can set youth upon the path of progress with a free swinging gait. This is our opportunity. This is the most critical responsibility that faces the educator of the established generation in dealing with the members of the oncoming generation.

The world of the future will judge us educators of today by this one thing—"In how far did you help youth to apply their full potentiality to the upbuilding of a better world?"

APPENDIX

POEMS TO SPRING

EXAMPLES FROM A PROJECT IN POETRY-MAKING

IN THE SECOND AND THIRD GRADES

OF THE

CHEVY CHASE COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

THE WHIPPOORWILL

All night when the moon shone bright
I heard the whippoorwill sing.
Oh whip-poor-will!
Oh whip-poor-will!
How sweet you sing!
You sing a note I've never heard before
A tune of far off lands!
If I could hear them in the day
I'd happier be than any one I know,
Oh whip-poor-will!
Oh whip-poor-will!

—*Robert Lane*

THE RAIN

Oh gentle rain that patters down,
Oh tell me true.
Do you like to patter down
And fill the dry streams
And water the thirsty earth,
Or are you sorry
To leave your cloud homes
With all your brothers and sisters?

—*Eliza Miller.*

A BUTTERFLY

I, a butterfly!
To fly about on blooming flowers.
Just think!
I, a butterfly,
From a brown and warm cocoon!
To be a butterfly!
To fly wherever I choose
With beautiful wings against the sky!

—*Jacqueline Parsons.*

IN THE SPRING

The wind through the branches
Goes rustling around,
Beauty, just beauty!
All's pretty around you.
Beauty, just beauty!
Beauty's all around you!
The birds are singing all around you.

—*Tom Goldman.*

HAPPY SPRING

A happy child
Went to the woods
And saw a robin
And talked to it
And said to it;
"What do you want to do this rainy day?"
"I do not want to go south,
I want to stay."

—*Meredith Coonley.*

THE WIND

The wind whistles so loud!
The wind tosses the birds around in the air.
God makes spring
So that all of us can be happy.
The wind comes whistling around the house
The wind blows, and the fairies dance to the music,
And the dwarfs skip to the music.
Spring is here once again
To make little boys and girls happy.

—*Golden McClain.*

THE SPRING

Oh pretty robin
How sweet you sing!
And pretty bluebird
Do you remember
You sang your song
To me one morning
And the happy children liked you.
They wanted you to stay.
O, pretty birds
I like your song!
And you, oh, mocking bird,
Where do you get all of your songs?
You have so many
That I like to sit under the oak tree
And hear you sing.

—*Margaret Springer.*

SPRING

I saw you, little nut hatch,
Darting up a tree.
I spied you, flaming cardinal,
Flying through the sky!
I heard you, lovely mocking bird,
Singing in a tree.
And all these wondrous creatures
God made them all for me.

—*Mary Dawson.*

IN DREAMLAND

At night when mother puts out the light,
I go to dreamland—an' there I see wonders—
Mountains and elves and fairies.

I saw them dance, I heard them sing
And then when the morning's rays peep through my
window,
I hear my mother call
"Get up you lazy bones!"

—*Bob Lane.*

Spring is here!
Spring is here!
   And tulips are in bloom.
And purple violets
Vie with them
   To chase away the gloom.

—*Eliza Miller.*

The little buds in silver
   For the spring
The violets in purple
   Their sweetness bring.

—*Emeline Bennett.*

WHEN WINTER DIES

Spring is here
Flowers are near
When winter dies
The violets rise.

Spring is near
Oh can't you hear
The birds in the trees
And the honey bees?

Spring is here
And oh what cheer
With little girls singing
And little boys swinging.

—*Helena Evans.*

The violets are beautiful in the woods;
The dandelions shine in the sunny meadows.
But the pansies in my garden
Are more beautiful than these.

—*Mary Dawson.*

The sunshine is beautiful
But at night it goes away.
Then it gets all dark,
And I have to go to bed,
And I don't like it.

—*Mary Virginia Sherly.*

JACK IN THE PULPIT

Oh Jack in the Pulpit
How straight you stand!
Do you ever get tired
Preaching all day long
In the green and grown woods?
I'd think you would!

—*Margaret Springer.*

A BREATH OF SPRING

Oh the golden dandelion
Peeps through the green grass.
And the purple violet
Smiles through the green at last.

—*Eliza Miller.*

RAIN

Rain, rain that patters down
Upon the seeds and flowers,
You water the thirsty earth
And make the flowers grow.
Flowers grow everywhere;
In the woods and in the parks;
And today I saw some wild geranium
In the woods;
And the trees love you, and
The flowers love you too.

—*Mary Dawson.*

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