

# THE NEW LEAVEN

*Progressive Education and  
Its Effect upon the  
Child and Society*

BY STANWOOD COBB

*New York*

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**To**  
*My comrades on the road of learning*  
**THE CHILDREN OF THE**  
**CHEVY CHASE COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL**

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

STANWOOD COBB was born November 6, 1881, at Newton, Massachusetts. He was educated at Dartmouth College and at the Divinity School of Harvard University. From 1907 to 1910 he taught at Robert College, in Constantinople. After two more years of teaching in Europe he returned to America and was, successively, on the faculties of St. John's College, Annapolis, the Asheville School for Boys and the U. S. Naval Academy.

In 1919 Mr. Cobb was instrumental in organizing the Progressive Education Association, in Washington, of which he was for some years executive secretary and is now president.

In 1919 Mr. Cobb was married to Nayan Whitlam, and with his wife as partner, he opened the Chevy Chase Country Day School, now one of the well-known progressive private schools. In 1926 Mast Cove Camp was opened, at Eliot, Maine, as an extension of the work of Chevy Chase Day School.

In addition to *The New Leaven*, Mr. Cobb is the author of *The Real Turk*, *Ayesha of the Bosphorus*, *The Essential Mysticism*, and *Simla, A Tale in Verse*.



## CONTENTS

### PART I: LOOKING AT THE PROBLEM

#### CHAPTER

- I *The Parent Takes a Hand in Education*

PAGE ✓

3

### PART II: THE PRINCIPLES OF THE NEW EDUCATION

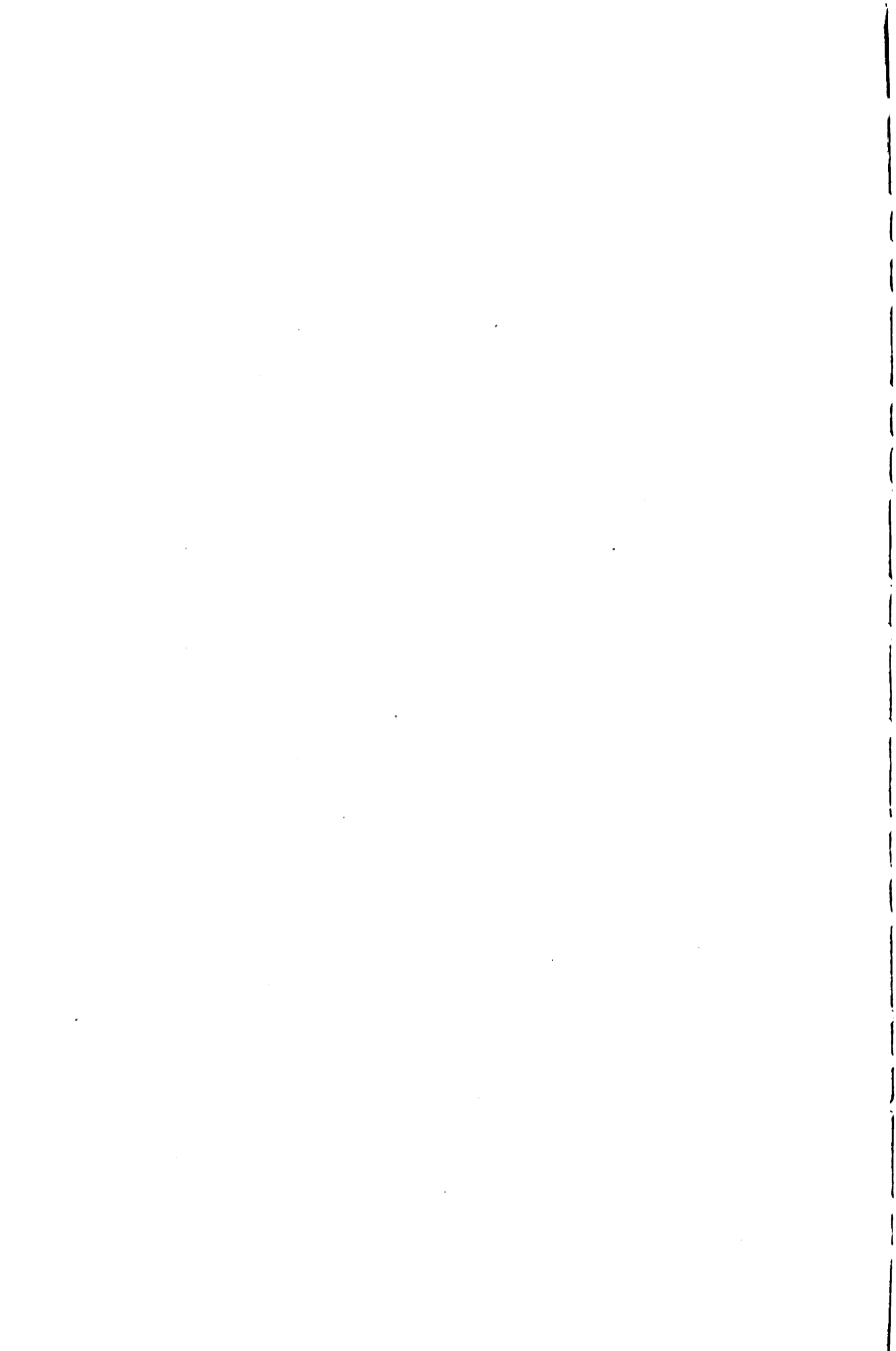
#### CHAPTER

- II ~~*Health Must Come First*~~ 27
- III *These Active Children* 43
- IV *The Freedom of the Child* 62 ✓
- V *The Individual Child* 83
- VI *Cultivating the Social Virtues* 111
- VII *Release the Creative Energies* 132
- VIII *Shall We Make the Child into a Walking Encyclopedia?* 156 ✓
- IX *The Creative Conquest of the Curriculum* 178
- X *The Tyranny of Marks* 199
- XI *The Teacher a Guide and Not a Taskmaster* 229 ✓
- XII *Treating Children as Human Beings* 247 ✓

### PART III: FROM NURSERY TO COLLEGE

#### CHAPTER

- XIII *How Young Should a Child Go to School?* 254
- XIV *The Failure of the Secondary School* 270
- XV *The Problem of the College* 292
- XVI *The Junior College—a Solution* 323



## PREFACE

The new progressive education which is revolutionizing child training and transforming the child, how difficult it is of expression and description! We have done our best to present an interpretation of this movement. If we have succeeded at all in giving a description that shall be inclusive and authentic, it is by reason of the much-appreciated aid rendered by numerous progressive educators who have generously contributed to the book their ideas as to what constitutes progressive education. Their names will be found on Page 16 of the text, and need not therefore be repeated here. May I take this occasion, however, to thank them, one and all, for their most helpful and generous coöperation in an endeavor to make clear to the general public the essence of this thing so dear to the heart of all progressive educators.

Also I wish to thank especially Miss Mary Josephine White for her very helpful assistance in securing the questionnaire material upon which the book is based; Miss Gertrude Hartman for reading the manuscript and making certain valuable suggestions; and my brother, Percival B. Cobb, for a critical reading of the manuscript. A portion of the material in Chapter XIV originally appeared in *Good Housekeeping*.

In conclusion, may I make due apologies beforehand for all sins of omission and commission. I do

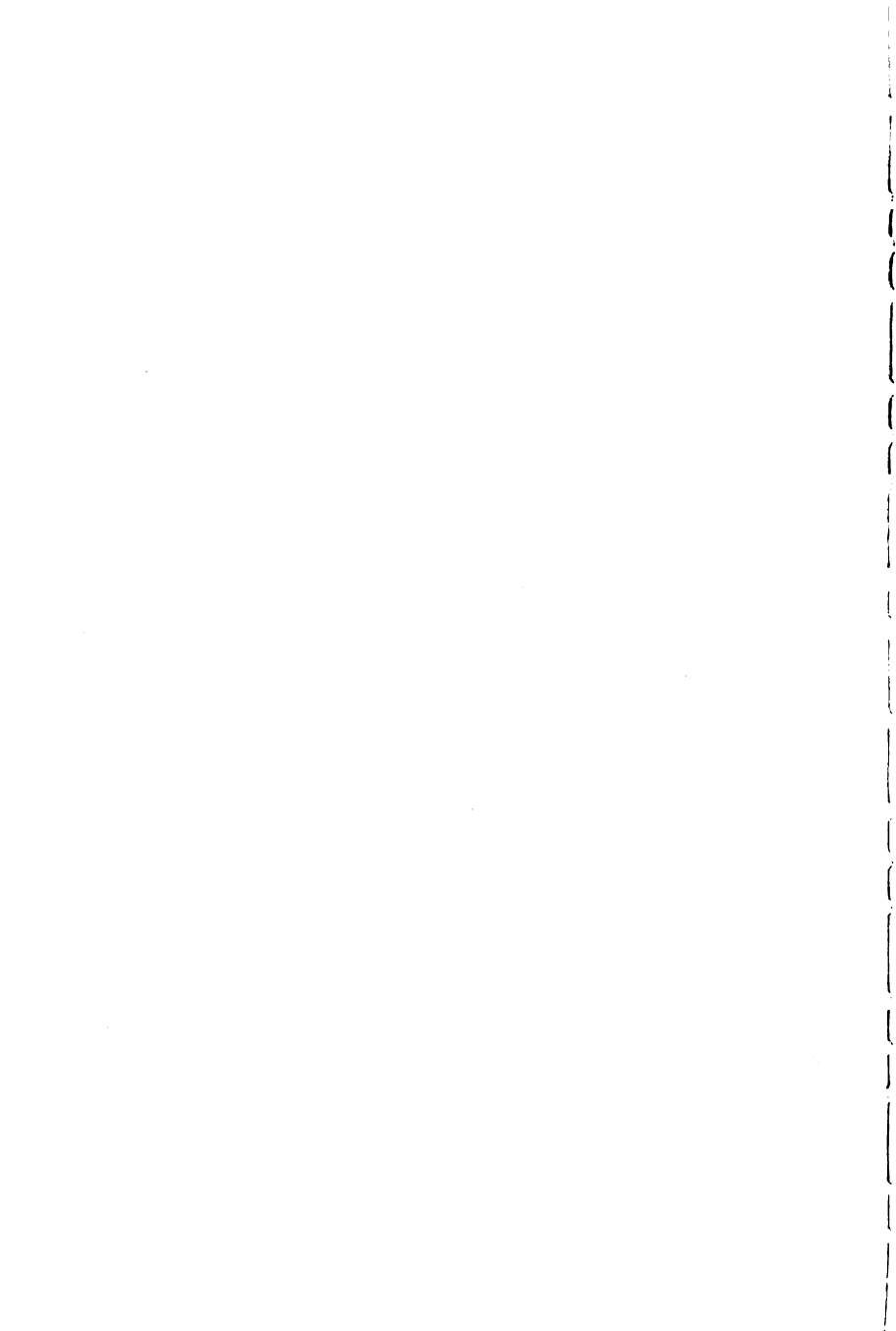
*Preface*

not feel that I have at all perfectly rendered this marvelously rich and varied movement of progressive education, which must appear in many different lights to many different people. What I have seen and rendered may not be what another person might see and render. Therefore I offer this book only as a humble contribution to the fast-growing field of writings on progressive education. If it can serve in any way to clarify the movement and to interpret and endear it to that great lay public whose verdict regarding education must ultimately prevail, it will have accomplished its purpose.

STANWOOD COBB

*Chevy Chase, Md.,  
March 5, 1928*

# THE NEW LEAVEN.



## PART I: LOOKING AT THE PROBLEM

### CHAPTER I

#### THE PARENT TAKES A HAND IN EDUCATION

*"I admire the courage with which advocates of progressive schools and colleges are to-day attacking their formidable problems. I admire also their persistence and their inventiveness. I believe that these pioneers are acting on principles which alone can make education in the United States the firm support of political and industrial freedom, and the true safeguard of democracy."*

CHARLES W. ELIOT.

**C**OME out and see my two boys and let me show you how I am educating them—or rather, how I am helping them to educate themselves."

I went out to my friend's house, a charming home in Brookline, Mass., with lawns, gardens, and stable remade into workshop and gymnasium. One boy was at work in the garden. The other was in the school-room finishing his journal. Twelve years and fourteen years old respectively, these boys had never been to school except to join in athletic sports at a neighboring school certain hours each afternoon.

"I cannot entrust them to any school," my friend said. "The drill and routine of the ordinary school would not only fail to help them but would injure them, according to my opinion. I prefer to plan

their education along lines which I think really developmental, and secure a tutor to help me carry out my educational program."

These boys are joint authors of several books of travel. When they take an extended automobile trip, they keep a diary and later write it up in the form of an illustrated travelogue which is bound in book form.

"Where do you find all this information about the places visited?" I asked them.

"From Dad's handbook," they said and showed me how in the handbook of their publisher father they hunted up material about each city visited.

Even more significant than their books of travel in this country was the record of their travels last year in southern Europe, illustrated with snapshots and with pictures cut out of tourist publicity material.

These boys—with their charming manners, their thorough earnestness and naïveté, their desire for knowledge and their habits of personal application—are indeed, I thought, educated in a remarkable sense. It would take a rare school, and one of a new type, to have done as much for them.

A few months ago I received a telephone call from the New Willard. "This is Mr. A—— from Allentown, Penna. I have read with great interest your article on the failure of the secondary school and should like very much to consult with you regarding my three children, whom I have been educating at home. Can you come down and have lunch with us?"

I found this gentleman and his wife all on fire



concerning the subject of education. They had been educating their three children at home with the aid of a resident tutor. Original methods had been used with the children to develop initiative, creativity, individuality. Now they were getting to be of an age when they should go away to school. But what boarding school could be found which would successfully continue this creative method with the children? That was the problem. And I could offer no satisfactory solution to it, the current system of education being what it is.

A New England mother who has been educating her son at home in preference to any neighboring school writes to *Progressive Education* the following query:

"In home work with one student there is the opportunity to treat education as a part of life and not as something to get through with and joyfully abandon at graduation. There is time to create an atmosphere of freedom, to develop initiative to the full and discover the resources of mind, to teach a child to think straight and reason for himself. Apart from reducing the elementary education to its simplest principles, my time has been spent in training character and the reasoning faculty and initiative. Three months of a daily lesson in reading at the age of eight enabled my son to read anything and everything. At eleven he had a term of Greek which he thoroughly enjoyed and found easy. He does creditable work in the various mediums of art and handicraft which he seems to have developed naturally, and which I believe possible for every child similarly treated.

"My son is now fourteen and will enter a regular school; his mind is more mature than boys of his age; he is not a prodigy (Heaven be praised) but simply equipped with mind and hands developed and goes out with sterling character. (What will the regular school do to him? Will his faculties be cramped or given scope for further development? Will his discrimination be lost, and how much of my special work will be counteracted?")

This same type of problem faces innumerable parents, who, realizing a deficiency of creativeness and an overemphasis on drill and routine in the schools, hesitate to commit their children to such a process of standardization; yet find the home tutorial system also an imperfect solution of their problem because of social and other reasons. What they really want is a new type of school which shall be elastic enough in its program to admit of individual differences; which shall emphasize and aid the development of initiative; and which shall make of education the joyous and inspirational process that it really and in essence is.

Lay dissatisfaction with current methods of education is so widespread as to represent virtually a revolt of the intelligent parenthood of the nation against the general concept of education as inherited from the past and applied to the present. These parents are wondering if education has failed to keep up with life. They feel that the material and cultural environment of the child to-day is far different from what it was a generation or two ago, and equally changed are the demands which life will make upon the child.

They feel that a large proportion, at least, of the children of to-day—due to the tremendously increased complexity and intensity of this changed environment, or to other less explicable causes—are quite different in type from the children of yesterday. They are more sensitive in their nervous organization; more febrile and intuitive; more quickly comprehending and receptive; more inclined and adapted to mastery of the power-machinery which has transformed our civilization; and less interested in abstract forms and in book-learning which is unrelated to life. *Quick to learn, impatient of tiresome repetitions, totally uninterested in the pedantry of their forebears,—these children neither need nor profit by the old-fashioned method of learning-by-rote.*

Says Nina Wilcox Putnam, in a humorously trenchant satire on "What They Don't Learn in School": "Most education-methods was invented before any of the modern inventions, like autos, telephones, radios, moving-pictures, aeroplanes and President Coolidge, so where do they apply, anyways? Why don't all them scientific things have a bigger place in the schools, anyhow? I claim that the best geography book in the world is a good automobile road map. And the best way to learn it, is to use it. You could teach more history in twenty minutes with a moving-picture, than you could in two years with a book full of dry dates. I personally myself have forgotten pretty near everything I learned in school. And why? Because it mostly had nothing whatsoever to do with the life I led when I got out of school."

THE fairly recent coming into parenthood and public activity of a great number of college-bred women has created a clientele for the schools which is very different from the old-time clientele. These women, as parents, are capable of analyses, of discriminations, of judgments concerning the education of their children. They are even capable of formulating definite methods and goals.

These intelligent, enlightened mothers are constantly studying the, to them, all important subject of child guidance. They belong to, and read the literature of, the Child Study Association, the Progressive Education Association, the Association of University Women or other kindred organizations, which have recently sprung up in answer to the demand of the modern parent for a better understanding of what education is and what it may become. They subscribe to educational magazines for the lay person, such as *Children* and *Progressive Education*. They devour in the literary and popular magazines articles criticizing existing educational methods or describing new ways of approach to the development of the child. They buy the latest books for the lay reader on education. They visit the schools their children attend. They pass judgment upon the teachers and the methods. They study carefully the reaction of their children to the educational process, watching for any unfavorable symptoms.

In a word, the modern parent is becoming an interested and intelligent partner with the professional educator in the training of her child. And the modern educator welcomes this partnership, so preg-

nant with possibilities for the further perfecting of education.

It is, indeed, of the utmost importance that the parent should understand something about this process of education, just as it is important that the parent should understand something about the physical development and needs of its child. The job of parenthood is one fraught with many responsibilities which should not and can not safely be delegated. The trend of education in any age is after all what parents desire it to be. It is the expression of their intelligent vision, or of their lack of vision. In order to have the best education possible, we must have the best parents possible; parents with an intelligently conscious purpose toward their children, a purpose which includes the whole educational process, physical, mental, social, and spiritual.

It is because progressive parents exist to-day that progressive education has come into being. These modern-minded parents, not content with advocating new principles of education, are joining together and actually founding schools in various parts of the country in order that their children may have the desired type of education. The story of these coöperative, progressive country day schools is most interesting. Many of them have started in a very simple way and worked up gradually to a larger success. Others have been so well organized financially as to be able to start off with an admirably situated and extensive site of land, with a group of buildings exemplifying the most progressive school architecture, and with sufficient wealth in the co-operating body of parents to provide generously for running expenses and to meet any deficits. These

schools are run not with aim to profit but to give as perfect a type of education as can be devised and carried out. Charles W. Eliot said in 1924: "*The progressive schools are increasing rapidly in number and in influence, and the educational public is becoming more and more awake to their merits. They are to be the schools of the future in both America and Europe.*"

But the progressive movement is in no wise limited to the establishment of private schools. It is also permeating the public schools, and in due time the whole vast system of this country will feel the impetus of this remarkable movement. This will be, however, only as parents in large numbers hold advanced and liberal views of education. Therefore, what is most needed is the educational enlightenment of the parent.

## 3

The pioneer of this progressive movement in education in this country was Francis W. Parker who, as director of the Cook County Normal School of Chicago, worked out, put into practice, and taught to his teachers a theory of education along the lines which Pestalozzi and Froebel had developed, of making the native endowment of the child rather than the curriculum the center of attention on the part of the educator.

In his *Talks on Pedagogics*, published in 1894, he asks, "What is the being to be educated? What is the child? It is the central problem of the universe. The child is the climax and culmination of all God's creations. It is a question for you and for me and for

the teachers of the present and future to answer; and still it will forever remain the unanswered question. We should study the child as we study all phenomena, by its actions and by its tendency to act."

Parker had a deep love for children which enabled him to understand their essential nature; he saw the child as a living soul with potentialities waiting to be developed under the leadership and guidance of the right kind of teacher. This tendency to approach the child with reverence, to deem it worthy of study, to raise the understanding of child-nature to a greater importance than the knowledge of subject matter,—characterizes all of the progressive educators of to-day.

Parker in studying the child came to the conclusion that the child is normally an active being and that its education should be based on its need for activity and on its natural curiosity and spirit of investigation. "There never was such a thing as a lazy child born on earth," he says. "Childhood is full of activities of every kind stimulated by external energies and shaped by external power. The child experiments continually until it gains its end."

How fortunate it was that this great educator and idealist found in Mrs. Emmons Blaine an admirer with sufficient means and sufficient impulse to organize a school for the carrying out of his ideas. Begun in 1901, the Francis W. Parker School of Chicago has had an honored history; not only has it given a more ideal education to hundreds of boys and girls, many of whom have had brilliant careers and all of whom have done credit to their Alma Mater, but it has attracted for years visitors from every part of this country and from abroad and it

has led to the organizing of other schools carrying out similar methods.

In summing up the work and ideas of Francis W. Parker it may be said that it was his great love for the child, as was the case with Pestalozzi and Froebel, which gave him the clew to child nature and enabled him to work out principles according to which the school was to be adjusted to the child rather than the child to the school. Parker was in this respect the forerunner of a new age for the child. To-day the child is coming into its own. Parents and teachers are seeing a new vision. There is a remarkable respect for the child to-day, for its innate powers and its ability to develop itself along the lines of its own gifts and native endowments.

While Parker was working out his revolutionary educational principles at the Cook County Normal School, a brilliant and original young educator, head of the Department of Pedagogy and Philosophy at the University of Chicago, was formulating and putting into practice in a little experimental school a psychology and philosophy of education which has had such great influence upon the world as to designate its author "the father of the new education." This young man was John Dewey. His contribution to the science of education was two-fold. First, he held that since all that the human race has accomplished in knowledge of methods and in invention has been from practical occupational activity, activity programs in the education of children are of the greatest importance; and secondly, he emphasized the value, with children, of the exchange of ideas and experiences in a social medium. His book, *School and Society*, issued in 1899 gave expres-



sion to this new philosophy of education, based on the value of learning through doing, and emphasizing the social as well as the intellectual values necessary to education in a democracy. In 1902 Dewey was given the directorship, left vacant by the death of Francis W. Parker, of the Experimental School of the University of Chicago. In a little booklet issued at this time, *The Child and the Curriculum*, Dewey sets forth that educational principle of a psychological approach to the child which has subsequently become the keynote of the new education.

"The child is the starting-point, the center, and the end. His development, his growth, is the ideal. It alone furnishes the standard. To the growth of the child all studies are subservient; they are instruments valued as they serve the needs of growth. Personality, character, is more than subject-matter. Not knowledge or information, but self-realization, is the goal. "Literally, we must take our stand with the child and our departure from him. It is he and not the subject-matter which determines both the quality and quantity of learning.

"The only significant method is the method of the mind as it reaches out and assimilates. Subject-matter is but spiritual food, possible nutritive material. The source of whatever is dead, mechanical, and formal in schools is found precisely in the subordination of the life and experience of the child to the curriculum. It is because of this that 'study' has become a synonym for what is irksome, and a lesson identical with a task."

In 1904, Dewey went to Columbia University from which vantage point he has ever since been the

fountain head of the new education. He has been called into consultation in countries abroad, notably China and Turkey, in the establishing of modern school systems in those backward countries. Of him Will Durant says in his *Story of Philosophy*, "All progressive teachers acknowledge his leadership, and there is hardly a school in America that has not felt his influence. Dewey first caught the eyes of the world by his work in the School of Education at Chicago. It was in those years that he revealed the resolute experimental bent of his thought, and now, thirty years later, his mind is still open to every new move in education, and his interest in the 'schools of to-morrow' never flags. We find him active everywhere in the task of remaking the schools of the world."

Marietta L. Johnson in her Organic School of Fairhope, Ala., founded in 1907; Eugene R. Smith in the Park School, Baltimore, founded in 1912; Arthur E. Morgan in the Moraine Park School, Dayton, Ohio, founded in 1917; and many other pioneer educators heading progressive schools—have been building on these foundations laid by Parker and Dewey, or on similar foundations derived directly or indirectly from those great educational reformers, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel.

This is not the place for a catalogue résumé of the progressive schools, or for a complete history of this remarkable movement. Suffice it to say that there are dozens of schools scattered through the country which give this new kind of education, new and uncrystallized. Since this is a spontaneous movement, the result of many minds and temperaments,

it shows a diversity which runs all the way from conservative or moderate application to such out-and-out application of the principles of freedom and self-direction for the child as holds, for instance, the Organic School of Fairhope, Ala., or the Moughtan Modern School of Peekskill, N. Y.

4

WHAT is progressive education? Although much has been written about the subject, the available material treats rather of details than of the method as a whole. In fact, it is difficult adequately to describe progressive education, because it is the achievement of many people of varying temperaments, ideas, and practices. It would be difficult for any one person, no matter how keen his insight or how broad his view, to give a definition of this movement that would be both inclusive and exclusive.

In order to be authentic, an objective definition is needed, a collective and synthetic description, so to speak, on the part of these very educators who are making progressive education what it is. What do they see as the essential features of this movement? To what educational principles do they adhere? What, in their minds, constitutes progressive education?

These questions have been asked the leading progressive educators of the country, and their replies as to what points they consider most important and most characteristic in this educational reform have been analyzed and tabulated in the form of a weighted list. The following are the progressive

educators who kindly lent their assistance to this attempt, for the first time, objectively to formulate a description of progressive education:

Mrs. Ethel Dummer Mintzer, FRANCIS W. PARKER SCHOOL, San Diego, California; Mr. Angelo Patri, PUBLIC SCHOOL, No. 45, The Bronx, New York City; Miss Flora J. Cooke, FRANCIS W. PARKER SCHOOL, Chicago, Illinois; Mr. Eugene R. Smith and Miss Margaretta Voorhees, THE BEAVER COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL, Brookline, Massachusetts; Miss Katharine Taylor, SHADY HILL SCHOOL, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Dr. Otis Caldwell, LINCOLN SCHOOL OF TEACHERS COLLEGE, New York City; Mr. Francis M. Froelicher, OAK LANE COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Mr. Frank D. Slutz, MORAINÉ PARK SCHOOL, Dayton, Ohio; Miss Ethel C. Bratton, THE ETHICAL CULTURE SCHOOL, New York City; Miss Caroline Pratt, THE CITY AND COUNTRY SCHOOL, New York City; Miss Margaret Pollitzer, THE WALDEN SCHOOL, New York City; Mrs. Marie T. Harvey, WINNETKA SCHOOL, Winnetka, Illinois; Miss Lucia B. Morse, THE JUNIOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, Downers Grove, Illinois; Miss Nancy Philbrick, THE KEITH SCHOOL, Rockford, Illinois; Mr. Perry D. Smith, NORTH SHORE COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL, Winnetka, Illinois; Miss Faye Henley, THE ORCHARD SCHOOL, Indianapolis, Indiana; Miss Helen Ericson, SUNSET HILL SCHOOL, Kansas City, Missouri; Mr. Frank R. Page, UTICA COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL, New Hartford, New York; Mr. James H. Dick, MOHEGAN MODERN SCHOOL, Peekskill, New York; Miss Rachel Erwin, THE WINBROOK SCHOOL, White Plains, New York; Mr. Erwin Zavitz, ANTIOCH SCHOOL, Yellow Springs, Ohio; Mrs. Calvin B. Cady, THE MUSIC-EDUCATION SCHOOL, Portland, Oregon; Miss Louisa F. Palmer, HANAHOUOLI SCHOOL, Honolulu, Hawaii; Mrs. Marietta L. Johnson, THE ORGANIC SCHOOL, Fairhope, Alabama; Mr. Edward Yeomans, THE OJAI VALLEY SCHOOL, Ojai, California; Miss Cora L. Williams, THE CORA L. WILLIAMS INSTITUTE FOR CREATIVE EDUCATION, Berkeley, California; Mr.

Carl Churchill, THE UNGUOWA SCHOOL, Bridgeport, Connecticut; Miss Euphrosyne Langley, THE EDGEWOOD SCHOOL, Greenwich, Connecticut; Mr. Burton T. Fowler, THE TOWER HILL SCHOOL, Wilmington, Delaware; Mr. Wilford M. Aiken, THE JOHN BURROUGHS SCHOOL, St. Louis, Missouri; Miss Mary H. Lewis, THE PARK SCHOOL, Cleveland, Ohio.

What do the contributions of these notable educators disclose? The following list of ten principles clearly emerge as their composite view of progressive education. Idiosyncrasies and extreme views do not appear here, the personal equation having been fairly well eliminated. These principles, as thus set forth, will give as catholic and, I feel, as convincing a description of progressive education, as it is impersonal and authentic.

## I. HEALTH MUST COME FIRST.

"If we have reverence for childhood," says Dewey, "our first specific rule is to make sure of a healthy bodily development." Progressive schools put health first. This means much more than physical examination and prescription for ills, or the use of athletic-field and gymnasium. It means that the school life from beginning to end should be adapted to the developing nervous system of the child. It means movable seats; more freedom of movement in the classroom; elimination of strain from academic work; abundant handwork and motor-activity of different kinds to balance the head work; avoidance of large classes with their overstimulation for small children; longer recesses and more use of the out-of-

doors; and close coöperation between school and home for detection and cure of pathological conditions, whether of body or of mind. In a word, the progressive educator feels it his first duty to provide for every child as splendid a foundation of health as possible upon which to build the ensuing career. If necessary, academic work is sacrificed for health, rather than health for academic work. And the competitive marking system, with all its strains of daily marks, of tests, of examinations, is abolished or greatly modified.

† II. LEARNING COMES FROM DOING: LET THE HANDS AID THE BRAIN.

The reason for the frequent failure of the present system of education to enlist the interest and zeal of youth is that it is too much confined to the acquirement of book-knowledge, and to the inculcation of habits of passivity and receptivity. Such educational methods were better adapted to an age when only the book-minded went on to higher education. To-day the mind of youth is dazzled with the vision of the machine-world about him, with all its marvelous inventions and possibilities. Since we are to-day giving universal education, and since a large proportion if not the majority of children are motor-active and love doing rather than reading, it follows that activity programs should be introduced so far as is possible into the school life and even into the study of academic subjects. There are many important values to handwork. Edward Yeomans, author of *Shackled Youth* and founder of the Ojai Valley School, California, even puts handwork first

in importance. John Dewey, creator of the educational philosophy "learning by doing," demonstrates the need of active work in the schoolroom in order to produce those qualities of earnestness, responsibility, initiative, creativeness, leadership, which the former home training of youth produced when the home was an industrial community. Where such methods are introduced into education, motor-active boys do not run away from school nor rebel against it. Rather do they find in and by means of such a school opportunity for adequate and satisfying expression of their gifts and proclivities.

III. THE CLASSROOM SHOULD BE FREED FROM UNNATURAL RESTRAINTS AND EXTERIOR COMPULSIONS TRANSFORMED INTO INTERIOR COMPULSIONS.

A large degree of freedom characterizes the life of the progressive school, both as regards the school work and the school discipline. In all these schools there is some form of self-government. The children feel the school to be theirs. They help make the rules which govern their own academic and social conduct. Hence they have an intense loyalty to their school and to the rules which govern it. Progressive education introduces into the school life the freedom and democracy which have long since been expressed in political life and which are now manifesting themselves in the home. This is no longer the age of autocracy. Children are best behaved when they learn to control themselves, and wish to control themselves because of their ideals of what is proper and necessary for the sake of the social group.

Children need not only freedom in matters of discipline, but also freedom of body, freedom of mind, and freedom of spirit. These freedoms the progressive school gives.

X IV. ADAPT EDUCATION TO THE DIFFERENCES OF THE INDIVIDUAL CHILD.

The progress of humanity consists in variation forward, not in repetition of a type. Those who insist on overstandardization are cutting at the very roots of the new race which is evolving. Progressive schools allow for differences in personality, encourage them, and provide a rich environment in which the native ability of each child may blossom and fructify. Children need more from their teachers than aid in the acquirement of book-knowledge or even of powers and skills. They need loving sympathy, understanding, and guidance such as to achieve those things for which Destiny has peculiarly endowed them. The overstandardization of our current school system is responsible for the fact that an enormous number of children do not feel at home in school; and these are apt to be the very children who have the most to contribute to human progress.

V. GROUP-CONSCIOUSNESS AND SOCIAL-MINDEDNESS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED IN CHILDREN: SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT AND CHARACTER TRAINING ARE AS IMPORTANT AS ACADEMIC PROGRESS.

Francis W. Parker, the pioneer of progressive education, emphasized strongly the need of social-mind-



edness and of the child working for the sake of the group rather than for the sake of his own advancement to eminence over others. Hence his abhorrence of competitive marks and rewards. Progressive educators since Parker have continued in this line of thought, feeling that in the world itself the competitive system is slowly being transformed for the better into a system of human coöperation. Therefore they seek to develop in children the social and coöperative rather than the aggressive, the competitive, and the exploiting qualities. The group-project is a very important means toward this end; in it achievement is by the group and for the sake of the group. The daily or weekly assembly in which individuals or groups contribute information or entertainment to the whole school is another important factor. In all the daily situations which arise in the life of the school the social necessities are dwelt upon. Children in progressive schools are generally characterized by grace and harmony of demeanor. They learn how to get along successfully with their fellows, a lesson which will be of the utmost importance in later life.

✦ VI. THE CHILD SHOULD HAVE ABUNDANT OPPORTUNITY FOR CREATIVE EXPRESSION.

Progressive educators stress in their list of needs for the child the opportunity for creative expression, because they believe education should be a process of expression rather than of impression—a natural unfolding of the powers and potentialities of the child. It is becoming apparent that the current system of educational standardization not only

allows little opportunity for the expression and development of individuality, but even inhibits it. Since the creative powers are of the utmost value to the race, progressive education considers their development one of the primary obligations of education. Not content with giving an important place in the curriculum to art-training of various kinds, the progressive schools are revolutionizing the teaching of all forms of art by encouraging creation first and allowing the technique to be developed in close relation to practice. Expression first, with form subservient to it. From this method is arising a productiveness on the part of children of those same exquisite values which characterized the Pre-Raphaelite art. Perhaps a generation of children thus trained in creativeness would bring a ferment which would ultimately eliminate the sense of drudgery from work, and substitute for the present patterns of industrialism something more creative and joyous.

VII. ENABLE THE CHILD TO ACQUIRE THOROUGH CONTROL OF THE TOOLS OF LEARNING RATHER THAN MERELY TO ACQUIRE FACTS.

Children do not need to become walking encyclopedias. Access to facts are at every hand, in libraries and in home encyclopedias. If children are trained in research methods, know how and where to find the facts they need, and have acquired the ability to gather and formulate the required information, they are possessed of something more valuable than an undigested mass of knowledge, even if this latter

can be successfully acquired. This creative method of education is both more valuable and more joyous to the child than the old routine method which made the child the slave to text-books.

VIII. INTRODUCE INTO ACADEMIC WORK THE METHOD OF CREATIVE EXPRESSION, SO THAT EDUCATION SHALL BE JOYOUS.

Not only is progressive education revolutionizing the teaching of art along more creative lines, but it is attempting the more difficult task of transforming in a similar manner the processes of academic work so as to introduce inspiration and creativeness as preliminary to the acquirement of technique by drill. When successfully carried out these methods eliminate the sense of drudgery from academic work and make it joyous. Children are not naturally lazy, say progressive educators. They will work hard where their own desires are being expressed, and accomplish marvels under such conditions. It is the prevailing situation in progressive schools that children actually enjoy their academic work, and consider attendance at school a privilege and joy.

IX. ABOLISH THE TYRANNY OF MARKS AND EXAMINATIONS.

Progressive schools do not entirely abolish marks and tests, but they use them in such a way as to eliminate strains and anxieties. Progressive educators as a rule use no marks in the classroom. They seek to abolish the evils of the competitive marking system—which is so apt to produce in brilliant chil-

dren self-consciousness, conceit, and selfishness; and in the slow-minded child a sense of failure, of inferiority, and of injustice (since marks often fail adequately to represent the intelligence and natural powers of the child). Children are encouraged to express themselves and to compete, not with other children, but with themselves to surpass their previous records and achievements. The elimination of the tyranny of marks also has an important bearing upon the health of the school child.

#### X. THE TEACHER SHOULD BE A LEADER AND GUIDE, NOT A TASKMASTER.

Plainly a new type of teacher is needed for progressive education, a teacher possessed of personality and culture and capable of awakening and developing the creative powers of the child. This means that the teacher should be of the artistic rather than of the bureaucratic temperament. There may seem to be a dearth of such teachers, but more of this creative kind would be available were educational methods more prevailingly of the creative type. Progressive schools are attracting gifted men and women to their field. Many a mother, formerly a highly successful school teacher, is reëntering the profession because of the appeal of progressive methods, often because she wants her own child educated by these methods. The statement is sometimes made that many of the values of progressive education are due to the gifted type of educator enlisted in this work. This may be true, but it does not detract from the merit of progressive education. It is rather an evidence that creative education attracts

creative people to its corps of workers. Only this kind of teacher is capable of giving progressive education.

5

IN these principles, as thus compiled, is presented to the world a new education which is not the conception of one single mind but the balanced and worked-out expression of a brilliantly creative group of educators who speak not from theory but from a practice and experience of years. One has only to observe the type of educator and of parent devoted to the new education to be convinced that they are preëminent in character and in discrimination; that what they see and believe and want in education, the whole world will see and believe and want within perhaps a generation.

Progressive education is not a system. It is not the projection of one personality upon the educational thought and procedure of his time, as have been most educational reforms. It is a spontaneous movement, springing up here and there, in Europe as well as in this country, in response to the demand, first subconscious but which is now fast becoming articulate, for a type of education better adapted to modern times and to the modern child. It is a revolt of parents as well as of educators against archaic forms which the new psychology is demonstrating to be unnatural to the child; and against the tyranny of a curriculum the content-value of which is as nothing in comparison with the actual development of the child in ways wholesome, inspiring, and natural.

Many educators have contributed their creative

genius to make progressive education what it is. And they are not resting content with what they have achieved. They are still pushing on to further frontiers, or they are giving their attention to better organizing a pioneer field. ¶ That progressive education has its shortcomings, its faults of commission and omission, the progressive educator would willingly acknowledge. For he is not seeking to establish dogmas and out of them create a water-tight system. He is rather intent on helping to expand the province of education to include the whole child, every phase of whose development must thus be studied and successfully provided for. This is a big task. No one educator can perform it. Nor do a few years suffice to perfect it. Progressive education is only a beginning. It points the way.

The movement is best comprehended by visiting the progressive schools and seeing their achievements. The results of such an educational system are amazing. Joyousness, sincerity, intellectual eagerness, creative powers, are some of its fruits for the child as it develops and unfolds under the guidance and care of the ideal teacher. We see what appears to be a new race evolving. The old self-consciousness, priggishness, puerility, artificial adoption of adult behavior before adult motives and powers are arrived at,—all these vanish and the child appears and stands out as itself, sincere, original, and creative.

PART II:  
PRINCIPLES OF THE NEW EDUCATION

CHAPTER II

HEALTH MUST COME FIRST

*"If we have reverence for childhood, our first specific rule is to make sure of a healthy bodily development."*

JOHN DEWEY

*MENS sana in corpore sano.* This age-long ideal of the development of the individual we all accept in theory, but do we sufficiently put it into practice in our educational procedure? Angelo Patri says, "School is wasted on a child who is not physically fit from his head to his heels." Of course, every school would claim that it regarded the health of the child as of the utmost importance and that it was taking every possible measure to safeguard that health. But is every school in reality doing its best to carry out this doctrine of healthy mind in healthy body?

Let us visit some of the schools of to-day. What do we find? Children brought in from roaming sunny fields and breathing open air—happy, care-free children starting at the age of six to frequent crowded schoolrooms, chained to desks from three to five hours a day; poor ventilation or good depending too much upon the whim of the room teacher; nervous strain in the classroom; stormy voice, perhaps, of teacher; crowded curriculum and study course to finish for the year; nervous attitude

of the teacher communicated to the children; short recesses with no real activity provided for the children who stroll about a desolate school yard chatting noisily, pushing each other for exercise, returning to the schoolroom again in all too brief a period; nervous haste in getting to school in the morning, lest one be tardy and spoil the school record; nervous haste again in getting to school after lunch; rigorous discipline applied to the confined child just taken in from the fields; and the strain of homework even after school is over,—is this a life calculated to maintain and improve the health of the child?

Since it is difficult to justly balance the claims of intellectual and physical development, we must in case of conflict give priority to one or the other. Progressive education says, in the case of the young child give priority to the health. Make sure of a healthy body at all cost. It is an educational crime to deprive the child of its natural dowry of good health. It is a sin of omission not to improve that health to the utmost and build for the child's future a foundation of sound, physical structure. Practical motives would dictate such a procedure apart from sentiment. Not only does the intellect fail to do its best under poor conditions of health, but character also suffers from the same cause. Laziness, lack of ambition, surliness, irritability, and still more serious faults of personality, frequently trace back to morphological, functional, or nervous troubles.

"If we are going to discipline our children aright," Kilpatrick says, "we shall wish for them, and bring it about as far as we can, that they have a happy wholesome infancy in which health is especially con-



sidered. As the children grow older we shall still wish for them happy childhood. We shall wish this childhood to be full of activity, gripping activity, challenging activity, varied activity. Happy childhood, filled with gripping, challenging, varied activities, under wise guidance, is almost certain to build the needed character."

As the school receives the child from its infancy, its first responsibility is to carry on that same procedure which in infancy is given due importance—the physical development and welfare. Whatever else is done, whatever else happens in the school, the child must be free to develop naturally, healthily, and normally. And this not by any *laissez faire* system, but by careful plan and educational procedure.

Let us not belittle the wide-spread attention now being given to the physical welfare of the pupils in all schools, both public and private. A splendid crusade is on foot for the health of the child, in which the public school is perhaps doing its best possible under present conditions. Free medical examination, if necessary, for certain defects that hamper healthy development; free clinical treatment when necessary, or, if there are sufficient family means, advice as to medical attention; health habits taught the child; periods of physical movement, rhythmic or calisthenic, interpenetrating the school day; more attention to play-grounds and play-ground equipment; provision for gymnasiums in modern public schools and even swimming-pools in some; mental hygiene duly considered; helpful work of visiting teachers in the homes,—all this is a worthy and helpful movement of much good.

Is there yet more that can be done? Progressive educators say yes, much more. And this is what they do. They build their schools on the outskirts of the city, in open fields, with plenty of space about them. They have long recesses with games provided for the children, space in which to play them, and plenty of apparatus in gymnasiums for rainy days. They have an all-day session so that a period is provided in the afternoons for athletics in which all, and not some, children participate. The school building is designed for health, the most perfect school architecture that the science of modern hygiene can provide as regards lighting, ventilation, sanitation, and easy access to the out-of-doors.

"Since the progressive creed emphasizes conditions that protect health," says *Progressive Education* in its issue devoted to school environment, "a progressive school building should be planned with consideration of all that affects the lighting and the air condition of its schoolrooms. Rooms need sun, but if the sun shines in the faces of the pupils or on their work, it becomes a danger to eyesight. Shadows cast by the sun shining from behind the pupils cause uneven lighting conditions, and sunny blackboards are often trying to the eyes."

Eugene R. Smith has given more attention, perhaps, than any other of the progressive educators to the hygienic requirements of school architecture. Before the Beaver Country Day School was built a series of carefully planned experiments were carried on to determine its proper orientation. By placing a model of a classroom on a testing table with a search-light sun adjustable in height, it was possible to determine the best orientations for lighting

at various times during the day and at various periods of the school year.

The Park School of Buffalo is an interesting type of the small unit school. It is made up of a series of bungalows, each designed to house two classes of approximately twenty-five children each. These bungalows are simply constructed, low and rambling, providing ample space for groups to carry on the varied experiences of their living. The large rooms are unplastered and free of all decoration, thus leaving scope for the children's own art expression. Huge windows to the south and east can be thrown open in warm weather, converting the bungalows into an open-air school. Adjoining each classroom is a workshop. The "Quiet Room," having its floor covered with battleship linoleum, is a place where the children gather for silent reading by the open fire or to play indoor games. Many doors open upon terraces or into the apple orchard, giving ready access to the out-of-doors.

Progressive educators greatly deprecate the rows of fixed desks which confine the average school child in a way that has deleterious results nervously and often physically. In all progressive schools the furniture is movable—either large tables about which the children gather or movable desks and chairs—so that the scenery can quickly be shifted from a study group to a rearrangement of furniture adapted to conferences, dramatizations, or activity programs.

Considerable freedom of movement is allowed the child. One visiting progressive schools will be struck by the way in which the children move about the schoolrooms without asking permission from the teacher. They are doing some research work, per-

haps. They pass to and fro, getting books in which to look up certain questions, conferring with fellow-students, securing material for handwork connected with the subject. The schoolroom has become a busy workshop in which the sense of restraint, of formality, of imprisonment is entirely banished.

During the working-out of a schoolroom project there is not only this freedom of movement; there is also a social freedom and opportunity to confer with the fellow-students, to compare work, to converse,—provided that this social activity does not interfere with the work going on in the room. There is a health-giving quality in the satisfactions of the social instincts of children during the school day.

It is said that Ole Bull in an excess of nervousness from sitting in school would at times suddenly jump out from an open window and run wild in the fields. The longing for the open fields and sunshine and fresh air in seasons of clement weather—in the cool and golden autumn or in the tender, silver days of spring—it seems a tragedy to utterly frustrate that in the child! True, the business of education must go on, life must be prepared for; but cannot the love of nature, the joy-giving quality of nature, be enjoyed and taken advantage of in this educational process? Progressive educators build their schools so that there is easy access to the out-of-doors. Some of them have semi-open-air classrooms. In clement weather a class often moves out of doors, under the trees or into the sunshine as desired.

✕ Conservative educators may query as to whether attention wanders under such circumstances, when skies are blue, trees in leaf, birds singing upon their

boughs, and squirrels darting here and there. One might answer: firstly, that it is not a great loss educationally if the attention does wander a bit, a certain margin of scholastic efficiency being duly sacrificable to the charm of nature; and secondly, that the children of progressive schools become early trained in the art of concentration under free conditions.

Not only do the children frequently carry on their school work out of doors, but they also have open-air excursions for educational purposes. And many of the school projects take the children out of doors,—gardening, tending to pets, carpentry and painting at times. Thus progressive schools do not at all seem to the children who attend them to be in the nature of a prison shutting them in from the beauty and the health of nature.

Movement and physical activity are things all children crave. The large proportion of the program in progressive schools given to handwork (see Chapter III) is of direct benefit to the health of the child. Many other activity features occur in projects, in games, and in rhythmic. Here and abroad sedentary book-work is yielding ground to a form of education which allows and even requires movement.

Now there can be no question but what this type of school which gives to children opportunity for the expression of their need of activity and movement is better for the health of the child, other things being equal, than the type of school which requires children to sit at desks all day, studying or reciting. The French schools are an example of the

latter type. They develop the intellect, but at a price to health and balance of personality which the Anglo-Saxon, and rightly so, is unwilling to pay.

One of the greatest modern advances in education is in this point of making the school a place of less nervous strain. In *Education Moves Ahead*, Eugene R. Smith says: "There seems no question that in the past many children have suffered a definite setback during the school months. Despite the various theories of why children grow at one time of the year and fail to gain at another, there are enough definite cases where gain has at once followed removal from school or transfer to a school of a different type, to prove that the nervous condition of a child under strain does affect growth and generally injure physical condition. The child who is continually repressed, who is always kept quiet, who is never allowed to move, is affected adversely. A boy about twelve years old sat by the school window and against orders looked out at the passers-by. When he reached home he said to his mother, 'When I saw a woman going by I thought to myself, "What would you do if you were made to sit in a seat all day long and never were allowed to move? I don't believe you could do it."' And the boy was right. That children cannot do it with impunity has been shown by tests that found nervous reaction in most children after very short periods of enforced quiet. On the other hand, a happy school-child, enjoying reasonable freedom, enthusiastic over the work and play of the day, is in the best possible environment in which to grow and become strong."

## 2

IT is the balanced development of the child that progressive education aims at. The book-worm, the introvert, the sickly child, if such enter progressive schools, are brought to a more healthy balance of personality and physique. And where the progressive school gets the child young, it makes full use of its opportunity to develop a balanced human being. No side of the child's nature, no phase of its growth and development, fall outside the province and responsibility of the modern educator, who has the young child in a most formative period for the greater part of its waking day. Working closely with parent and physician the progressive educator plays the part, not of mental disciplinarian only, but of a builder of personality in its broadest sense.

Says Dr. Ilse Forest: "The progressive type of kindergarten has developed along the lines of a democratic philosophy of education, and is making use of the findings of modern psychology, psychiatry, and hygiene concerning the nature and needs of pre-school children. The modern kindergarten is thus interested in the all-round development of the child. It aims to aid this complete development by providing activities suited to the child's physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs. Modern kindergarten curricula and methods of recording progress show that each of these factors in development—the physical, the social, the emotional, and the intellectual—is given due weight."

In the matter of reading, many progressive educators consider it best to postpone this artificial use of the eyes, with its frequent strains—this late and

difficult art of the human race—until the eighth year or even later. And after the art of reading has been acquired, they try to divert the book-minded child from too great a devotion to his idols. Much of his school time must be given to activity programs, to crafts, to rhythemics, and dramatics. Athletics are for all children, and cannot be avoided by the introvert. In these ways progressive education tries to safeguard the present and future health of that type of child whose love for books is a mania as possessive as the thirst for hashish is to the Oriental and largely for the same reason,—that it conducts into a world of dreams, a world out of time and out of space. Let all children learn the way to this magic world of books—but let none frequent it too often and too passionately, lest rosy cheeks and dimply laughter be lost together with heartiness in sports and health and balanced soul.

Children are sensitively organized. Emotional and psychic factors enter largely into health conditions with them. The classroom environment should be charming in appearance, tranquil, harmonious, and happy. The teacher needs to be of cultured personality, sweet-voiced, smiling. The group needs to be small—not over twenty. In such an atmosphere of love and sympathy and harmony a child will develop at its best.

Eugene R. Smith told in one of his lectures of a great improvement of two children, sisters, who came into his school. On the first day of attendance, they went home and eagerly cried out, "Oh, mother, what do you think? The teacher didn't shout at the children once the whole day!" From being nervous, anemic children, they developed into normal, poised



children; gaining weight, gaining joyousness, and greatly improving in health. Similar instances could be cited in other progressive schools.

There is a close connection between health and the suppressions that occur under tyrannical rule. Children and wife of an arbitrary, forceful, tyrannic man often are pale and anemic. And the converse is true, that freedom is health-giving. The free atmosphere of a progressive school is as conducive to the expansion of physical well-being as it is to the growth of the child's spirit.

## 3

ONE of the chief causes of nervous wear in school, and consequent tendency to ill-health and even to breakdowns—namely, marks and examinations—is eliminated in progressive schools. The nervous strains and fears which come to many children because of low marks, and of repeated failures before their classmates, are well known to all who study children. This subject of marks will be treated in full in a later chapter. Some concrete instances showing the relation of health to marks may be of advantage, however, at this point.

The writer himself, at the beginning of his teaching career, was brought face to face with this emotional problem of youth when he was teaching at Robert College, Constantinople. A Russian Jew who had done poor work in Latin through the year, and had not kept his own promise to be tutored on condition that he be allowed to go on the second semester after failing the first semester work, now at the end of the school year had come two points

below the pass-mark, obtaining by his examination an average for the semester work of 48 per cent instead of 50 per cent.

Anxiously he came to my room after the examinations had been marked, inquiring his standing. I told him he had not passed. He asked his mark. I told him. He asked if I could not pass him and let him try the senior year. I discussed with him his work for the year, confronting him with his repeated failures to make good and told him I could not pass him.

The youth grew pale and said, "Mr. Cobb, life is nothing to me if I fail this year. An uncle is putting me through college. I have flunked physics, and now if I flunk Latin I shall have to repeat the year. My uncle would not let me come back to college. My career would be ruined. I have a revolver in my room, sir, and if I do not pass, I shall shoot myself."

What was I to do? His threat was perhaps a mere bluff—very probably was. Yet, I knew that he was an extremely nervous youth, subject to temporary attacks of poor health. I knew the tendency of European youths to suicide on account of their studies. I knew that two points stood between him and security. Should I stand for officialdom or for humanity?

Perhaps it was the memory of a kind professor in my own college days who winked at red tape when I was in too poor health to do the necessary final honors in his subject, urging me for the sake of my health to abandon that work and then surprising me at Commencement by assigning the unearned honors—yes, I am sure it was the memory of his

humanity toward me that came at this moment to weigh down the scales in favor of this Jewish youth.

"Very well," I said, "I will pass you." He thanked me effusively. All Orientals are effusive in their thanks whether sincere or not. The real confirmation of my decision, however, came to me at the end of the ensuing year, when I had the pleasure of seeing him graduate successfully from Robert College, healthy, happy, facing his career untrammelled. Then and ever after, I have seen in my mind those two points as a symbol of the injury we do to youth. Who can weigh in the balance those two points between 48 per cent and 50 per cent as equal in importance to health, happiness, and career?

At this same college was an Armenian youth, a most earnest student whose scholarship allowance was rated according to his marks. I noticed that, as the year went on, he did poorer and poorer work in Latin—work that was hectic and illogical and becoming of a grade below passing. I was puzzled because I knew he was an intelligent, earnest, and hard-working student. I called him to my room and inquired about his method of preparation. He told me that he studied Latin two hours a day. Then, I saw the reason for his failure. He was studying too much and too anxiously. He was a boy inclined to tuberculosis. I was more anxious about his health than I was about his marks which would determine his scholarship for him.

"Look here," I said to him, "you are studying much too hard. You are doing poor work because you are overanxious and overworking. This is what I advise. Forget marks. Let them go to blazes. Don't worry about your work. Get out and play

more. I believe your marks will improve if you will do this."

He followed my advice and to my astonishment—for I had not as much faith in my advice as events proved—his marks did improve with much less study. He got over this crisis of worry and overwork and struck a pace which enabled him to do good work without overworking. Had I not entered into the situation, however, that boy was certainly on the swift road to tuberculosis and death.

One more instance of this cruel aspect of marks. At a time when I was doing some tutoring in my native town, I was called into consultation in a case of a widow with two girls and with no means to provide for tutoring. The case of the younger girl, fourteen, was so pathetic that I entered in to see what I could do. She was failing badly in history, yet she was studying two hours every day on it. She was beginning to have nervous spells on account of this repeated failure, was crying at home and becoming despondent. Tuberculosis ran in the family. She was in a very fair way to swift destruction, and all on account of marks in school.

A little investigation disclosed a situation which would be amusing, were it not hinging upon such tragic consequences. The teacher in history was a young college graduate who was trying to carry out with her students a research method such as she had been using in her graduate work. Instead of assigning certain pages in a history she was giving them topics to make research about and to report on, without giving them sufficient reference and guidance. This girl had difficulty in finding material about the subjects given. I found it also difficult to

find material on the topics assigned until, by accident, I came across the very history, not a usual one, from which the teacher was taking her assignments. Then, the trick was done. I had the girl get a copy of this history and all she needed to do was to read it in preparation for her lesson, because the teacher was drawing all of her topics from this book to which the children had no access. This immature teacher had not at all investigated the difficulty of the work she was assigning, work which was really like asking the children to make bricks without straw.

## 4

WHAT is to be our goal in education? Is it to produce by hot-house growth the book-student with frazzled nerves and undermined vitality? Is not the goal of our educational process to-day still too much that of the final successful passing of examinations? Does not this severe and terrifying ordeal create fear waves down into the secondary school and even into the elementary school? Marks, marks, marks! Examinations, examinations, examinations! Reports, reports, reports! And the final diplomas or lack of them! Is that an accurate epitome of education?

It is one of the chief aims of progressive education to release the child from the strain inherent in such a system. Of what use is mental training if the process is injurious to the health, vitality, and subsequent life energy of the individual? Academic progress should be subordinated to and conditioned upon health needs. The aim of education should be the normal development of the individual. *Parents*

*and physicians make every effort, during the pre-school days of the child, to give it as healthy a physical development as modern scientific care can make possible. This healthy physical foundation should not, upon entrance into a school system, be impaired by the process of education.*

The educator of to-day takes on a new responsibility. He must watch the health of the children under his care and note faulty situations there as keenly as he does in the development of the child's intellect. He must work, enlisting the coöperation of the parents, as earnestly to overcome physical or nervous abnormalities as he does to overcome intellectual defects. This motto should be emblazoned on the walls of all the schoolrooms of the world:  
**HEALTH MUST COME FIRST.**

## CHAPTER III

### THESE ACTIVE CHILDREN

*"We are beginning to believe that the main business of an elementary school is handwork, that upon that as a core you may properly wrap your 'windings,'—reading, writing, arithmetic, history, geography, and get a character much more integral and strong, better nerves, better judgment, better poise."*

EDWARD YEOMANS.

**A** BOY from one of the best New York families went through the course of his education at Groton and at Yale with very poor academic record. At Groton the masters frankly despaired of him. "When subjected to the best that New England education had to offer," says *The New Yorker* of him, "this youth merely responded by devoting his spare moments to a monkey-wrench and a lot of greasy gadgets. One of the Greek masters at Groton wrote this jingle about him:

When Charlie Lawrence seems to work  
With singular devotion  
It's not his Latin nor his Greek;  
Oh, no—he's got a notion.  
He's busy with the last details  
For crossing land and ocean  
On his new patent flying car  
Run by perpetual motion!

Little did the derisive teacher realize how near his satire was to prophecy. Thirty-one years later transatlantic flights by Lindbergh and Chamberlin and Byrd were to depend upon the Whirlwind motor which this impossible pupil later invented."

+ "Education," says Angelo Patri, "does not lie in text-books. A great part of it is to be found outside of them and can never be bound inside their covers. The great educational forces are people and experiences and the relations between them, and the best way for a child to master these forces is through his hands. Hands have lifted men from the foot-beaten trail to the high-powered motor road. Hands have given us all we have. Hands have made us secure of what little we know of this world."

In this mechano-industrial age of ours, and especially in America, it is the mastery of our outer environment and of these wonderful revolutionizing power-tools creating new civilization-modes,—it is this that appeals most to our youth. How can even the most rosily optimistic humanist expect the *Sir Roger de Coverley Papers*, for instance, to compete for boyish interest with the details and progress of the automobile, the radio, the aeroplane? Those politely polished essays were written to entertain people of leisure in a civilization which had no automobiles, no radios, no aeroplanes, and but little reading matter. Their (the essays') quaint meanderings belong to an age which has sunk into oblivion. Shall we try to resurrect from that oblivion a past form of culture designed for leisure, and seek by means of it to avert the growing boy from his absorbing interest in things of the present and future? And



shall we bemoan the fact that Latin and Greek must struggle for existence in the present curriculum?

*It is the glory of America to have achieved the first civilization in the history of the world founded upon universal work.* There may be privileged classes, but there is no leisure class of power in the United States. By the toil of their hands our pioneer ancestors wrought out a civilization from the wilderness. And that original impulse has not died out. Ideals of work, of constructive enterprise, fill the intellectual atmosphere of the new world and electrify thought into action. It is no wonder that our boys and girls are chiefly motor-active. For them a new type of schooling must be designed—in progressive schools is being designed—which shall give due weight to the value of manual work and other forms of activity in that process of the development of intelligence and its trained power of application to environment which we call education.

The need of manual work in plenty, to balance the more abstract training of the intelligence through book-learning, pertains to all children. But especially needed is such a kind of education for the great number of motor-active boys and girls now going on through the grammar grades and through high school. The complexion of our secondary education group is wholly altered from the type in vogue a generation ago, when higher education was a privilege sought chiefly by children with a high potentiality for abstract culture. We can not in any way turn back this tide of human desire which is flooding our high schools and colleges. Nor should we wish to. It is quite the most magnificent educational spectacle of the ages.

What then, shall we do about it? Wisdom and sanity would suggest the adaption of education to the nature and needs of those seeking it. In such adaptation, one of the most important factors is opportunity for expression and cultivation of the intellect in terms of activity and handwork.

Says John L. Stenquist, director of Educational Research of the public schools of Baltimore: "There is more than a single kind of intelligence. The boy who can start a balking automobile, fly an aeroplane, or devise a new and better machine for doing work that formerly was drudgery certainly displays an ability that is of great importance in the world of to-day and merits being called intelligent. Mechanical genius has revolutionized modern life. Every moment of present-day civilization is tremendously influenced directly or indirectly by the products of mechanical ability. The enormous increase in enrollment has brought in many pupils who are mechanically minded rather than academically minded. Therefore, schools are giving more and more attention to discovering and developing mechanical aptitude among girls and boys.'

## 2

" THE hands are, indeed, an important avenue of sensation to the brain and mark the beginning of the use of the power of analysis in the animal world. The only animals which use the hand are those of the same genus as man, the Primates, and they approximate the intelligence of the lower races of man. By means of the hand, we can examine objects in a way that would otherwise be impossible. We can

weigh, feel texture, balance, push, manipulate in various ways. Not until the hand was freely used could the hurling of stones and the shooting of arrows become possible,—a power which projected defense and offense to a distance from man and made him the ruler of the animal world. An even more important step in the use of the hand came when man commenced to mold objects to his need. Then began the arts of civilization. Later still in the course of evolution, the skilled use of the hands, guided by the analytical and inventive powers of the intellect, enabled man to assert his power over inanimate nature and to conquer the earth, the air, the sea.

The child, recapitulating the history of the race, begins his mental development largely by the use of the hands. In infancy he shows a great proclivity to handle everything, seeking thus to satisfy his desire for a full stream of sensation flowing to him from the outer world. As infancy is passed and there comes the coördination sufficient for manipulating materials, the child finds great enjoyment and educational gain in molding, cutting, sawing, and hammering, wielding the paint brush, arranging blocks and other articles, fastening and unfastening things, becoming a builder, a constructor. Education is, at this point, largely a matter of expression through the hands.

“Every normal child,” says Satis Coleman, “has the healthy, natural desire to make things; and his mind is never so active as when his hands are doing a piece of constructive work that interests him. Every strip sawed to the right length and glued where it belongs, every surface sand-papered, gives

the child a realization of something accomplished."

John Dewey has introduced into the philosophy of education the idea of "learning by doing." Just let us see how much education a child can get by the aid of his hands. The child of the modern school in planned activities recapitulates the history of the race. By making with his hands, for instance, different types of shelter in miniature form he is learning in a concrete and fascinating way the story of the evolution of the home. Then he models little dishes, little bowls of clay, and makes out of wood in his childish imperfect way tables and benches to complete the equipment necessary for a primitive meal. He learns to weave little rugs on a simple type of loom such as his primitive ancestors used. He digs up the soil, plants seeds and watches them grow to fruition. He grinds corn and wheat kernels into flour, and cooks simple unleavened cakes. He makes sandals and primitive shepherd costumes, and wears them in dramatizing the life of ancient man. Later on, perhaps, he constructs viking ships and sails the wide seas in imagination, following the "whale paths" of our lusty forebears. Then he turns to the finer arts of civilization, reconstructs Greek temples and the life of Athens and of Rome. Then the Middle Ages with its castles, its marvelous cathedrals, its guild-life, lives for him in a concrete form created by the work of his own hands and guiding mind. Now he becomes a Pilgrim, landing on a rock-bound coast, building stockades, fighting the Indians whose habits and culture he has perhaps previously reconstructed as a younger child. But adolescence is at hand, and the imaginative world of the past yields in interest to the fascinating realities

of the present—the principles of the machine, the automobile, the radio, the aeroplane. And so, on and on. There is no limit to the educative value of handwork in its ability to correlate an appreciation of life-needs with a knowledge of human ingenuity in satisfying them.

The progressive schools in this country in general adapt their handwork to the pattern set forth by Dewey. On entering a typical progressive school we would find such activity going on. The schoolroom may have become, for the time being, a busy workshop. An Indian village is being constructed. There is movement, interest, life. No child is passive or static. So great is the concentration that our entrance into the room is unnoticed. As we circulate about among the children, it may be hard even to get verbal response to our questions from this child and that, so intent is he upon his task. There is the quiet orderly passing to and fro of children getting equipment, referring to some source book, going to confer with another child. The schoolroom is certainly not such as we had pictured school to be. It is not a group of children sitting at fixed desks, immobile, silent, thumbing detested text-books.

Is not this change in the nature of the school a revolution as great as "that introduced by Copernicus, when the astronomical center shifted from the earth to the sun"?

To facilitate this active work of the children, some of the progressive schools have little workshops opening out from each schoolroom, others have work-benches along one wall of the classroom, so that the child may carry immediately the idea into its concrete expression. Handwork is thus not rele-

gated to certain hours in the curriculum and carried on only in a craft-shop, but it interpenetrates the whole work and life of the school. At a moment's notice a class, or an individual, may shift from book to work-bench; from abstract thought to its expression in objective form. Along with these activities go correlated work in reading, in writing, and in arithmetic.\*

The proportion of active work to academic work in the various progressive schools varies. Edward Yeomans says of handwork at his Ojai Valley School, "We are beginning to believe here that the main business of an elementary school is handwork, that upon that as a core you may properly wrap your 'windings,'—reading, writing, arithmetic, history, geography (with all the handwork involved in these when properly taught), and get a character much more integral and strong, better nerves, better judgment, better poise."

It is in the primary grades chiefly that the children work out their recapitulation of civilization. The amount and nature of the handwork in grades above the primary is the expression of the genius of the individual teacher and of the group she has to work with. Through all the grades, on up through the secondary school, however, go in some measure activities correlated with bookwork, illuminating and inspiring the acquisition of knowledge.†

\* Several public school systems have introduced activity programs, with suitable equipment, into all their primary grades; most notable of which are Denver, Kalamazoo, and San Francisco. The territory of Hawaii is planning to inaugurate this method in all its schools. Other cities are following suit as fast as they can adjust.

† An excellent idea of this activity program work of children and of the type of schoolroom adapted to it can be obtained from the

In addition to this organized handwork, the schools of the new type have craft shops and craft work done by the older children usually in an afternoon period. This craft work may or may not be correlated with the academic work. As a form of creative expression it has its own *raison d'être*, aside from any academic purpose.

## 3

IN the New Schools of Europe manual work as an important factor of the school life had its inception in the idea of Cecil Reddie—in founding Abbots-holme in 1889—of training boys to meet the needs of the modern world, rather than to follow that course of education which fitted for a leisured aristocracy. In a boarding school such as this, situated in the actual country, with its farm, its live-stock, its orchards, its woods, its buildings to care for and add to, there is opportunity for a practical form of manual work which even the most ideal country day school cannot offer.

At the foundation of the school the garden was a wilderness of weeds, the farm a waste of rubbish. The boys made pathways, established a system of drainage, tarred the gates and railings, painted the wood-work and prepared and enclosed the football grounds. In the work-shop they manufactured a considerable amount of the furniture needed in the school. The scholastic work was, whenever possible,

*Progressive Education* reprint, "The Environment for Creative Education." (Progressive Education Association, Washington, D. C., 35 cents.) This richly illustrated booklet has an unusually good collection of pictures of children doing things, happily busy at constructive work.

correlated with the practical work. In arithmetic, for instance, the boys kept account of the different bills and expenditures of the school and farm. In science they had ample material for the direct study of the plant and animal life about them.

Mr. Edmond Demolins, editor of *La Science Sociale*, came in touch with Reddie, whose ideas of reforming education he found provocative. "Contemporary teaching no longer answers the conditions of modern life," was Reddie's challenge. "It forms men for the past, not for the present."

"But how," asked the French savant, "does your school manage to modify this system?"

"Our aim," the master replied, "is to achieve a harmonious development of all the human faculties. The boy is to become a complete man, so as to be capable of fulfilling all the ends of life. To achieve this, the school ought not to be an artificial center where there is no communication with life except through books; it ought to be a small world, real, practical, where the child may find itself. Theory is not enough, there must be practice as well; these two elements should be in the school, as they are around us. Otherwise, the young man is condemned to enter a world entirely new to him, where he loses all his bearings. Man is not a mere intelligence, but an intelligence attached to a body. We are, therefore, to train the pupil's energy, will power, physical strength, manual skill and agility."

Demolins, deeply interested, visited Abbotsholme and was greatly impressed. "It seemed to me," he later wrote, "to mark a stage in the evolution of a system of education better fitted to the new conditions of social life. In its practical character, in its



chief aim to form the man, the whole man, and develop all faculties and the full power of personal energy and initiative, this school presents a striking contrast to all our modern systems of teaching."

The example of Abbotsholme and the pen of Demolins combined to spread the New School idea in France and Germany. In the latter country a type of school has sprung up, patterned after Abbotsholme, of which the German designation is Land-erziehungsheim, meaning, "home school in the country." The most significant Land-erziehungsheim is the Odenwaldschule founded by Paul Geheeb in 1910. Here the students enter into all the activities of the farm surrounding the school.

In the United States there are a few boarding schools similar to the New Schools of England and the Continent, the most thoroughly characteristic of which is the Raymond Riordan School of Highland, N. Y., established in 1914 by Raymond Riordan with the aim of getting away from the formalism of the traditional school and of utilizing the arts and crafts to stimulate constructive activity. The boys have much responsible work in connection with the farm and the school plant, involving actual construction as well as maintenance and repair of buildings, and the care of machinery and stock.

In the Loomis Institute, Windsor, Conn., the pupils share in the useful labor of the school, caring for their own rooms, the classrooms, and the school grounds and athletic fields. In the agricultural course a boy may carry out an actual farm project on land rented from the school, with money borrowed at interest from the school, the profits of the enterprise going to the boy.

In the Kent School, Kent, Conn., Rev. Frederick H. Sill has built up a wonderful school actuated by ideals of democratic service. For purposes of character-training as well as for other reasons the boys do all the house work outside the laundry and kitchen.

Frank D. Slutz, when conducting the Moraine Park School of Dayton, Ohio, succeeded in creating a wonderfully democratic attitude toward manual labor. When visiting the school one day, I was surprised, at the stroke of three, to see students mopping brooms and mops. Within five minutes from class dismissal the schoolrooms and halls were a busy scene of manual operations of the kind deemed among the lowest in the scale of unskilled labor. With the money thus saved from janitor service the children enjoyed a week's camping trip at the end of each school year. With that motive, work was earnest, whole-hearted, and joyous. In the plan of the director, I suspect motives of democracy were the impelling ones.

Of all the progressive educators in this country, it may be safe to say that Edward Yeomans, retired iron manufacturer and founder and co-principal of the Ojai Valley School, California, most emphasizes the value of abundant handwork. One of his reasons for this is to prepare for a constructive leisure in the later life. A second reason is to make concrete the academic work. A third and even more basic reason, with Yeomans, appertains to his philosophy of economics and his disapprobation of an industrial system which sets the brain worker in a position to absorb and exploit the manual work of others, with the resulting tendency toward a mild form of caste.

In thus introducing abundant handwork into academic education, Yeomans' aim is just the opposite of the vocational school which is, as Labor sees it, a form of caste education tending to perpetuate the class of artisans by giving their children a training fitting them for the same career as their parents. Yeomans gives as one of the chief aims of his school, "to give the hand its rightful place in the development of the mind and so assist in breaking down caste barriers, and secure a symmetrical character." The shop, he says, "must reverence the hand as the stabilizer of the mind, and begin to bridge that gap between the intellectual and manual which now produces social antipathies and injustice."

Sanderson of Oundle, so graphically described by H. G. Wells in his *Story of a Great Schoolmaster*, introduced into an English preparatory school, as an antidote for too much Greek and Latin, a great amount of shop work. Every boy, even though specializing in the classical course, has to spend from one to ten weeks each year in the shops, which are remarkably fine and provided with the most up-to-date equipment. In these shops the boys do all the repair work for the school and make all the apparatus needed by the laboratories and by the shops themselves. The school has even taken over the village smithy and shoes all the horses. Here the purpose of handwork is, somewhat as with Reddie and Yeomans, to teach the children of the wealthy and cultured classes the dignity of hand labor, and to train them in adeptness in the use of their hands for cultural as well as for practical purposes.

At Bedales, England, founded by Badley after some years of teaching experience at Abbotsholme,

handwork is used as an outlet for creative energy. There the eleven- and twelve-year-old children do manual work in the morning and study in the evening. "Their creative powers are at their best in the morning," says the director of the lower school. "Therefore, we want to leave them free at this time of day to make things. They are allowed to go to any shoproom they like and make anything freely. It is their right to express themselves and create freely. In the evening, when they are physically tired but their brains are still fresh, they are content to sit quietly and study."

Of the different private progressive schools I have visited, in this country and abroad, the *École des Roches* in France, a New School founded by Demolins under the inspiration of Abbotsholme, has a notably wide range and technical perfection of instruction and of achievement in craft work. The boys of this secondary school repair to the craft shops each afternoon for an hour and a half or two hours, following an after-lunch period of sports in the open air. Here I saw unusual work being done by the boys in painting, sculpture, carpentry, metal work, and forging. The boys were most earnest and engrossed in their work. Such a variety of mediums for expression under most competent teachers, and in shops splendidly equipped, is ideal. It can only be provided by a progressive school which is large in numbers, like the *École des Roches*, or one splendidly endowed. Of public schools, Angelo Patri's School Number 45, the Bronx, is outstanding for the quality of its handwork, which often rises to the artist rank.

## 4

PROGRESSIVE schools in general, then, give a considerable place to handwork, much in the primary and intermediate grades, less as the grades mount up toward college entrance. This diminuendo is due perhaps not so much to the theory and desire of the progressive educators as to the limitations which college entrance imposes upon them.

The motives on the part of educators leading them to introduce handwork into academic education are diverse, as we have seen. Indeed there are innumerable advantages which one may perceive in handwork for children. The most significant of these advantages may be recapitulated somewhat as follows:

1. Work with the hands is the natural expression of the intelligence of young children. Children are all, in their early years, motor-active. In making handwork an integral part of education at this age, children will acquire knowledge in a way suited to their nervous system and to their psychological development. This impulse to do things with their hands can thus be led into profitable and educative channels.

2. Handwork is of great value at all ages in furnishing a healthy balance to brain-work of a sedentary nature. The confinement of children to desks, with application to book-work of an abstract type through the long hours of the school day is, we hope, fast becoming a relic of medievalism. The human being, seeking to develop at forced pace his intellect at the expense of motor-activity, tends to nervous ills and breakdowns. Let the school day of

the child, therefore, have its proper proportion of handwork. It will be a balanced day.

3. In handwork, more than in abstract thinking, it is easy for the child to be creative. We want the child to think for itself, to originate, to create. To do this on the plane of the abstract requires more data, more knowledge than the young child has at its command. But in the realm of the concrete the child is easily at home; it is able to create, to be original, to be expressive.

4. Handwork is an important means of aid to certain children for the prevention of the rise of an inferiority complex. Certain motor-active children tend to be poor in academic work of an abstract kind. Such children may be highly intelligent, yet in classes on abstract subjects they appear dull and inferior. This is a trying situation psychologically for them. They realize subconsciously that they are not dull or stupid, yet the force of public opinion is against them. They are pleased to be able to demonstrate that they are not inferior in intelligence,—these children who can never shine at academic work yet who are of the type by which the world's work is chiefly performed and whose abilities later in life will prove of good earning power. Successful achievement in handwork in early years is the first step toward the feeling of dignity and self-confidence which such children so sorely need.\*

5. Abundant handwork helps to discover aptitudes in the child. Progressive educators do not use handwork in an actual prevocational sense, but

\* It is unnecessary here to go into the matter of handwork for the subnormal, because we are dealing with the education of the average child. The value of handwork for the subnormal is of course well known.

rather in a sense of showing a native bent which is certainly of value in indicating the life work. Often, pupils will show no interest in different lines of the school work and program but suddenly will develop a keen interest in some form of handwork and through that discover themselves.

6. Handwork is of value in developing in children manual skills which will remain useful and enjoyable throughout life. One of the most wholesome ways to spend leisure from one's vocation is in a hobby of this kind.

There is, indeed, a delight in thus successfully using the hands to improve one's environment. The numerous advertisements of paint and varnish manufacturers in our popular magazines, picturing the housewife as gayly and daintily wielding the paintbrush for the benefit of her floors and her furniture, show how enormously widespread has become the use of paints by novices. Many people now paint their own houses. One of the most delightful of experiences is to apply a few cans of enamel paint to an old automobile body and see it shine as a result. Is there not a certain spiritual value in using one's energy to improve things?

Manual labor when intelligently applied to the planting of gardens, whether vegetable or flower, brings rich rewards in enjoyment, in health, and in the actual products of the soil. Children love to garden and gardening is an experience which should form a part of every child's education.

Perhaps the prophetic verse of Isaiah, to the effect that every man shall sit under his own fig tree, refers to a time when the average man will own his house and little plot of land and will spend much of

his spare time from business or from work in improving his property, planting it with fruits and vegetables and flowers, and cultivating these for his own pleasure and health as well as for actual value of the products to be raised.

Whatever the future holds in store, there is no question of the value to the child in gaining dexterity and technical skill.

7. Of all the results of handwork, one of the most important is to teach children the dignity and worthwhileness of manual labor and to thus help bridge the gulf between Labor and Capital, between the white-collar man and the horny hand of toil. Nothing would do more to remove the mutual misunderstanding of the classes than for those who are following intellectual professions to take an actual part in some labor of a manual nature. When a thinking man labors side by side with a workman, then sympathy and unity are born.

The curse of Europe and of Asia is their setting up of leisure as the supreme goal of life; and their caste system, in accordance with which many live without ever employing their hands usefully while the great mass of workers live a treadmill life—they and their children and their grandchildren, and so on forever—without the opportunity of employing their brains intelligently.

The glory of America is its apotheosis of work. Its ideal man is he whose intellectual development has not disqualified him from use of his muscles. Lincoln, with his log-splitting, his ever-upward struggles, his practical wisdom, his great heart, is the man who stands highest in his country's esteem. Perhaps there is a certain wholesome, spiritual



quality in work and activity which is lacking to the cloistered scholar.

It is evident that as regards the ideal of what constitutes an educated man, America will not be content to accept past standards, or the standards of present-day peoples whose civilization is based upon an aristocracy of leisure. It will forge out new and virile ideals of its own.

The important question for the progressive educator to consider is:

What is the right proportion of handwork to brainwork, of the concrete to the abstract? Who knows? At any rate, it is the balanced, all-round personality that we modern educators are aiming to produce—neither too bookishly impractical nor yet too lacking in the finer intelligence and in the power of intellectual discrimination.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE FREEDOM OF THE CHILD

*"Only through freedom can man attain his fullness of growth."*

TAGORE.

**F**REEDOM is the very breath of life. So humanity has discovered in its progress from absolute forms of government to democracy. Freedom causes man to lift his head higher, to breathe more freely the air about him, to enjoy an environment of civilization which he has himself helped to create by sharing in its ideas and initiatives.

The movement toward democracy has now reached such a point that argument against it would be futile. It is part of the evolution of humanity. It has certain disadvantages, certain difficulties to overcome. It is less efficient than an absolute form of government, and less remedial than a benevolent tyranny. Nevertheless, none of us prefer to be under a tyrannical form of government, however intelligent and beneficial such a government may be. It is not, after all, what one man with absolute power can accomplish that counts for the world, but what the average citizen can become in civic conscience, in self-restraint, in service for the public good, and in intelligence and ability to share in the organization of a progressive government.

Inefficient as democracy may be, therefore, it

nevertheless prevails. Its value is as great in training a people to rule themselves, as it is in any measures accomplished by legislative action. The beneficial results of freedom can very readily be seen, for example, in comparing any state church with a free church such as exists in this country. Lord Bryce, in visiting the United States some years ago, was greatly impressed with the activities which centered around our self-supporting churches. He states in his *History of Democracy* that this system of ecclesiastical self-government has been one of the most formative experiences of the American people, extremely valuable to them in the development of initiative, self-control, and executive ability.

The urge toward freedom has at last reached the school and the home. As for the latter, it is hardly recognizable as compared with the old-fashioned home in which the arbitrary will of the parents prevailed. The school, too, is responding to this impulse toward democracy. In the progressive schools especially, there is an atmosphere of freedom permeating every activity of the school life. This sense of freedom characterizes also the attitude of the child toward the teacher, who appears as the guide and companion of the child, not as a taskmaster and dominator.

One entering a progressive school will sense immediately this quality of freedom. It is apparent even in the faces of the children and their postures and attitudes. It is observable in the slight disorder from the viewpoint of the strict disciplinarian. There is a bustle and confusion at times, which is the result of the freedom that prevails. There is even an inefficiency such as is the inevitable con-

comitant of democracy. On the other hand, of course, there are enormous gains to the child and to the school life from this freedom.

So vital a factor is freedom in the New School movement, that the World Conference on the New Education, held at Locarno last August, revolved about the central theme "The True Meaning of Freedom in Education." "It was pretty generally accepted," says Fola La Follette in describing the spirit of this conference, "that freedom for the child in modern education did not mean a wholesale or unintelligent toleration of his narrowly egoistic and harmful activities at the expense, for instance, of his own health or the well-being of his child associates. But that it did mean organizing the environment to fit the child's rather than the adult's needs. And that *within the limitations of this environment the child should be given the greatest possible freedom to follow his own urge to experience, to experiment, and to discover for himself the meaning of work, the world of nature, and of human relations. What is needed is the inner freeing of the child and the release of his individual creative energy and capacities.*"

At the first annual convention of the Progressive Education Association, held in Washington in 1920, Marietta L. Johnson, whose whole educational career has been a heroic struggle to win greater freedom for the child, speaking on "The School and the Child" said, "The child needs freedom—freedom of body first. Were we to follow the great experts on child psychology, it would revolutionize the public schools of to-day. The fixed desks should be replaced by movable furniture. The number of

children in the room should be thinned down, perhaps 50 per cent or more; for our classrooms are entirely too crowded.

"The child also needs mental and intellectual freedom. *Free intellectual play for the child is to think about something and wonder how it got there and what it is for. Every child wants to know a multitude of things that he does not know. It is because adults have so hedged him about by external demands that this desire to want to know has been abolished in our modern schoolroom.* The child must be free, also, to take time to think. Children are told to read the text-book and give back the information to the teacher. That isn't thinking; that's simply answering. Thinking is finding out something from an impulse that is within you and that makes a demand upon you. And the child must have not only physical, mental and intellectual freedom, but spiritual freedom as well. One of the greatest needs in the world to-day is freedom of spirit."

Thus we see that the word "freedom" as used by the progressive educator has a rich connotation and implies much more than freedom in behavior and the abolition of ancient and formal disciplines. It is this last-mentioned application of freedom to the child that is uppermost, however, in the thought of the general public and of conservative educators when they contemplate the progressive movement. It is assumed that freedom for the child means license. True, visitors to progressive schools may here and there find types of behavior which go too far in the way of individualism and unrestrained desire. It is but natural that in the reaction from formal disciplines some teachers and parents should

swing too far in the other direction. In the first years of experimentation I myself must confess to have permitted a freedom of expression as regards behavior on the part of the children which the consideration of ultimate values, in the light of actual experience, has caused me to modify.

How much freedom should the child have? A greater measure of freedom than in the past, yes. But are there limits necessary and beneficial to the child as well as to the adult world in the midst of which the child moves and has his being?

Were we adults to consider our own comfort and tranquillity only, we should place very sharp limits upon the child's freedom as it conflicts frequently with our own desires, plans, and mode of life. The old doctrine that a child should be seen and not heard constituted a very comfortable procedure for the adult world, which was thus given center stage and was also provided with opportunities for silences unbroken by child activities. To-day the child either is given or takes freedom to make a noise of one sort or another, maybe the constant babble of conversation or the noise due to abrupt movements such as characterize child life, or noise made in playing with objects. So that if we consider only ourselves, we should feel inclined to return to the ancient form of government which prescribed silence for the child, leaving the making of noise the province of the adult world only.

But the new education and the new parent considers the child and its welfare as of central importance. Therefore it asks: What is for the best welfare of the child? And is willing to sacrifice its own comfort to a considerable extent in order that the

child may have such freedom of expression as is beneficial to it. *The child must have its own place in the sun. After all, the world does not belong to adults. That is a recent and important discovery, not made possible while the world was ruled by force.*

As for this wonderful world of children, then, which inhabits our midst, which has its own rights, its own needs, and which is so precious to us both from the joys its fresh young life conveys to us and from the potentiality in it which we reverence—as to this world, then, of childhood, what degree of freedom shall we designate as most salutary, most effective for self-development, most beneficial to the child itself, as well as to the future world of which the child is to become the leading citizen?

Clearly, it is to the child's harm to become lawless, to carry freedom to the extent of license. The foundations of society rest upon self-restraint and law rather than upon self-expression. However, we do not need to invoke the adult life of the child as a measure of its behavior, but to follow that procedure which produces the most ideal life in the school itself.

*That form of life in the school is most ideal which combines freedom and self-expression with self-restraint for the benefit of the group.* At no time should the sense of freedom of the child impair the work of the group or of another child. Neither should the freedom of movement and expression of the child produce so much disorder as to be disturbing not only to the mental activities but also to the nervous organisms of the group. In other words, we do not want a hectic and chaotic atmosphere.

We must have an atmosphere of repose, of tranquility, even though there be movement and activity.

Should the child in the course of its training be guided in such a way as not to need punishment? That is one of the problems which modern psychology raises. Certainly, one would say the less punishment, the better. *Kilpatrick points out that discipline does not necessarily entail punishment; and that, on the other hand, punishment does not necessarily produce the results desired from discipline.* We must study the psychology of the child. We must watch the reaction of punishment, aiming always at results and not losing ourselves in the event itself. Punishment should never be used merely for revenge either of the teacher or of the school. It should not be considered a "post facto" obligation, as something necessarily ensuing, as in a bureaucracy, from any violation of custom, of law, or of order.

On the other hand, I firmly believe in punishment when it seems necessary and wise. I myself use it and permit the teachers to use it directly and without reference to the self-government association when occurrences demand it. Yet, this discipline should be of simple kind, as logical as possible, that is to say, pertaining to the act itself; and of a nature to seem fair and just to the child who is being punished, as well as to its mates.

Justice must always be the comrade of freedom, insuring such a degree of order as to guarantee satisfaction to all members of the group. I am not one who believes that the child left to its own inclination does right. Neither do I believe that the child is prone to evil doing. The child is rather in a con-



dition of a tender plant which has a potentiality for good fruitage, yet needs protection and training—pruning if necessary. It cannot arrive at the necessary and proper character merely through the process of self-unfoldment. Were that so, the child abandoned in the wilds, if it succeeded in supporting life, would grow up a perfect citizen; which is, of course, not the case. *The child develops into ideal maturity through self-unfoldment modified by the suggestion of environment, partly unconscious and partly conscious.* In that environment the parent and the teacher play a very important part. That is what they are for—to aid the child at every point where its steps are necessarily too feeble to climb the path which leads to character and achievement.

In the case of the fractious child the social condemnation of the group, autonomous or directed by suggestion of the teacher, is usually efficacious. Ostracism, isolation if necessary, produce beneficial results. The social sanctions, which are in reality the most powerful regulators of conduct, are as effective in the schoolroom as in society.

But it sometimes happens that a child is not guided into a right behaviour by these means. Then what?

The logical thing in such a case is a mild form of suspension. A progressive school the orderly discipline of which I admired greatly used this disciplinary method, I ascertained, as a last resort, and with remarkable effect. I applied the idea to my own school, in a few instances, with very good results. The head of another progressive school told me that she had kept one boy who was disorderly home for a week, and that he came back

thoroughly chastened and reformed; for he loved the school and had sorely missed it during his enforced absence.

Progressive schools, as a last resort, may even ask for the withdrawal of children whom they are unable to assimilate. From my own experience with children, I am convinced that just as there are some people who are not ready for democracy, so there are some children who cannot successfully adjust themselves to the freedom which prevails in progressive schools, and who need a sterner discipline and a more exacting régime. There is undoubtedly a type of boy and girl who respond happily and successfully to regimentation. The high-class military school even may have a place in the educational world which progressive education cannot immediately render dispensable.

## 2

SOME form of self-government exists in every progressive school. Eugene R. Smith prefers to call it student participation in government, or coöperative government. This is a truer designation of what takes place in most of the progressive schools, since, after all, the school staff of teachers reserves to itself a final authority. It is very much like the measure of self-government which we give in the Philippines. Strangely enough, it has been my experience that the children, certainly those in the grammar grades, never seem to resent, even if they realize, this final authority on the part of the school. They do not analyze to that extent the form of self-government which is allowed them. Certainly as regards

the elementary stage of education, this semi-government or coöperative government is amply sufficient and to my mind more satisfactory, more feasible than any attempt at real self-government.

There are, however, progressive schools where an almost absolute form of self-government prevails and teachers may be called to account by the governing organization of the pupils, or the daily program may be changed at their desire. Even at a further extreme than this is the system which prevails in some of the public schools of Hamburg, where there is not only no government by the teachers but no government by the pupils either, such an organization as would be described by the word anarchy (no-government). Visitors to these schools perceive that the atmosphere and situation in these schools are not at all, however, what the public mind usually conceives to be the expression of anarchy. So that in the new education there will be found a broad range from no-government at all or from absolute student self-government, to that more conservative form of self-government which we may call coöperative government. It is this last which predominates in the progressive schools.

In our own school, in which there are only eight grades, all the children above the third grade participate in the student self-government association conducted along the lines of the old New England town council. The body as a whole makes laws, sees that they are carried out, and acts as both jury and judge in deciding guilt and awarding penalties. With young children I believe this to be preferable to a student council form of government, as it reduces

to a negligible minimum all personality and thought of prejudice or favoritism.

The meetings of this self-government association furnish excellent training in parliamentary law. The children become accustomed to stand on their feet and discuss matters of importance. They make their own rules and elect committees, the most important of which is the Law and Order Committee. It is the duty of this committee to look after the law and order of the school, to report misdemeanors, and to receive reports from others of misdemeanors. It was found from experience best to let no complaints be given from the floor. Nothing can be brought before the meeting concerning the violation of law and order except by the chairman of this committee. Each offense, if acknowledged by the guilty party, is acted upon; if denied, the guilt must be proved by two witnesses. Punishments are suggested by any member of the assembly in the form of a motion which after being seconded is open to discussion. The group sense of justice in these children is a lesson to adults. Whereas one child, through prejudice, may be too severe or too lax, the motion which finally carries expressing the consensus of the group is almost always just, humane, and wise.

It is possible through this self-government practically to abolish the system of private feud and vendetta so characteristic of boy life. Difficulties which arise in the way of altercations or personal injuries can find solution and satisfaction by means of adjudication. As a rule the children show remarkable self-restraint, leaving any thirst for revenge which they may have to the action of their self-government. Occasions do arise where a boy, to

use the words of Omar Khayyám, prefers to "take the cash and let the credit go"; but as a rule even possible Shylocks among us are persuaded to await due process of law for the satisfaction of their revenge-complexes.

These boys below adolescence relive the life of our Old Testament patriarchs. Their ethics are those of Moses, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." They are not yet capable of the ethics of Christ. But they have taken a great step forward in the civilizing process when they wait upon the law to give them satisfaction instead of committing personal reprisals which keep alive a prolonged vendetta. Although a boy of that age cannot be asked to forgive an injury, he can successfully be asked to rise from the lawless stage of civilization to that of organized justice represented by the legal codes of Hammurabi and Moses.

In the process of self-government, the children get excellent training in human relations. One little girl of eight, coming new to the school, unwisely undertook too much prominent action in her group and in the meeting of the self-government association. One day she moralized beautifully to the children on the need of love and harmony—a speech which abstractly one might admire but which concretely one might apprehend as dangerous to the maker. So it proved. This child had a pet dog which had been allowed to follow her to school and sit in the classroom. At the next meeting of the Steabe a motion was made, seconded, and carried, that no dogs be allowed in the school. Also a dog committee was appointed to see that this rule was carried out. Mary remained discreetly silent at the time, but

while walking to the house with me for dinner she said, "Mr. Cobb, don't you think it's a waste of good material to have a dog committee? Besides, whose dog is there coming to school but mine?" I took occasion to remind her of the virtues of modesty and self-effacement on the part of the newcomer to any community, as a wise preliminary to active participation in the affairs of said community.

The Francis W. Parker School of Chicago has a very thorough and effective system of student government. Matters concerning the school program do not come within its province. But all disciplinary cases are brought to it, as well as matters pertaining to the welfare and improvement of the school. It is run on the student council plan. It is one of the important factors in the maintenance at that school of a rare spirit of order, of harmony, of coöperation and loyalty. Upon my inquiry as to developments since my personal study of the Student Government there a few years ago, the director writes: "You ask about the school's Student Government. It has indeed improved marvelously in the last few years. I am sending you a Constitution, corrected to date. I should like so much to have your personal eye on this part of our school. To me it is the most satisfying thing we have, and the growth through the last few years in the attitude and responsibility of all members of the high school is marked and is very evident in the meetings of the Council, Jury and Assembly. There is a spirit of coöperation and desire on the part of the pupils for justice and for getting behind the ideals and standards and policies and best traditions of the school that should be convincing to those who are hesitating between a gov-

ernment by faculty authority and one by Student Government."

In visiting the Hathaway Brown School (for girls) in Cleveland recently, I found that the large study hall, holding at times seventy, was presided over by students. The whole atmosphere of the school was delightful. The self-government association, I learned from talking with one of the girls, played a very important part in the school life. "What do you do in the case of girls that seem incorrigible?" I asked. "Do you have the power of expulsion?" "Yes," she said, "but we never have had to use it. Such girls as you speak of leave of their own accord. They don't find themselves comfortable here."

Student self-government is of course not a monopoly of the newer schools. It has run its own successful cycle quite independent of the progressive movement in education, and is widely used in public and private schools. But in the case of the progressive school it holds a very integral relation to the spirit of freedom and self-directed behavior which is sought.

The advantages of freedom and self-government to the pupil are obvious. One of the most valuable results is the elimination of the antithesis between child and school, as between the governed and the government. In a school of the autocratic type, no matter how wisely conducted, there is always the possibility of resentment on the part of the pupils toward the government, of dissatisfaction, of complaint, of insubordination. There is the opportunity for pupils of bold, naturally rebellious character to make heroes of themselves in the eyes of their fel-

low-students by acts of mischief and insubordination. Order in such a school is due to restraint from above. This sort of order, we must realize, is unstable, impermanent. Whenever anything happens to lessen the restraint from above, order is apt to give way to disorder.

The only order that is worth while is that which springs from the sense of order of the participants. *Let the compulsions come from within, not from without, is the slogan of progressives.* If the child's own sense of law and order is developed and its own volition is engaged in the matter, a fairly stable order is achieved. Whatever deviations occur from that are temporary and inconsiderable in a school in which the sense of order permeates the body of the pupils by means of self-government and through the spirit of freedom.

In the application of this principle of freedom, the educator must use, of course, great wisdom. He must watch results which seem bad in the child or in the school. We must not make a fetish of freedom. We must be true psychologists, true scientists, analyzing the results and not using formulas as of themselves having any mystic value. It is only results that are worth while, not theories. What we want to produce is the free-souled, earnest, responsible, serviceable, and joyous individual; orderly in behavior, yet so far as possible untrammelled, following inner rather than outer compulsions. There is no formula yet perfected, guaranteed to produce such results. The human equation enters in. What the child is, what the teacher is, are factors of the utmost importance. But the aim, the ideal, we must keep be-



fore our eyes; and use as much of freedom as seems valuable toward the achievement of our goal.

Anyone visiting a progressive school would understand something of what I am trying to describe. They would see it in the faces and actions of all the children—an attitude of coöperation, of comradeship with the teacher, of love of the school and loyalty to it that is delightful and which more than compensates for the occasional aberrations and misuse of the freedom which arise.

A parent of children attending the Lincoln School, Mrs. Katherine K. Knickerbocker, gives in *Progressive Education* this charming testimony to the value of school-democracy: "It has been an absorbing and stimulating thing to watch our own child, and other people's children, educate themselves under the directing influence of their teachers, to see them develop in ability to direct their own affairs intelligently, and rise, year by year, to higher levels of self-control, and self-direction, and self-reliance. I have seen democracy itself built into the lives of these children, for their school has been a place where they have really lived, a miniature community."

3

FREEDOM in school for the child means much more, however, than opportunity for self-directed behavior. It means a release of the spirit from a deadening routine and the opportunity to think, to express, and to create. Glenn Frank has put it succinctly in one of his *Philosophies*. It does not mean letting the child do what he pleases, to the extent

X of bad personal habits, bad manners, bad actions. That is a negative conception of liberty. "Positively conceived, freedom for the child means giving all the good impulses of the child free rein. It means letting the child try experiments; follow its curiosity; formulate its real desires, fears, difficulties, ideas. It means letting the child try what he thinks out, and make what he invents. It means letting the child discover his world instead of giving him a sort of personally conducted Cook's tour through it."

In order to afford the child this creative freedom, it is necessary to "organize the child's surroundings so they will stimulate his curiosity, lead him to experiment, and give him a zest for discovering and understanding his world on his own account."

To so organize a child's school world means, at the first, to eliminate nearly all causes for discipline. Children in a school that they love, working at tasks which they enjoy, with freedom to express to some extent their own desires, their own gifts, their own personalities, are not going to be provocative of discipline. In fact it may truly be said that in the ideal type of school discipline is a subconscious and not a conscious element of the school life.

## 4

+ AND what about these other freedoms?—Freedom to think, freedom to express, freedom to differ from the teacher or from other authorities, freedom to act along the lines of one's genius? It is these freedoms that are fundamental in a progressive school.

A little girl of nine when asked to tell a visitor how her school differed from other schools, an-

swered: "They let us talk here if we want to say something." One of the most pathetically unnatural things about the public school classes of forty or fifty children under the formal recitation system is the necessity of suppressing any actual contributions of the children in the way of original thoughts, ideas, or experiences. This is the most cruel tyranny that life can put upon anyone, child or adult. We all long for opportunity for expression. What we think, we want to express; and by expressing we grow. Children are that way too. Why should they be deprived of this privilege which the adult world esteems so highly—and which is so necessary to mental health?

In progressive schools children are allowed to talk—to each other and to the teacher. Their ideas are respected and even solicited. There is time to think, time to express.

Can we not all recall delightful conversations which we have participated in as one of a group of adults? Conversations where thought developed, where ideas seemed to sprout and blossom out, where each expressed his inmost and his uttermost without fear of ridicule, and the life of the group was for the time lifted up into an almost super-human plane of brilliancy, of light, of truth-perception? Did our souls not grow and expand at such a time, more even than when listening to the most inspiring address?

*This is real freedom—the opportunity to be most deeply and truly ourselves. And this is what every child craves.* Shall we deprive him of that opportunity because of curricular requirements? But what are these curricular requirements? And what is the

purpose of this whole experience which we call education, if it is not to enable the soul to grow and to expand?

If then the curriculum stands in the way of soul-growth, shall we allow this petty slavery to continue? Shall we bind and restrict the spirit of the child because a program abstractly formulated fails to fit a concrete growing individual? As regards program and subject-matter, shall a fixed and determined pattern be imposed on the child or shall the child have some freedom to follow that gay leader, desire, into vivid adventures and experiences?

Dewey says in *School and Society*: "Plato somewhere speaks of the slave as one who in his actions does not express his own ideas, but those of some other man. It is our social problem now, even more urgent than in the time of Plato, that method, purpose, understanding, shall exist in the consciousness of the one who does the work, that his activity shall have meaning to himself."

Rabindranath Tagore says, "Our system of education refuses to admit that children are children. Children are punished because they fail to behave like grown-up people and have the impertinence to be noisily childish. We kill that spirit of liberty in their mind, the spirit of adventure, which we all bring with us into the world—the spirit that every day seeks for new experiences. This freedom is absolutely necessary for the intelligent growth of the mind, as well as for the moral nature of children."

Freedom of opinion is especially a need of children in this century when the boundaries of thought are daily fluctuating—this pragmatic century which questions all things and is more concerned in reëval-

uating than in memorizing and obeying dogmas. For a child to differ in opinion from a text-book or a teacher is certainly no crime. But it is not enough merely to allow a difference of opinion to be stated. The teacher must be neither supercilious nor condescending. A child's world is a very real world, and its thoughts are earnest thoughts; they should be given our sincere attention and sympathy. Perhaps we can help them to find better ideas. Perhaps we can not. At any rate, we must see to it that the child is free to formulate its own ideas and to weave its own pattern of truth; giving it material for thought but not dogmas.

## 5

THESE are some of the freedoms which progressive education seeks to give the child. And the child responds—beautifully, whole-heartedly—so that teaching becomes a joy and school becomes a utopia where citizens dwell together in the spirit of co-operation and brotherhood.

Surely a race of human beings thus schooled should grow up less exploitive, less aggressive, less given to complexes of inferiority, of envy, of revenge. It is a characteristic consequence of the arbitrary enforcement of power that the party which has to submit never rests until he can find a still weaker individual upon whom to express arbitrary power. Thus the spirit of ugliness and malevolence thrives and festers in the midst of a mentally unhygienic humanity. Thus the bellicose demon, individual and national, stands entrenched.

But a generation educated in the atmosphere of freedom; given to behavior patterns of sympathy,

of appreciation, of coöperation and loyalty; through whose school days love and joy and free expression have run like golden threads across the silver background of ratiocination and knowledge-acquisition,—of such children we may surely expect better things. If the world to come is not a superior world because of the education of to-day, then the education of to-day has tragically failed to embrace its opportunity.

## CHAPTER V

### THE INDIVIDUAL CHILD

*"No human being has the right to make a standard of success for another human being. There is a denial of justice in a school process under which one child flourishes and another languishes."*

MARIETTA L. JOHNSON.

**W**HAT is the educator to do in the case of a child who is failing in most of his subjects? If subnormal, the course of his education will be fairly well delineated. But suppose he is of normal intelligence and earnest character, only for some reason or other he finds obstructions in the way of the regular school work? The school of yesterday would have sloughed him off. The modern school does not seek in that easy way to escape its responsibility. If the child is not succeeding in one kind of subject, let us try another until we find one in which he can succeed.

"We never let a boy fail," said one of the teachers of Oundle, to Carleton Washburne. "When one of them shows no ability in the classics, we give him more modern languages and science. If he does not show ability in one science, we try him in another. We had one boy here a while ago who was poor in almost everything he undertook. He had no self-confidence; but we discovered that he had a knack of handling people. So we gave him the job of build-

ing that little foundry you see out there. We gave him regular paid laborers to work under his direction and he rolled up his sleeves and worked with them. He became so much interested in it that he stayed on during his Christmas holidays, and the day when the building was finished he did not stop work until eleven o'clock at night, he was so anxious to make the first casting in that foundry. Through this piece of work he learned confidence in himself, and he gained the confidence of his fellow students. We began to find the lines of his ability and to develop them. We are not trying to give all our boys the same education. We are trying to find the ability of each one and to develop it as fully as possible."

How absurd it appears, when one faces actual facts, that a boy who has a strong talent along the lines of mechanics, electricity, radio, should be compelled to hurdle the college entrance requirements in French, Latin, English Grammar. Or why should a child with distinct literary gifts be set to too much drudgery in mathematics? Because we make a fetish of the curriculum we cause many children to fail in their educational work, when the failure is really due to the educational system. Every child should be aided to succeed along the lines of his own gifts.

A remarkable instance of how a school system of an Ohio town adapted itself to a case of individual need is told by A. E. Winship in his *Journal of Education*:

"A lad of fourteen simply would not stay in school and the teacher did not want him there. 'Why don't you like school?' asked the friendly specialist. 'I am not ready to go to school at nine o'clock. I get up at



five o'clock, go to my traps and get my muskrats and take them to my market, and it interferes with my business to go to school.'

"'Isn't there anything that you could learn in school that you would like to learn?'"

"'Oh, yes. I'd like to know how to cure muskrat skins. I'd get a lot more for my skins if I could cure them.'"

"'All right,' said the friendly specialist, 'you come to the high school'—he was in the sixth grade—'a week from next Monday, and we'll have someone who can teach you how to cure muskrat skins.'"

"Now there was another more serious problem for the friendly specialist. He had to deal with the system. There was nothing in the new and idealized curriculum which provided for curing muskrat skins. And this lad had not completed the eighth grade.

"But the specialist thought in terms of the muskrat lad instead of the curriculum, and he nosed around in the laboratories till he found a teacher who would be glad to learn, himself, how to cure a muskrat skin and would be ready for the lad on Monday of the next week.

"Interest in the lad was general. One of the women teachers had a coyote skin offered her for a rug, and she asked the muskrat boy if he could cure it, and he did it to the queen's taste.

"That lad stayed in school daily from early to late because he was provided with one book after another about fur-bearing animals, their habits, their value and the marketing of furs.

"That sixth-grader muskrat pupil was the greatest thrill in high school."

It is not always extra-curricular activities that the educational problem child needs. A girl of thirteen was sent to us as a resident pupil who was a paradox. Although not lacking in intelligence, she had been unable to pass even fourth grade work, with the exception of arithmetic. We were told that she was not academic-minded, and it was suggested that she be given a program consisting largely of non-academic subjects such as sewing, domestic science, archery, horse-back riding. The girl's intelligent reaction to environment, to situations, to concrete things, and her normal achievement for her age in arithmetic, combined with a complete childishness in regard to abstract and general ideas, led me to suspect that her chief trouble was lack of reading comprehension.

This I found to be the case. Her phonics were imperfect, her word recognition very poor, and her store of abstract ideas almost nil. Drill in phonics and in word recognition began to improve her reading comprehension. The first year she was at the school she progressed from a second grade reading level to a fourth grade reading level. The second year, she was able to do sixth grade work in all subjects. Far from being impossible of achievement in academic work, she proved to be quite scholarly and thorough. At first, work with books was very arduous and distasteful to her; but as she gained mastery of the technique of reading she gradually found herself enjoying books of all kinds.

The very worst treatment this child's educational problem could have received would have been release from academic work. Thus treated, she never would have mastered the art of reading, which was

all that stood between her and successful acquisition of knowledge. She had been a cripple mentally. She needed certain muscles developed. She didn't need crutches.

Eugene R. Smith tells of a similar case of educational retardation on the part of a boy who seemed normal in health and intelligence. Smith, by persistent ingenious investigation, finally brought about the discovery of an obscure defect of the eyes unnoticed by the family oculist, which had prevented the boy from seeing letters as words. This cured, the academic retardation was in time eliminated.

These are but a few of the countless individual problems that confront the educator. It is evident that there is no general panacea for such children. Each case must be studied by itself. One child may need release from academic drill, while to a second child such release would be fatal.

Educationally children need individual treatment just as much as they need individual medical treatment. But while we have developed the art of medicine to a point where every man, woman, and child in a civilized community can receive physically individual diagnosis and treatment, we have not yet developed education to a similar standard of perfection.

In his book *Education Moves Ahead*, Eugene R. Smith says in regard to the progress now being made in methods of studying the individual child: "Probably the most important of the recent developments in education is the advance in scientific methods of studying individual children. Education is perhaps the last important industry, if I may call

it that, to develop methods of analyzing its material. Business and the various professions have long had methods of examination and diagnosis. Education alone has continued to depend upon unsupported personal judgment. That this lack of diagnostic methods has proved a handicap is unquestioned. Teachers have been compelled to think in terms of large groups rather than in definite distinctions. Pupils have been considered 'good' or 'bad,' 'bright' or 'stupid,' and only the exceptional teachers have been able to analyze more completely."

In all the best schools, public as well as private, the problems of the individual child on the lower levels of academic achievement are to-day being given attention and a great deal is being accomplished for this type of child,—more perhaps than is proportionately fair to the rest of the school group.

## 2

IF it seems necessary and desirable to adapt education to the individual needs of the inferior student, how much more imperative is it to release the superior child from confinement to a routine curriculum designed for the average child. Should gifted children be treated as rear-rank privates in a vast drill-squad? How patent is the absurdity of compelling brilliant students who have perfectly mastered their lessons to sit through a formal recitation and be tortured by the meanderings of poorly prepared students! This is worse than a mere waste of time. It represents an emotional strain which in a way is as injurious to the gifted child as undue men-

tal pressure is to the slow-minded child. For it is the quality of genius to accomplish miracles without strain when freely expressing innate gifts and powers, but to show enervation when forced to follow a routine or regimentation to which it has aversion.

As educators, and the public, come to realize that in gifted children lie practically the leadership of the coming generation, it will appear the most socially economic fallacy to neglect their fullest educational cultivation. And this means individual cultivation, for you cannot successfully regiment the gifted child.

In progressive schools education is adapted to the individual child. Tastes, proclivities, and gifts are considered and given opportunity for expression. The creative energies of the children are released, not only in the arts but also in academic work. Routine and unmotivated drill are replaced by methods which call forth interest; and which give scope for those qualities of initiative, of leadership, of power of self-directed achievement with which the superior child is by nature endowed. The development of special talents, whether musical, artistic, literary, or scientific and mechanical, is provided for within the school day. ~~For why should such cultural personality activities be relegated to the limbo of the extra-curriculum, unhonored by academic recognition?~~ Progressive schools consider them as an integral part of education and make provision for them within the school program, not only giving opportunity for the development of these talents but utilizing their expression for the greater joy and richer cultural life of the whole school.

Even in the domain of the public school system, experimentation is now going on here and there in the way of opportunity for the gifted child to develop along lines of individuality. The most notable of such experiments is that which has been conducted for some years in the training school of the University of California, Southern Branch, by Lulu M. Stedman.\* This most vital work with gifted children owed its inception to the vision of Dr. William T. Root of the University of Pittsburgh, who has long deprecated the overstandardization and de-individualizing of our public school educational system. If opportunity classes and individual methods are valuable for subnormal children, how much more necessary are they for supernormal children. The high potentiality of the latter group for social service should make their best possible education a social concern of paramount importance. It was such a belief in the minds of the founders that gave rise to this opportunity room for children showing an intelligence quotient of 140 or more, from the fourth to the eighth grade.

"To take their own pace instead of lock-stepping," says Miss Stedman, "children must study independently, choose their own goals, and work to the maximum of their capacity. To develop fully, they must encounter situations which will try their powers to the utmost. Without choice and conflict there can be no real growth. *To this end, the first problems undertaken in the opportunity room were teaching how to study, how to use the library, and how, in a simple way, to do research work. The*

\* See *The Education of Gifted Children* by Lulu M. Stedman. (World Book Co.)

*child who possesses these abilities has gained more real education than can be derived from any amount of mere knowledge.* These children not only demonstrated ability to work alone but manifested a decided preference for independent study. Very soon they became surprisingly adept at investigating a subject from many angles."

The work of these children is almost wholly individual in nature. Each child has his own separate assignment, and upon completing this is permitted to proceed to the next without regard to what other members of the class are doing. The traditional schoolroom recitation has been abandoned. Instead, the children and teacher gather about a round table for informal discussion, which is frequently led by a child. Here also the children render the reports of their researches, and new class projects are organized. There is a certain informality as well as freedom. Tables and chairs replace the desks which convention has made the usual furniture of the school. Books on astronomy, geology, nature, science, history, geography, travel, and biography as well as the best fiction, are immediately available. It is the practice, whenever possible, not only to permit but to encourage the children to work and study together. It is the aim to make the environment coincide as closely as possible with situations in the home, in business, and in society.

"To plan any but a flexible curriculum for gifted children," says Miss Stedman, "would be analogous to putting a saddle and bridle on Pegasus." The curriculum in use is that of the regular grades, but expanded and enriched to meet the needs of the various individuals. Much of the drill, explanation,

and development necessary in teaching average children is eliminated. The time usually given to academic subjects has been decreased, and extra-curricular activities have been introduced, including many problems involving creative work.

These children in the opportunity room seem to be having an ideal kind of education. They write and produce plays, including designing, drafting of patterns, making of costumes, and planning of stage settings and properties. To illustrate historical or geographical subjects they get up fairs, pageants, travelogues, or balopticon lectures which they give to audiences of fellow-pupils, teachers and parents. They assume all responsibility for the presentation of their programs. "Few college freshmen," says Miss Stedman, "speak with the ease and poise with which many of these children address an audience."

### 3

ONE ponders, on reading of this perfect educational system for these superior children, whether such a method would not also be ideal for the average child.

Says Professor Terman regarding this educational experiment: "It should be of interest not only to teachers of similar classes, but to educators generally, and to parents; for it is by no means improbable that the educational methods best adapted to gifted children will be found to have wide applicability in the training of all children."

Progressive educators are working out such a type of education, adapted to the individual needs of all children. Nor do they find it either necessary



or advantageous to segregate children into groups according to intelligence, in order to fit education to the individual child. The classes being small ( seldom over twenty), each class can be widely heterogeneous and yet have opportunity for individual development. Every type of normal child, from the slow-minded to the brilliant, from the most extremely motor-active to the most academic-minded, can be successfully developed in one and the same educational group, by the progressive method. Each child works according to its capacity, contributing to the final group achievement or class conference whatever power in it lies.) The brilliant student contributes much, the slow student contributes less, but the work of the class does not suffer on this account.

The group project is an effective means of giving opportunity for expression to all sorts of talents and native abilities. Let us take, for example, the making of a class play. There is needed first creative ability of a literary kind, aided by historical research if the play is put in a past epoch. In rehearsals there is needed dramatic ability, executive ability, initiative. And for the staging of the play, scene painting, carpentry, costume designing and making, including dyeing and decorative work, electrical skill for the lighting effects, the printing of programs, ushering on the final day, the stage and audience managing. Thus, many diverse gifts and individual talents may find expression in the whole project of creating and staging a play; and so in other group projects as well, there is opportunity for diversity of accomplishments which are impossible in the ordinary class recitation based upon memorization of textual material.

Progressive educators deprecate the segregation of children according to their intelligence quotients or other qualifications. This may be the most feasible way for the overcrowded public school to solve its problem, but it is not an ideal solution. The different types of children, by associating together in their intellectual life, aid each other. The brilliant stimulate the slow-minded, while the average students give balance and poise to the group. The book-minded bring the results of their research to the group; and the motor-active contribute their special gift of concrete achievement. All learn to bear and forbear, to respect differences in mentality and temperament as fundamental facts which call, not for invidious comparisons, but for mutual understanding, sympathy, and service.

In actual life, what could be more distressing than for a group of geniuses to be obliged to live together, segregated from all average-minded people? Or for average- and slow-minded people to be segregated, and deprived of all contact with brilliant people? No, God has made us all to dwell together, to our mutual advantage. In families, in communities, in clubs, in organizations, people of every type mingle; and every earnest individual has his or her valued contribution to make.

Thus it seems more normal, more desirable, more conducive to full and wholesome development of the individual child, that there be not segregation but association on a basis which permits of the expression of wide individual differences. If we have classes small enough to allow for the mechanics of the thing; able, cultured teachers acquainted with child-psychology; and a theory of education which

makes the child and not the curriculum the center of things,—then we can give attention to the needs of individual children without having to sort them into groups, groups which even at the best will never be really homogeneous because no two children are alike.

If we make the curriculum sacred, we cannot accomplish this. But the center of gravity has been steadily shifting from the curriculum to the child. Back in 1899 John Dewey said: "What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must the community want for all of its children. Any other ideal for our schools is narrow and unlovely; acted upon, it destroys our democracy. All that society has accomplished for itself is put, through the agency of the school, at the disposal of its future members. *Only by being true to the full growth of all the individuals who make it up, can society by any chance be true to itself.*"

An example of the individual work done in one of the leading progressive schools will make clear how the child can be evaluated, and aided to individual development. Jennie Hall, in the Francis W. Parker School Studies in Education devoted to "The Individual and the Curriculum," describes her experiment with the seventh grade in letting the chief academic work develop as a sequence of individual projects, largely self-chosen. Her class consisted of thirty-three children. Certain subjects of the curriculum were excepted from the experiment: music, gymnastics, mathematics, modern language, and history, which were given by special teachers in the after-

noon. The morning was wholly devoted to the individual program, including organization, preparation, reports, and morning assembly. Much of the handwork done in the afternoon was correlated with the individual projects. Among the subjects chosen by the children for individual study and report were: paper-making, wireless, weapons, history of art, history of sailing ships, early maps, photography, railroads. The handwork included: dressing historical dolls, making airplanes, printing, drawings for wireless, making puppet theater, putting up telegraph lines.

One of the pupils describes how a period of preparation looked: "We are everywhere at once—some in the shop making a theater, some in the library poring over books, some in the laboratory making experiments, some in the art room printing, and still others in the classroom doing almost everything."

Even the home work of the children was thrown open to individual choice. Says Miss Hall, "Would it not be well for us to give our pupils in this matter the possibility of choice and of self-direction? Shall I, moreover, by my action give the child to understand that he is incapable of making his own choices and plans and of directing himself? Shall I crush his self-respect and his ambition by showing that I consider his interests of little worth? Let me not rob him of his rightful leisure—as important a requisite for right living as food and sleep and brains. Let me not discourage his forming the habit of making his own disposal of his own time. I want his life at school and his life at home to be parts of

a whole—a whole that is rich, interesting, purposeful, satisfying living, not a treadmill existence.”

Among the subjects submitted for home work were: Write a play on *Little Women*; read *Nicholas Nickleby*; read about Russia; learn semaphore signals for Boy Scout test; work on telephone I am making; draw subway for Record Book; find pictures of architecture; prepare for history test; plan color schemes for interior decorating; make pictures of furniture; read about Saint Francis; read about Washington, D. C., etc.

A study of these subjects reveals, as one would expect, a variety of tastes, of temperaments, of home environment. Some of the children are motor-active and choose activity subjects. Some are literary, and choose to read, or to write plays. Some are interested especially in history, some in travel. One pupil thinks that the best use he can make of his time is to “prepare for the history test.”

How marvelously this method adapts itself to individual needs and desires, weaving all together into a unified pattern of culture! The conferences, the reports, the assembly, enable the whole class to receive the benefit of each individual's achievement. Also in this way, technique is being acquired in reading comprehension, analysis, synthesis, and literary composition. So that the motor-active children have subtly set before them academic tasks which they never realize as abstract subject-matter. They are not, to their consciousness, doing work in English Composition and Elocution. It seems to them a natural and desirable part of their achievement that they prepare a report and lecture on it.

This interesting experiment in individual instruc-

tion was brought to an untimely end by the death of Miss Hall. In reply to an inquiry as to what results this experiment has had on the permanent organization of the work of the Francis W. Parker School, its director, Flora J. Cooke writes: "The principles underlying the plan are in operation and we do have individual instruction in the formal drill exercises of the school. The children overcome their individual difficulties by themselves or in very small groups, according to the need. All the rest of the work is organized around individual or social group projects involving every type of activity which the community needs in its development. There are all kinds of academic units of work for the purpose of getting information or knowledge for some definite end;—science, history or literature. There are artistic projects, using all the fine arts—music, drama, dancing, color and plastic arts. There are intellectual exercises demanded in the school government and community life."

While the practice in different progressive schools varies, it may be said that in all of them the children have opportunity for individual expression. Though these schools differ in the extent to which they depart from a sustained program and curriculum, they all agree in studying the needs of the individual child and in case of any conflict, in making the curriculum subservient to the child rather than the child subservient to the curriculum.

## 4

**BUT**, one may ask, are average children able to profit by an individual method which must evidently

depend for its success on qualities of responsibility, initiative, self-direction, and persistence? The superior child, of the genius type, can be trusted to a large degree with the carrying out of his own educational career. That is because geniuses are naturally endowed with ambition, initiative, power of self-direction, and will to overcome obstacles. They do not have to be driven to tasks that are expressions of their innate gifts. They carry on without task-masters and without supervision, needing only the guidance and synthesis of a more mature and disciplined mind.

Professor Terman, in his recent volume *Genetic Studies of Genius*, the result of researches into the qualities both of gifted children of to-day and of three hundred geniuses of the past during their childhood, enumerates the following traits as universally characteristic of genius: "intelligence, curiosity, judgment, originality, sense of humor, a persevering will, self-confidence, prudence, foresight, and an impelling desire for perfection. One particular trait of these children, is that the less intelligence a subject demands, the less they like it and the harder it seems to them; on the other hand, the more intelligence a piece of work demands, the more easy and enjoyable it seems to them."

Let us examine these traits of genius. Are they absent in the average child? Or are they present in all normal children, but with less force than in genius? Is it possible that genius is only a matter of degree? And that all children have the genius quality to some extent, but not to the degree and force which would enable achievement such as genius is capable of? Or on the contrary is there a distinct

cleavage between the genius type and the normal type, and are most children in need of routine direction, institutionalism, and bureaucracy?

This is an important question for educators to decide. If average children are not capable of self-direction; if they do not have initiative, responsibility, the power to overcome obstacles,—then a method which gives a large measure of individual freedom would be neither feasible nor profitable for them.

*Progressive educators base their educational practice on the theory that the average child, if given opportunity, if properly encouraged and guided, is capable of self-direction and of responsibility. Experiments covering over twenty years have abundantly proved this point of view. The child, given freedom and opportunity, has, on the whole, justified the faith put in him. Progressive education seeks to encourage the creative spirit. And the success of this effort is abundantly witnessed in the type of achievement and of personality which one sees in the typically progressive schools.*

Some educators believe that it is not a difference in kind but a difference in degree which separates the genius child from the normal child. And modern researches of psychologists into the nature of genius rather uphold this idea. The researches of Terman show that the genius type, instead of being abnormal and biologically degenerative, is sound, healthy, normal, developed to a superior degree in every direction. These children excel in sports as they do in studies. They are gifted artistically as well as intellectually. They are successful socially—being both well liked by their mates and looked to for leader-



ship. In other words, they are perfectly normal, but more gifted in every direction than the average child. It is rather characteristic of these children that they come from families with a heredity of intelligence above the average, and have been brought up in an environment of culture above the average. Thus it would appear that they are not saltations, or freaks, in the evolution of the human race; but represent normal progression in evolutionary sequence toward greater perfection of type. This perfection is physical as well as mental. These children, it is found, weigh more at birth, have excellent health during their first year, walk one month earlier than the average, have better resistance, good muscles, good lungs, sleep better and longer than the average, have sounder teeth than the average, etc.

This discovery will come as a surprise to those who have thought genius to be an erratic departure of nature from the norm—something unbalanced, emotionally and physically unsound. We forget that Poe, archetype of the diseased soul of genius, himself was a champion swimmer in his youth—and excelled in other sports; and that his warped personality may be traced to wrong training in childhood and youth rather than to inherent causes.

Doctors Voivenel and Remond, in their study on *Literary Genius* published in 1922 \* came to the conclusion that: "We may consider genius as a natural manifestation in which the fundamental qualities of being attain a maximum development which remains inaccessible to the vast majority—a sort of synthesis of the highest and best that nature can produce in the way of cerebral organization. Far

\* Alcan, Paris, 1922.

from being a phenomenon of degeneracy, it must on the contrary be regarded as the expression of progress, of 'progeneracy' or perfecting. *There is nothing more in the man of genius than in the normal man, unless it be a superior quality of general intellectual equilibrium.*"

The genius type is simply the most perfectly evolved type of the human race, produced naturally and with normal frequency. Approximating it there is a second type which shows talent, and has intellectual and physical qualities superior to the average.

But what is this average man we talk about? There is no such person. It is a fiction of statisticians. By subtle degrees of differentiation, so subtle that only Divinity could so create, the greatest genius type descends to the superior type, then to the medium, and so on down to the less gifted. It is just as hard to tell where genius ends in this scale as to tell where the moron or subnormal begins. *We cannot safely pigeon-hole normal children into classifications of intelligence groups, because there are no groups of intelligences created; but only an infinite number of individuals all differing slightly each from each, and reaching by the most microscopic gradations from genius to idiot.* And some who seem in childhood almost idiots turn out to have talent amounting to genius. Edison was such a child. So was George Sand.

Now the qualities that the genius child manifests, other children, less gifted, manifest also to a lesser degree. For instance, is it not characteristic of all children above the subnormal to take greater delight in, and give greater effort to, tasks which call for intelligence rather than tasks that do not?

Let us look again at the qualities Terman notes as characteristic of the superior child: Intelligence, curiosity, judgment, originality, a persevering will, self-confidence, foresight, desire for perfection. Are these qualities the monopoly of genius? No. They exist to some extent in the average boy and girl. It should be the function of education to give opportunity for the expression of these qualities, in order that they may become strengthened. *By treating children as mediocre we keep them mediocre.*

That this average child, forming personality patterns of mediocrity, can be changed into a unique child of rich personality merely by giving it abundant opportunity to express itself as a separate individual,—this is a discovery which every progressive school is making. Children who in other institutions seem mediocre, on coming to the school which allows and encourages individual expression, begin to “blossom out,” as one parent put it. They forget self-constraint, fear of ridicule, conformity—those habits forced upon them by mass standards which were little by little obscuring the soul and preventing it from shining. They begin to be themselves, to venture forth as upon a friendly world. They become happier; consequently more radiant. Their faces grow more sensitive, more mobile, more expressive of inner thoughts and emotions.

Yes, the ordinary boy and girl have also somewhat of those gifts which Nature has lavished in a supreme degree on geniuses. For instance, the quality of curiosity, so characteristic of genius, exists in all children; and progressive schools make it one of their chief aims to keep alive this wonderful quality which has as necessary a relation to the growth of

intelligence and wisdom as oxygen has to fire. Judgment they also show, as applied to the problems which they face; and problems of activity as well as academic nature are brought to their door in order that their judgment may be the better developed. Originality, which is *persona non grata* in the institutionalized type of school, thrives in progressive schools.

A persevering will? Well, that is a quality, one must grant, in which genius stands supreme—a true criterion of the superior person. Yet it can be cultivated, more or less, in every child. It cannot be cultivated, however, by methods of arbitrary discipline, by imposing the will of the school on the young and tender will of the child. *What the child needs is opportunity to express its own nature, and to learn how to use its will for some achievement which is self-desired. For will is commensurate with desire.* These boys who show such a weak and unpersevering will as regards the accomplishment of assigned lessons may surprise us by the fierceness and steady heat of their wills when fired by a desire which they are allowed to express in some individual project.

Miss Barker tells of a project showing a remarkably persistent will on the part of a boy who begged her to let him make a study of the piping for water and for heating in her school. He worked constantly at this for six months, during the daily period allowed him for this survey. He traced all the pipes, learned the situation of each faucet and storage-tank, the methods of filling and of emptying the baths, and the radiators. He ended by making a plan so perfect that it was later of service to heat-

ing experts with whom consultation became necessary.

Would this boy have shown as persevering a will in regard to some academic task imposed upon him? *Many a child who seems indifferent, lacking in application and perseverance, is so because of lack of desire toward the work he is engaged in.* Even geniuses show no perseverance in distasteful tasks imposed upon them. They are, in fact, the least persevering of people under such circumstances, comparing unfavorably even with the moron. If we analyze it, we shall find this persevering will which is characteristic of genius to be the result always of strong desires. And the converse is true, that where we can awaken or create strong desires in children, we shall under normal circumstances find a persevering will manifesting itself. Progressive schools give great attention to this important need of awakening strong educational desires, and of fostering persistent application of the will to tasks and duties.

Self-confidence, which is lacking in many institutionalized children, develops fast enough in a progressive school. Indeed it is necessary to keep it from developing so fast, in the atmosphere of freedom and sympathy and self-expression, that it might become unsocial in quality.

The desire for perfection, powerful in geniuses, has to be cultivated in the average child, which is too readily satisfied with less-than-perfect achievement. But this desire can be cultivated. And progressive educators take great pains to inculcate the taste for quality in achievement.

## 5

THUS we see that all those qualities which Terman found to be characteristic of genius exist to a certain degree in every child. Under a system of standardization and of institutional control which leaves no room for individuality, these qualities tend to become inhibited; and the child is finally turned out from the system, true to that average type for which the system was designed—the type of mediocrity.

One of the greatest services which the progressive schools are rendering to society is this demonstration that normal children can rise above the fatal average, can express individuality, can act and think and live according to genius-patterns rather than according to patterns of mediocrity.

It is true that the children of these progressive schools have distinct advantages of heredity and of environment. The cultural personality development which individual attention is able to give these children, could it also give the great mass of children that frequent our schools? We cannot be certain. But we have adequate grounds for belief that more subtle values, more of the genius quality, will develop in every child when treated as an individual.

There is something lost from the child when it is confined and cribbed in the conventions of too formal a system; something which the child once possessed, and which he manifested in those glorious pre-school days when life was free and followed the patterns of desire.

As a result of the conventions settling around it, "every child," says H. G. Wells in *The Passionate*

*Friends*, "passes into this secret stage; it closes in from its first frankness; it carries off the growing jewel of its consciousness to hide from all mankind. . . . I think I can see why this should be so, but I cannot tell why in so many cases no jewel is given back again at last, alight, ripened, wonderful, glowing with the deep fires of experience. I think that is what ought to happen; it is what does happen now with true poets and true artists. Some day I think it will be the life of all normal human souls. But usually it does not seem to happen at all. Children pass out of a stage—open, beautiful, exquisitely simple—into silences and discretions beneath an imposed and artificial life. And they are lost. Out of the finished, careful, watchful, restrained and limited man or woman, no child emerges again. . . ."

Is it possible that the education of the future, instead of forcing the reality of the child to remain hidden, instead of tending to inhibit genius, will permit of such a free expression of personality, in an atmosphere of kindly sympathy and appreciation, that society will be able to reap, as such educated children come to maturity, a richer harvest of average achievement than the world has yet known?

One of the chief glories of the human world as above the animal world lies in its extreme variability, biologically speaking. *The progress of humanity consists in variation forward, not in repetition of a type. Those who insist on the latter are cutting at the very roots of the new race which is evolving. The ideal school will allow for differences of personality, encourage them, and furnish a rich environment in*

*which the native ability of each child may blossom and fructify.*

All children need more than book-knowledge. They need that loving sympathy, understanding, and guidance which will give them confidence, courage, and inspiration to achieve those things for which Destiny has peculiarly endowed them. Is it not apparent that education, by its very aim and nature, must be individual? And that in so far as it fails of this it has failed of its essential mission? I should call that school ideal where there was such freedom for the expression of personality that the genius and the slow-minded child would feel equally at home; where the gifted child and the wholesome, appealing, much-needed average child, would feel equally happy and become successful in proportion to their respective abilities.

Education adapted to the individuality of the child would cost more, it is true. It means that there must be fewer in a class, perhaps not more than twenty. It means that teachers must be of greater ability, with more thorough training and with some knowledge of child-psychology, and with an understanding and sympathetic heart. The public can hardly be persuaded to supply even the necessary physical equipment for mass education. How, then, one may ask, can it ever come to the point of supplying the necessary funds for education which shall consider and conserve the individuality of the child?

We can, however, concern ourselves here only with what is fundamentally right and necessary for the child. The public will in time, when it sees the right, accomplish it.

It may be pointed out that the principle of free



public education which is now accepted in all civilized countries of the world was unheard of a century and a half ago. The public did not consider it its duty to educate children of the poor. People of means educated their own children and left the poor to illiteracy. The marvelous work of Joseph Lancaster and his Monitorial System in initiating and spreading the idea of free, public education is one of the most dramatic events in all the history of education. It has taken a full hundred years and more, from the time when Joseph Lancaster first sowed the seeds of universal public education, for the idea to be universally accepted and put in practice. The general public is now humanized up to the point of appropriating sufficient funds to give mass education in the form of quantity production.

When the public realizes that mass-education is not real education; that it results in an impoverished culture of the individual child; that through these faulty results the human race itself is impoverished since the growing generation is not helped and trained to its utmost capacity,—the public will gladly appropriate funds sufficient for giving what we might call “quality education.”

It is evident that a population which could add to the high general intelligence now resulting from universal education, a quality of discrimination, of initiative, and of creativeness, would be able to establish on this continent a civilization of greater prosperity, of greater happiness, and of greater splendor than the world has yet dreamed.

That people even now are awakening to this great need is shown by such utterances as that of Superintendent Ballou, to the teachers of his Washington,

D. C., school system: "It is our business as a profession to familiarize ourselves with the individual needs, capacities, interests and abilities of the pupils whom we instruct; to organize our educational program in such a manner as to provide an equality of opportunity for all the children of all the people. Differences among children are numerous and are significant. We shall not have discharged our obligations to the public until we shall have adopted the educational program of the schools to those differences."

Perhaps the day will come when the school will be like a garden and the teacher like the gardener who gives each plant the thing it needs, not vexed that fig trees do not bear oranges, or that the shade trees do not bear fruit at all; tilling the flowers, helping them to grow, caring for each one according to its kind, and loving each flower because it is different from the rest.

Personally, I do not see how anything less than this can be called education. For as Colin Scott has said, "In the mind of one child no subject will ever be the same as in the mind of another. Minds grow like plants of different species. They may live in the same soil and air, but they select and use the nourishment at their disposal for different purposes."

## CHAPTER VI

### CULTIVATING THE SOCIAL VIRTUES

*"Education aims to give every individual those experiences that will lead him to adapt himself to the social usages of his fellowmen."*

J. V. BREITWIESER.

**I**T takes a very skillful and devoted teacher to turn the energies of children—naturally egoistic, selfish, and at times cruel—into channels of sympathy, helpfulness, and social-mindedness.

Herbert came to school at the age of ten, a softy mamma's boy. If anyone teased or hit him he cried and slunk away. He was poor in all sports. In baseball he muffed, fanned out, and otherwise evidenced a high degree of inferiority. In soccer he was even worse. Naturally he was subject to teasing. His life had been made miserable for him at the public school where he had previously been.

What was the teacher to do about it? The self-government association seemed unable to solve the problem. Scolding, punishing, preaching wouldn't help, she knew. So she appealed to the group spirit. The school, it seems, was divided into groups, in imitation of Indian totem groups,—the Stags, the Eagles, the Beavers. Herbert belonged to the Eagles, but he was disgracing them. So the teacher gathered the Eagles together one day when Herbert was absent and had a talk with them.

"What are we going to do about Herbert?" she

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asked, thus throwing the responsibility upon them. "If we want our group to be as good as the Stags (the next older group), we have got to help Herbert to be a better sport."

Thus given the burden of proof, the children put all their will and ingenuity at work to think of ways of helping Herbert. "Well," said Evelyn, the tom-boy of the class, "when anyone hits him he ought to hit back." That idea met with unanimous approval. It seemed the only way out.

"Then why don't you all tell him that and train him to be a good Eagle? For our group cannot be strong with Herbert weak. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link, you know."

The Eagles agreed to give Herbert a training in self-defense, and Evelyn was delegated to be chief coach. When Herbert returned to school she took him aside and gave him earnest and sensible advice.

"When a boy takes your cap, you take his. If a boy hits you, you hit him back. You got to be a sport. We Eagles don't want the Stags bragging over us, and you are spoiling everything."

"But," rejoined Herbert, who was not inferior in size or strength, or really in courage, but only very sensitive, tender-hearted, and trained in habits of non-resistance, "if I hit a boy I might hurt him."

"Never mind," our little preceptress assured him. "It will teach them to let you alone. Don't you care. You just light in."

Herbert timidly began to experiment in the methods of self-defense suggested by his group. At first his attempts were rather sickly. But instead of meeting with derision from his group, he met with applause and encouragement.

"Atta boy!" "Take his cap!" "Stand up to him! You're just as good as he is!"

It is wonderful what this moral support of the gang did for Herbert. He soon learned how to give tit for tat. He no longer cried when set upon but robustly did his best to hold up his end of the bargain. Soon he ceased to be teased. And gradually, under the coaching of the Eagles, he began to improve in sports. His salvation was begun and well on its way before the end of the year, and his friends the Eagles were no longer ashamed of him. In general development he had made more progress than any child in the school.

The moral of this tale lies, not in the reformation of Herbert, but in the reformation of the attitude of the group toward him; due to its realization that as a chain is no stronger than its weakest link so the group is weakened by weak members, and best thrives when its weak members are strengthened.

## 2

THE individual development of the child, and the freedom of the child, principles so vigorously advocated and practiced by progressive educators, do not imply a necessary abandonment of the child to individualism, egoism, selfishness. On the contrary, among the ten points which by their own vote progressive educators deem most important to the new education stands the principle of developing in the child the social virtues,—to be kindly, coöperative, and serviceable.

The world has suffered much from individualism gone rampant. Such is not at all the aim of the pro-

gressive educator, who has a vision of a more sympathetic society, less egocentric, in which motives of service and kindness will be prevalent. On every hand we see signs of the dawn of a civilization the keynote of which shall be coöperation. Already it is affecting the world of industry and commerce, and even that of agriculture which is most prone to individualism and most injured by it.

It has been pointed out by those who consider this subject of coöperation that in a group thoroughly coöperating it is not a question of the individual sacrificing something of its own good for the sake of the others. It is a question of each individual laying on the table his own plans and ideas in order that from consultation a larger and better idea and plan shall result. Thus coöperation when truly practiced enhances the powers and achievements of each individual by enabling him to function in projects of greater vision and perfection than could have been worked out by any one member of the group, the aid and support of the group being always at hand.

The group mind—planning, creating, and achieving—can accomplish marvels of which the individual is incapable. An example of this in the life of commerce and industry is the laboratory work being done in electrical research by groups of men working in coöperation, by means of which most important results have been and are being achieved, results which could hardly have been achieved by any individual, no matter how brilliant, working alone. The long-distance telephone and the radio, for instance, are largely the fruit of group-inventiveness.

Therefore, it is clear that one of the most important qualifications for successful achievement in the coming civilization will be the power to harmonize with one's fellowmen and to work coöperatively, submerging—or better speaking, sublimating—the ego for the sake of group effort and achievement.

If this vision of the future be true, then one of the most important functions of the schools of to-day is to prepare for such a society. The child is prone to egotism. How can we help it to sublimate self-seeking ambition into attitudes that are social and into habits that are coöperative? On the other hand are there any practices in current education which should be eliminated in order to accomplish this end—practices which exaggerate the ego, the self-conceit, the vanity and striving, the desire for personal renown and exaltation regardless of others or even at others' expense?

In this day of civic pride and effort, with the slogan of democracy and service on everybody's lips, the Babbitts of the country would point with greatest pride to the public school system as an ideal trainer for democracy and public service. But is that the case? Are there not grave faults in our current system and practice of education which, being expressions of the past egocentric, individualistic age, tend to develop these qualities in the child?

Francis W. Parker, in his *Talks to Teachers*, asserted that one of the most prominent products of our schools to-day is the systematic cultivation of self-consciousness. This he laid to the custom of assigning competitive marks and prizes. This hope of reward, while it serves as a stimulus to the child,

produces the most undesirable results. "A child is dominated," said Parker, "by one desire and controlled by one motive. 'I wish to succeed. I am glad when I excel my classmates, when I arrive at the head.' The boy rushes home filled with joy of conqueror. He falls into his mother's arms and cries, 'I am at the head of the class. All the others are below me. I have beaten them.' No prayer meeting, no Christianity, no religion on earth can eradicate this monstrous quality of self-consciousness which parents and teachers ignorantly and prayerfully foster. The cultivation of the reward system in our schools is the cultivation of inordinate ambition, the sinking of every other motive into one of personal success.

"True, children must come into competition with each other, but that competition should be generous, should be the recognition of each other's powers, each other's weaknesses. There should be a desire to help or to be helped, a mutual giving and taking. . . . Work, all-round, educative work, work for the brain and hand, for the mind and body, work that best develops the whole being, work that is most needed by all the members of a school brings its own sweet, joyous reward." And Parker goes on to show that the competition of the child can be directed toward his own work, aiming at constant improvement and surpassing of past achievements rather than at prominence over his fellow pupils.

The true artist knows that the best work is never done under motives of competition with others, but only under individual inspiration and the desire of self-expression. There is the story told in the Chinese classics of a wood carver whose work was be-



yond that of all others. When the Emperor Yao asked him how he did such beautiful work he replied, "When I have a task to perform, I go into meditation for three days in order to forget myself. Then, with no thought of personal ambition, I go to the forest, select the finest piece of wood, and do my carving."

It is that kind of effort which we wish to encourage in the children of our school to-day. Let them desire to excel, yes; but not others, ~~only themselves~~. Let them surpass all their previous records. Let them attain the greatest triumphs imaginable, but triumphs within their own spiritual world; not triumphs over others, not competitive ranking which places them on eminence and by natural consequence condemns others to a lesser position in the public eye.

In the progressive schools there is an effort made to ~~prevent this development of personal vanity and ambition in the pupils and to lead their energies into channels of group activity and group achievement~~. Group play is a great educator of the social qualities, when rightly directed. Different games and sports are provided, so that all children in progressive schools take part daily. The limitation of sports as a social educator in the ordinary school lies in the fact that not all take part in the games, and chiefly those who most need such a training are the ones left out. If sports are to prove an integral factor in the educative process they must be universal, as in the English public schools and in the progressive schools of this country. They must be universally required and they must form part of the daily program.

But more important than touching the periphery of the problem, as sports and the playgrounds do, is the endeavor on the part of progressive educators to permeate the atmosphere of the whole school—academic as well as the extra-curriculum—with the spirit and practice of coöperation. Much of the academic work is done in the form of group projects or group conferences in which each individual brings a contribution to bear on the subject, not for the sake of the reward of marks and of prominence for himself as an individualist but for the sake of informing the group and of adding to the perfection of the work at hand.

The project is indeed a marvelous means of developing the social sense in children. Even in young children who are working out a project, egotism, self-consciousness, recalcitrance can be realized as social faults disturbing the group and are condemned by the group as a whole. It is not the school authority which punishes the child in such a case, but the public sanction on the part of the child's social group. Thus, from the very first, the most powerful sanctions and motives are brought to bear upon the child—those of its social group—to produce in it the social graces and amenities.

In the subject-matter of each grade, opportunity can be made for group expression. In geography, for instance, a class scrap-book may be made—the expression of the ability of the class as a whole—instead of each pupil making one of his own in competition one with the other. In Decroly's schools the children maintain collections of material available for the whole class, bringing contributions to it from time to time; and that collection can be drawn from

by any child who is working on a subject which the collection can aid. How different is this practice from a method by which the child who could succeed in getting the best material would be ranked highest and be victorious over his classmates who had not been so successful!

In the giving of plays in progressive schools group action is sought rather than individual excellence. For instance, instead of a few children being picked to perform who already have histrionic ability and expressiveness, the whole class or the whole group take part each according to his or her ability, the more gifted children helping the less gifted ones in their memorizing and rehearsing. When the final performance comes off—a play, a pageant, a demonstration of rhythmic—it is a social event in which a whole room or a whole school take part. It is not a performance so arranged that a few brilliant individuals shine for the passive enjoyment of the rest. Just as the whole town of Oberammergau throbs and vibrates with its Passion Play, so the whole school feels itself expressed in dramatic or other performances in a progressive school. This feeling is carefully cultivated by the teachers. Individual achievement, while it is encouraged, is not held up before the school for appraisal and distinction. Great care is taken to keep away those fatal enemies of man's best self, egotism and conceit.

Where the academic work is being accomplished by a group project or individual project, competition is practically eliminated with all its vicious results. The children are not thinking how each one can surpass the other, nor what personal success they can achieve. Their minds and efforts are put

upon the task as the end in itself. Even though there may naturally be some egocentric motives in their work, it is the business of the progressive educator to watch for such symptoms and try to overcome them, praising the social qualities and fostering their development.

A very excellent practice in progressive schools is that of letting the more brilliant pupils help the slower ones in different subjects of the academic program. A child who knows its tables perfectly may do the very kindly act of drilling a poorer student in the tables instead of going on with some work which is of only selfish advantage to it.

I remember the case of a teacher who retired from her public school system some years ago because she could not express ideas which were then a little too progressive for her time. The superintendent visiting her class one day and finding some of the children helping others in their work, upbraided her on the ground that she was being paid to do the teaching.

In progressive schools, teachers are paid to achieve the aim of aiding the children to accomplish for themselves and for others the utmost possible. What they are asked to do is to develop the qualities, the capabilities, the initiative of the children by any means feasible and possible. They have every opportunity and a very distinct responsibility toward helping these children to help themselves. How different an atmosphere from that of the schoolroom in which the teacher is doing the indoctrinating and the children are merely recipients, rewarded by marks and prizes according to their degree of efficiency in receptivity and regurgitation!

In progressive schools, numerous enterprises are undertaken of a social value to the outside community. (Of course, such civic enterprises are not peculiar to progressive schools. Many splendid things of this kind are being done in the public schools to develop the civic qualities in the children.) Two such activities might be described. In the Junior Elementary School of Downers Grove, Ill., children of the first and second grade undertook the project of clearing a public brook of débris and waste dumped along its banks. The point in which such a project in a progressive school differs from that in the ordinary school is that in the former type of school it is deemed important enough to form part of the academic program and is not looked upon as an extra-curricular activity which must find time apart from the regular program. In the Francis W. Parker School of Chicago, the children each winter have a toy hospital to which broken toys or cast-off paraphernalia are brought from their homes by the children, repaired or made over in the craft shop, and presented to children's hospitals at Christmas time. Even the parents join in this lovely project, coming in the evenings to help in the carpentry and woodwork; and the whole school vibrates to this motif for some weeks previous to Christmas. Many such civic projects could be enumerated and described, not necessarily peculiar to progressive schools.

Francis W. Parker, pioneer of progressive education, in order to cultivate an "esprit de corps," a social and comradely spirit, brought his whole school (the Cook County Normal School) to-

gether daily in an assembly which differed from the ordinary school assembly in that here the students took an active part, presenting as their share of the program the results of classroom work in literature, history, nature study, or a celebration of some festival day or historic event. Every class in the school was responsible for a certain number of morning exercises a year. Each person, big or little, taking part in the exercise knew that he was expected to make the most distant listener hear and understand what he was saying, and usually controlled thinking and clear enunciation was the result. Says Flora J. Cooke of these exercises, "The habit of contributing our small best to the common good was a soul-expanding and heart-warming process, which is the very essence of social education."

Many, perhaps it is safe to say all, of the progressive schools follow this example set by Parker, in having a daily, or at least a weekly, assembly in which the children in turn take part, presenting informational material which has been part of their class-work, or entertainment in the form of individual and group performances. This is indeed, as Parker foresaw, a very important factor in developing the social attitude among the pupils of a school. Here all meet together—pleasantly, happily—and either contribute or listen, in both cases deriving a social gain. For in listening courteously and patiently to performances of children not always highly successful, the audience has opportunity to grow in the spirit of group kindness and mutuality. Often it happens that a child who is slow in academic work and poor in sports may make a splendid contribution to the assembly, increasing thereby his

own self-confidence and the esteem of his fellow students toward him.

In the schools directly influenced by Parker's educational ideas, the Francis W. Parker School of Chicago, the Francis W. Parker School of San Diego, and the Shady Hill School of Cambridge, a daily assembly is held. Of this feature of the work in the Parker School of Chicago, Martha Fleming says: "The school is a place where we live together. A large portion of every day is spent there, and the interests of both teacher and children center about it quite as strongly as about the home. We are one family, and it is essential to our unity, harmony, and success, that we have a time and place for coming together. The morning exercise is a common meeting-ground; it is the family altar of the school to which each brings his offerings—the fruits of his observations and studies, or the music, literature, and art that delight him; a place where all cooperate for the pleasure and well-being of the whole; where all contribute to and share the intellectual and spiritual life of the whole; where all bring their best and choicest experiences in the most attractive form at their command. The morning exercise is one means of impressing upon the children the unity of the whole school and of counteracting some of the undesirable effects of the separation into grades. This community interest is usually a restraint upon individual selfishness. Each child learns that the interest and the happiness of the whole is his special concern, his individual responsibility, that he is a citizen of the community, endowed not only with the rights, but also the duties of citizenship.\*

\* Francis W. Parker Year Book, "The Morning Exercise as a Socializing Influence."

## 3

SINCE progressive education aims at the all-round development of the child, it holds itself responsible as much for character training as for mental training. Our ideal average child will be honorable, sincere, self-reliant, responsible, of harmonious personality, sympathetic, serviceable; and in addition to these needed and admirable qualities we may expect a certain proportion of children to develop qualities of initiative and leadership.

Very good. The model child stands sketched before us. But how attain the goal in actuality? It is easy to say how not to attain it. Children educated in an atmosphere of absolute and arbitrary authority, along institutionalized methods which give no freedom and opportunity for the expression of personality, will not tend to manifest the above-mentioned virtues. Of that we can be assured.

For as Kilpatrick points out, character being the sum total of all our habits, we acquire in the way of character only what we have opportunity to practice. How can a child acquire the power of self-direction unless he has an opportunity to practice self-direction? The child, in order to develop a self-reliant and responsible character, must be allowed to make decisions. He must have opportunity to practice these good qualities. He must act in a social group, and in a social situation. How else can we expect him to develop the social, coöperative virtues?

One has only to look at history to see what the effect of long domination is on weak subject races. While free virile races are universally character-



ized by the virtues of courage, honor, self-reliance, dignity, the subject races tend to develop the qualities of mental agility, cleverness, deceitfulness, fear, and unreliability. A study of the Near East will reveal that very situation existing there to-day. Deceitfulness is indeed a virtue in a subject race which is in constant danger of arbitrary force. For nature protects by dissimulation those weaker insects, animals, and humans with whom force is lacking.

And so with children. Practically any child can be bred into dishonesty by too arbitrary an authority. Conversely, practically any child can be bred to honesty by gentle rule and sympathetic guidance. When I taught at Robert College, I found that the students—then mostly of the races subject to the Turk—lied by instinct. They lied even when openly detected in an act. They lied—so deeply seated was the habit—even against their own interests. Yet I recall the amazing transformation of one class to a point where, if any little misdemeanor occurred, I had only to ask "Who did that," and the boy who did it would immediately stand up.

How was this accomplished? By eliminating punishment, banishing fear, and appealing to the students' own desire to make rapid achievement in their learning of English. When a student would thus openly confess to a slight disturbance, I did not punish him. Three questions usually sufficed to cure the boy of any such habit of mischief. "Did you mean to do that?" The boy would hang his head. "Don't you realize that it disturbs the class?" "Yes, sir." "Will you try not to do such a thing again?" "Yes, sir."

I found these boys, before the end of the year's

training, with but a few exceptions perfectly honorable, dependable, and coöperative. Thus we see how true is Kilpatrick's statement that character is the sum of our habits. These boys might be said to have had at first dishonest characters as a result of practicing dishonesty, and later to have manifested an honorable character as a result of practicing honesty. It must be stated that there was, to build upon, an earnest desire for education on the part of the great majority of these boys, and an interest in their English work.

Now if character is formed by practice, and we wish the school to be a character-forming environment, it follows that we must make 'the school a place where the child has opportunity to meet situations and to make decisions based upon his own volitions. Therefore, progressive schools seek to afford such situations and to give ample opportunity for character-making decisions. Some ways in which they do it have been described in previous chapters.

It will be seen, upon reflection, that all the different qualifications of progressive education adhere together. It is not safe to establish any one principle without at the same time establishing the others. For instance, unless the children find interest and joy in their school work, it will not be possible to establish the amount of freedom which characterizes progressive schools; and unless opportunities for creativeness are given, the individual development of the child will not prove successful. Similarly, it is clear that character-building in a progressive school is not an isolated function of the educator, provided for under certain phases of the curriculum; rather, it is an effort to make the whole daily,

weekly, and monthly program of the school a training in moral living, full of opportunities for experiences in moral conduct.

Says Dr. Bamberger in *Progressive Education and Character Building*: "The primary function of a progressive school, then, is not to teach arithmetic, nor languages, nor reading and the like; but to have children learn to make, to do, to create, to produce, to study, and *to live together coöperatively and sympathetically.*"

✧ In schools too crowded, too formal, too institutionalized, the employment of moral lectures, exercises, reading material and other devices, no matter how excellent or how thoroughly utilized, can never afford the opportunity and medium for character development such as the progressive schools afford through their smaller groups, their freedom of movement, their flexibility of program, their group projects, their self-government, their close coöperation with the home, and their study of and adaptation to the individual child which enables them to focus effort on any personality defect in their pupils.

✧ In progressive schools the development of personality has precedence over curriculum; and character is put before knowledge. Whatever else be their merits, it must be acknowledged that these schools are turning out splendid characters, solid, reliable, coöperative, possessed of the social virtues.

Victor E. Marriott, prominent in the field of Religious Education, gives in the magazine of that name a generous testimony to the work of progressive educators along the line of character training: "Progressive schools are frankly experimental. They do

not start with a preconceived type of character to which all pupils are expected to conform. They confront pupils with situations in their daily round in school; they try to make the issues clear, and then trust to the judgment of the group. They are not convinced that our present standards of conduct represent the acme of development. They look for something better. *They hope to release forces that shall produce a kindlier, more harmonious, and more creative individual than our present system of education is producing.* The method in which they trust is a way of freedom and bold adventure. The right, they believe, is not something to be treasured in a golden bowl, but something to be achieved." \*

## 4

THE modern world of business and affairs puts character before cleverness as a qualification for employment and success. Inharmonious geniuses, in most lines of business, simply are not wanted. The world is strewn to-day with pitiful wrecks of humanity whose abilities should have assured them a high success, but whose lack of the social virtues were such that their post-educational career has proved a continuous retrogression so far as outer success is concerned.

Modern industry is geared so highly, so delicately, as to require team work of the most exacting kind. The ability to coöperate is the "sine qua non." Arthur Pound, writing in the *Atlantic*

\* *Religious Education*, November 1927, "The Progressive Education Movement and Character Training."

*Monthly* on the human factor in modern industry, says regarding the qualifications of the desirable employee: "The indiscriminating hiring of mere hands and muscles is no more; selection of employees proceeds upon the basis of character, upon the adaptability of the applicant to fit into a system which demands steadfastness and dependability. The work depends upon men, less as doers of this or that particular thing, than as men of good intent who do what they have to do with a will."

Education is enlarging its scope to consciously include, as part of its obligation to society, the development of a properly social being. The report of a committee working under the direction of the Commonwealth Fund expressly says that "*education, broadly conceived, is especially concerned with developing the habits of thought, emotional response, and behavior that are basic to the successful operation of a coöperative living.*"

For the individual, then, it is of the utmost importance to learn to control the tendency toward pride, self-seeking, and exploitation. In a monistic universe, the creation and the creature of one ruling Destiny and Power, it is evident that there is no room for private ambition and prowess. Sooner or later the egotist, the man of immense conceit and selfish ambition, must crash down in utter ruin and humiliation, else the universe would become an anarchy of warring wills and ambitions. Destiny knows how to use the personal efforts of selfish individuals to its own purposes. It extracts what good can be had from them, but throws aside the empty vessel. Only the humble, only the harmonious, the co-

operative individual, can permanently survive and flourish in a universe based upon law and order with harmonious interworkings of every part.

As for Society, can anyone fail to realize the vast importance to it of developing these social, these serviceable, these non-egoistic qualities in the child? In the past the world has gotten on, it is true, through the progress made by the ambitions of its citizens pitted against each other, but it has limped and gone poorly. It has been subject to the chronic disaster of war which is the direct result of egotism, of selfish competition, of the private ambition of individuals or of nationalities. The world must find a better foundation for its culture and civilization, or it will hardly survive the tremendous dangers of self-seeking competition which finds available for use the wholesale and subtle means of destruction being invented to-day.

This effort of progressive education to cultivate the social virtues is in reality, then, a spiritual effort. It is getting at the very essence of the spiritual nature and end of man and training toward a better society. It is aiding the child's moral development more than sermons and preachments could do. It is producing a very beautiful atmosphere and spirit permeating the whole educational process; and is pointing out the one way, I believe, which leads to character—the habit of daily living in an environment conducive to nobility of soul.

Gertrude Hartman sums it up admirably when she says: "The future of democratic society depends upon the socialization of the schools. When they become practice communities in which young people through their growing years are trained to respond

in desirable ways to social situations, when students are versed in solving social problems, when the curriculum is enriched by a broad social interpretation, we shall have the hope of creating a society capable of directing social changes instead of being overwhelmed by them."

## CHAPTER VII

### RELEASE THE CREATIVE ENERGIES

*"If the school cannot give more vital experiences than the child can get anywhere else in the world, it has no valid claim upon his time."*

W. FRANKLIN JONES.

**C**AN the natural qualities and capacities of the child be inhibited by the wrong kind of education?

Some years ago, at a home where I visited frequently was a little girl of eight named Laila, who was quite gifted in the way of spontaneous and creative drawing and improvisation on the piano. She had not at that time attended school, but had grown up in the home, reading much, expressing herself according to her moods in creative drawing and music, and enjoying nature in all its varied beauties. When I then knew her she could draw rapidly under inspiration in a remarkable way. One evening, as I read scenes from a narrative poem that I had been writing, the scene of which was laid in ancient India, she sat on the floor in the midst of the family drawing illustrative pictures as I read. Some eight illustrations were made within an hour and a half, wonderfully catching the spirit of the poem and its Oriental atmosphere, surprisingly correct in accessories of Oriental costume and physiognomy. How she got that Orientalism into the pictures, and the expression of rhapsody in some of them describing an



Oriental saint, it is difficult to say; because one never knows how much of our creational expression in life comes from the subconscious memory and how much from inspirational sources beyond that.

No less remarkable were her achievements in improvisation on the piano. One day I experimented. "Play that it's a warm, sunny day at noon; the fields full of flowers and the bees humming around." And that motif she expressed adequately and beautifully in improvisation. Then I changed the theme to something quite different. "Play," I said, "a storm at sea with the wind blowing and the waves crashing." Amazing was the quality of turbulent force which now appeared in her playing.

This power of adapting herself to the mood which was on her, this truly creative power, was rapidly destroyed in her by the following process. Jealous neighbors, seeing her play about freely while their children were at school, complained to the school board, and she was obliged to attend school. A grandmother came to live with the family who taught Laila the piano from the ground up as she thought it should be studied. Four years passed before I saw the girl again. She now had no trace left of that wonderful creativeness that she had had at the age of eight. Her drawing and her piano playing had the mediocre quality of talent. She was bright, quick-minded, but devoid of that volcanic creative force which had manifested itself when her childhood was untrammelled by an educational system.

In one of our great American Universities recently was a poet even then well known to many

lovers of poetry. His name and the name of the university I withhold because this incident was given me in confidence by an alumnus of the university. It seems that the poet student was absenting himself too much from attendance at lectures. He was haled before the Dean and told he could not go on in this way, exceeding his allowance of cuts. He said, "But this is the only way that I can do if I am to stay here. When the mood of creation comes upon me I must write, lectures or no lectures." "Well," said the Dean, "you cannot stay here if you continue to absent yourself." The young poet, whose fame perhaps had not reached the ears of the Dean, resigned. Alumni who knew the reputation of the young genius, hearing of this situation and considering it a distinct loss to the university, put the matter before the Dean's office with the result that the youth was written to and told he would be perfectly free henceforth to carry out his own creative urge while attending the university. But it was too late. His mind and spirit had turned against the institution and its regimentation. He had sailed to London to carry on his writing there, feeling that his creative work would be too much hampered by further attendance at this famous institution of learning.

Such instances as these demonstrate clearly that genius is seldom at home in institutions of learning, because the prevailing educational methods furnish little or no opportunity for creative work and on the other hand tend to paralyze the creative powers by too much routine and regimentation.

"Parents and schools cannot create talent or genius but they can greatly discourage, or even suppress it! Also, they can encourage and develop it,

a fact I should like every present-day parent and educator to know." Thus speaks Dr. Catherine M. Cox, who has recently completed an exhaustive investigation of the lives of three hundred geniuses born between the years 1450 and 1850, the results of which are published by Stanford University in the book, *Early Mental Traits of Three Hundred Geniuses*. What does her study of the childhood lives of such men as Franklin, Washington, Rembrandt, Goethe, Humboldt, Disraeli, show? First, that these geniuses in childhood possessed traits very similar to those of our superchildren of to-day. And secondly, that intelligent interest on the part of the parents or others gave many of those youthful geniuses of the past the needed opportunities for their development. The inference follows, that our gifted children of to-day should have the most abundant opportunity for rich, cultural experience and for creative expression, to the end that their fullest possible genius quality may be developed for the benefit of themselves and of society. Least of all, should they be hampered by too much regimentation while at school, or driven from the school system by failure of the school to adapt its methods to the needs of the gifted child.

If the wrong educational methods tend to drive geniuses from school, what effect do they have upon the child whose gifts are not of such high degree as to make him a genius? *Are not the creative qualities which in their aggregation we call genius and which we believe to be to some degree in every child, are not these too much inhibited in our schools? Perhaps our present system of education, designed to advance all to medium ability and thus patterned*

*to produce mediocrity, is in reality stultifying the genius-quality of the race.*

## 2

TO-DAY we stand, in education, at the parting of the ways. There is the old formalism which treats the child as an intellectual machine; the disciplinary regimentation derived, with some things that were good, from Prussia. On the other hand is the spirit of the new age, and especially of the New World, which would make of education a process of the unfolding of powers, of the development of capacities,—through freedom of opportunity, through initiative, through expression. The first method proceeds from without inward, seeking to form the soul of the child to a set pattern. The second method proceeds from within outward, seeking to free the soul from trammels and to encourage and inspire it to expand.

The world of education is now beginning to feel this pulse of activity, of initiative, of originality. The new types of schools are focusing their work about the creative energy of the child.

This is not merely a movement toward self-expression; nor is it a capitulation to the modern tendency to individualism. It is an effort to diametrically change the nature and essence of education, making it fundamentally creative instead of acquisitive. In whatever field of effort the creative energy of the child is awakened, the influence goes out through all the ramifications of the child's being.

“The vital function of creative thought,” says Calvin B. Cady, director of the Music-Education

School of Portland, Oregon, "lies not in its evidence of 'self-expression' but in its revelation of the nature, capacities and content of individual being and in the opportunity it offers the child for the true discovery of individual selfhood. The revelation of the creative spirit in any subject of thought is the demonstration of its application to all ideas—the whole content of mind. Every subject, therefore, may and should serve the purpose of awakening creative thought, and its influence will necessarily be felt in the general mental activity of the child."

"Those of us who have watched young life grow," states that inspirer of youth and enlightener of adults, Hughes Mearns, writing on "The Creative Spirit and Its Significance for Education,"\* "from dependent insecurity to independent power through the opportunities for the cultivation of the spirit which the newer schools afford, are assured that something ever so much more important than a beautiful product is the result of the new freedom in education. Personality develops with the springing certainty of a dry seed dropped into moist earth, Character emerges; and with it knowledge, a kind of wisdom, so sure in its judgments as to make us listen and attend rather than command and instruct. Taste is never, as with us, a hypocrisy. Confidence comes into the spirit and thrives there, for fear and bewilderment—the acknowledged tools of the older education—never yet begot faith in oneself. New hungers arise, new desires, new satisfactions, and these are the very food of education. The cultivation of the creative spirit makes for great artists, giant scholars and thinkers; it is the recipe for dis-

\* *Progressive Education*, April 1926.

inction. The story of the leaders of the race is the story of those who cultivated the creative spirit in spite of the schools. Why is it, I wonder, that we have never taken that lesson to heart? The newer education is learning the uses of the mysterious forces of the spirit through which one may literally educate oneself for all the important needs of living."

This modern attitude of respect for the natural genius of the child and sympathetic aid to its development harks back to Rousseau. But it has taken all the time from the publication of his *Emile* in 1762 till now to get this attitude firmly established. Pestalozzi, Froebel and Herbart made their great contributions to the stream of liberalizing theory and practice concerning the child. The work of Francis W. Parker, of John Dewey, and of Patty Hill and others in this country has exerted an enormous influence toward the establishment of this concept of an active and expressive form of education centered about the child's needs. As Sir John Adams says, "*The child is proved to have entered into his kingdom.*"

In those schools which have caught the vision of the child as being by nature an artist and creator, the work revolves about the innate desire of the child to express itself. Not only is expression unhampered, but it is encouraged and stimulated. What one appreciative father wrote to a progressive school is typical of the perception on the part of the modern parent of the value of this type of education. "We keenly appreciate what the school has done during the past year for our three boys. The happy combination of freedom and skillful stimulus

in an environment of well-chosen materials has aroused their eager interest and has developed their ability for independent and creative activity. We have been particularly delighted at the emphasis you have placed on esthetic expression for each child, regardless of age or special aptitude. The orchestra, the weaving, the modeling, the fresco painting, the gardening, the building, the play-acting, the singing, the dancing have done so much to enrich the children's outlook and capacity for enjoying life. We have been glad too that they have been getting the significance of everyday things in their walks and trips. Perhaps, above all, we have appreciated the love and understanding you have all given the individual development of these three quite different personalities. We have actually seen each boy grow under it—Ben in interest and character, Jack in the assertion of his own personality, and Peter in observation and coördination."

## 3

CREATIVE desire on the part of the young child naturally expresses itself in handwork and crafts, in the arts of modeling, painting, music, poetry, drama, and eurhythmics. The new schools provide abundant equipment and opportunity for expression along all these lines. In developing these art forms, instead of using the formal method of teaching the technique in a routine way, the children are encouraged to express themselves freely and the technique is perfected as the need arises and is perceived.

Marvelous work has been done with children in this free method of art expression. Perhaps the most

striking and best known to the general public is the work done by Cizek's children in Vienna. His exhibits have traveled widely over this country and given visual demonstration of what children can do when left to themselves to create as they see and desire. Cizek's method is to invite the children to come to his studio, inspire them by the sight of the creative work being done by himself and his pupils, and let the desire to create germinate and blossom into self-expression. Technical training is given as the children feel the need of it. The best argument for this method is the fruits it produces. The art work of rare and spontaneous quality done by his children, exhibited in originals and reproductions, has had a vitalizing effect upon art teaching in this country.

Here and there other art teachers have been doing similar things. Some very notable creative work with children has been achieved in this country. Among the best known of such teachers is Mangravite, who for the last few years has worked with the children of the Montessori School and the Potomac Park School in Washington. Under his inspiration young children five, six, eight years of age, have achieved results which seem incredible.

A few striking specimens of the work of Mangravite's young pupils together with many other examples of children's creative art work can be seen in the volume, *Creative Expression Through Art*, published by the Progressive Education Association. The book is an epoch-making publication, being the first notable collection of children's creative work in art. It is profusely illustrated in color. The pictures in it speak for themselves in a most convincing way



as to what children can do through inspiration rather than through routine drill.

I shall never forget the quaint, gentle, wistful smile with which Angelo Patri waved his hand around the art room of his famous School Number 45, the Bronx, and apologized to me for the kind of drawing the children were doing. "Here," he said, showing me beautiful creative poster work of original kind on the walls of the room and in portfolios, "is what the children had been doing until some busybody drew the attention of the school board to my departure from the routine methods of art teaching. Then, I received directions to carry out the program as designated for the public schools of New York. Here it is," he said with a sweep of his hand. "PLASTER CASTS!"

Needless to say, the plaster cast method of teaching art does not prevail in progressive schools.

Also in other forms of art-expression using different mediums, such as paper cutting, clay modeling, ivory-soap carving, woodwork, handicrafts of various kinds, children show marvelous courage, skill and creative power. There have been exhibits of this work at the annual conferences of the Progressive Education Association. The careful study of such concrete material, or better still a visit to the craft shop of a progressive school, will do more to convince one of the potential ability of childhood and of the value of this creative method of education than volumes of verbal exposition.

IN the teaching of music also more creative ways are being sought. Sartis Coleman has developed a method described fully in her book, *Creative Music*, by which she carries the children through an epitome of musical development as it occurred in the history of the race. They begin with the most simple instrument, the drum, and learn rhythm from the use of that; then they take the reed instruments, and next the plucked string instruments of which the Greek harp is the classic example; from that they pass to the fretted string instruments such as the violin,—all this before they undertake that most complicated and relatively modern instrument, the piano. The children design and make their own musical instruments. They learn to play in little orchestras. It is a delightful sight to see an orchestra of children as young as six or seven years of age joyously and earnestly playing in concert upon these simple instruments.

As regards the piano, Angelo Patri suggests in his *Problems of Childhood* that the ideal way for a child to begin is by getting the joy of creativeness first, before the drudgery of drill. "The child who loves sounds should have the freedom of the music studio. Try to get over the idea that a child must strum over the scale for endless years before he can make music. He does not. THE VERY BEST MUSIC TEACHER I KNOW SAYS THAT HE NEED NOT. He can sit down at the piano and play a song, play a mood, if you let him. The technique, the drudgery of the art, will all be mastered willingly ONCE HE GETS A GLIMPSE OF THE JOY BEYOND."

A new invention for teaching piano to young children has an ingenious device of electric light bulbs which shine behind the keys and guide the young child in playing a piece of music without the need of any notation or printed page. This instrument makes it possible for the child to play real music and enjoy the expressive delight of music from the start. According to the *Chicago Music News* this instrument has produced marvelous results in the musical education of young children.

Most interesting of all, as regards the art of music, is the practice in many progressive schools of the actual composing of simple melodic themes by children. This opportunity for creative expression is as important a factor in the musical education of children as the Cizek method is in art, in that inspiration, creation, discovery of power and of beauty precede and inspire the acquisition of technique.

Harriet Seymour, in regard to her work with children in this matter of musical creativeness, says: "The mistake we have made is that we have not adopted simple enough ways of culturing the creative faculty, for no matter how apparently dull or inert the child may be, it is possible to awaken that spark of creative power dwelling within him. This is rapidly being discovered and the teaching of music is now undergoing great changes. We are swinging around from the mechanical to the creative."

How the teaching of music is responding to this "motif" of self-expression which is revolutionizing all education, is vividly described by the Junior Elementary School of Downers Grove, Illinois: "The orchestra of the Junior Elementary School has come about through the intense interest shown by the

children in the playing of the instruments in preference to music of any other kind, a greater interest even than is shown for dance rhythms when the child has reached the First Primary. The development of the orchestra has not been forced, but there has been an effort made to provide material which will meet the growing consciousness of the children's power to use more difficult instruments. There have been three direct sources which have contributed to the interest and development of the present orchestra. These sources in terms of subject-matter are Indian Life, Fairies, and Primitive Man."

In the teaching of group singing, Thomas Whitney Surette has developed a method which makes fuller use of sensation and expression. "Listening," he says, "should be a part of the music program throughout the school life of the child. Children are first taught simple songs in early years, with dramatization of some of them, marching, skipping, running, etc., as a preliminary to seeing notation." Approaching the intricacies of notation in this way, the reading of music will not present serious difficulties. Following this method of musical education the girls of the Beaver County Day School are doing significant work in musical reading and in choral singing.

Of the value of music in the life of the child Mr. Surette has this to say: "Music, it may be pointed out, is the one form of activity in which a whole school can take part while at the same time creating something beautiful. It is like play minus the exuberant physical activity but plus an exuberance of the spirit. It requires the most accurate 'teamwork,' it is unselfish, it awakens sympathy, creates joy, frees

the soul and subtly harmonizes the physical being. What school can afford to neglect it? What school can afford to offer its children anything less than the whole of it?"

In progressive schools music and art are considered of such educational importance that they are not relegated to the category of extra-curricular subjects. Statistics in England and this country show that music, in addition to its esthetic values, ranks high as a mental stimulus. Robert W. Claiborne says in an article in the magazine, *Children*, "Music study develops especially the following faculties— invention, memory, quickness of thought, accuracy, concise observation, concentration of mind, broad mental grasp, ability to compare and analyze. To these may be added the following emotional qualities—patience, self-control, refined feelings, cultured taste, imagination, acute sensibilities, sensitive moral perceptions, and most essential of all, that firmness of will necessary to overcome difficulties and to surmount crises on the instant."

## 5

IN the art of literature, young children in schools of this country and England have demonstrated by their creative output how universal is the gift of creation. The right kind of teacher can inspire and aid each and all of his pupils to creative expression. Two men who are geniuses at thus arousing the genius quality in children are H. Caldwell Cook of the Perse School, Cambridge, England, and Hughes Mearns, who did such a monumental work with the children of the Lincoln School of New York City.

Each of these has written of his work in setting free the creative spirit of children—the one in *Perse Playbooks*, the other in *Creative Youth*. Still more striking evidence of the wide-spread prevalence of poetry writing among school children is furnished by the anthology, *Singing Youth*, in which have been compiled by Mabel Mountsier the best in child verse both here and in England.

The method used by teachers in securing the poetic expression from children is very similar to Cizek's method of inspiring the free expression of the art impulse: A rich background of poetic material is supplied the children. They may live with poems for weeks before it is suggested that they themselves compose. Then, with the rhythm and sensuousness of beautiful poetry flooding their consciousness, and with a definite idea about which to compose, they themselves create. Under the best conditions, with a gifted teacher and an inspired class, each child can be led to compose something of poetic value, and certain children pour out exquisite lyrics as naturally as thrushes sing.

Under such a teacher in our own school, a little girl of seven composed the following poem on rain, which was one of those selected for publication in *Singing Youth*.

#### 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?

Another poem by a girl of six from the same class I like even better.

### 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.

It may interest the reader to get a peep behind the scenes with a certain teacher in a Junior High School whose method of inspiring children to poetic expression was described by Mabel Mountsier at the 1927 Convention of the Progressive Education Association. "She sometimes makes suggestions as to the theme by giving a general word that starts a train of thought, such as the word 'lost,' by naming a color—'scarlet,' for instance; or by playing music which has a pictorial effect as "The Sorcerer's Apprentice" by Dumas or Ravel's "Mother Goose" suite. All these have resulted in beautiful poems. In one of her classes a study of motion and rhythm proved a fertile field of suggestion. After reading poems about the wind by Stevenson, Rossetti, and others, the children tried to explain various winds, from zephyrs to tornadoes. To make the motion clear one beat out a dance, one drew a picture, and another waved her arms. Then they wrote poems to transfer these motions to verse. This is a zephyr poem by a pupil of eleven:

## THE WIND

I am standing at the window,  
I'm quiet as a mouse;  
I'm waiting for the wind  
To come singing round the house.

I don't want nurse to see me,  
She'll say, "Oh, you'll catch cold!"  
She's in the kitchen making tea  
That's why I feel so bold.

The wind tells of fairy things,  
Of funny elves and dwarfs,  
Of fairy dance in magic rings  
On a carpet made of moss,

Of fairy fish that swim around  
In sparkling water in the woods,  
And little houses in a mound  
With toadstools for their hoods.

"Why do you stand at the window?"  
They ask when I go to tea;  
But I never tell about the wind  
That whispers soft to me.

It is inevitable that children writing poetry should be to a certain extent imitative. All artists start their career of creation in this way. The poetry written by American children runs largely to free verse or to riming verse of rather informal meter. It is interesting to place in contrast to such verse the following exquisitely modeled poem by an English girl of ten, quoted from a recent English anthology of child verse, *Almond Blossoms*.



WHEN STARS ARE IN QUIET HEAVENS

When stars are in the heavens  
And the night is still,  
The nightingale will come and sing  
Out upon the hill.

And the fairies will come too,  
And dance among the trees;  
But the quiet stars will shine  
High above all these.

The wee folk come and dance,  
The trees sway in the breeze;  
And all the while the quiet stars  
Shine above all these.

These and other countless examples of child-poetry convince one that, as Hughes Mearns, in a striking article on children's poetry in *Progressive Education*,\* maintains, "Children speak naturally in a form that we adults are accustomed to call poetry. That is because their minds are wholly intent upon something real within them; the language is instinctive and really of secondary consideration; they fashion it to the significant form exactly as other artists handle their medium, swiftly and without disturbing thoughts of standards outside themselves. . . . Yet, sad thought, the unstudied naturalness of the early 'poetry' of childhood will thrive only among those who have ears to hear and judgment to approve. Only through constant exercise in a favoring environment will the artist nature survive." Every child, Mearns asserts, is naturally a poet, an artist. It is the world of adult conventions,

\* "Childhood's Own Literature" by Hughes Mearns, *Progressive Education*, January, 1928.

hedging him about, that destroys finally the artist in him.

## 6

THE drama holds a prominent place in progressive schools, both the original composition of plays and the acting of these and other plays. In this field of creative activity the Francis W. Parker School of Chicago, and others, employ the method of group-writing. Such a method of composition has the advantage of affording all the members of the group the pleasure and thrill of creative work, and avoids the evils of choosing by competition between individual pupils—a thing which many of the progressive schools consider to entail unfavorable results of conceit and egotism. Coöperation, service, the submergence of individual desire to the group-needs, are admirably manifested in such a project as this. Many of the plays created in this way by different classes of the Francis W. Parker School are available in printed form. These plays are short, simple, and constructed around some theme of Greek mythology, of medieval legend, or other literary lore. Some of the subjects are: "Robin Hood," from Howard Pyle's *Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*, arranged by the Eighth Grade; "The Return of the Douglas," a play from *The Lady of the Lake*, arranged by the Eighth Grade; "The Paradise of Children," arranged from Hawthorne's *Paradise of Children* by members of the Fifth Grade; "The Return of Odysseus," adapted from Butcher and Lang's *Odyssey*; by the Fifth Grade.

Not only are such dramatizations as these composed from existing material, but entirely original

dramas are often written by individual children and acted by the group.

Dramatic expression in the acting of plays is a very important factor in the emotional and esthetic development of children. In many of the progressive schools such expression differs radically from the ordinary form of school dramatics; first, in that here every child in the group takes part; and secondly, that the acting flows naturally and genuinely from the child's own consciousness instead of expressing an artificial mode set for it by someone else. The purpose of dramatics in these schools is not toward performance, but toward expression. In the course of the year, every child in the school should have one or more opportunities for dramatic expression.

The results of such an experience in the case of children who are restrained, awkward, bashful, inexpressive, are remarkable. A girl of thirteen newly entered in our school was very awkward in her first play, and although given the minor part of a servant, managed to ruin that by stumbling and dropping a tray of glasses filled with lemonade; but the very next year she took a leading part in "Two Gentlemen of Verona" and acted with grace, sincerity, and perfect stage presence. Similarly, a boy of twelve who could hardly be induced to take any part during his first year at the school, after a year and a half of experience played the part of Julius Cæsar with such a convincing power of imagination and portrayal that his acting drew tears from the audience. These and many other such incidents in the course of nine years of dramatic work with children have brought me to the conviction that every child

has the soul of an artist. It is not the exceptional performance of the brilliant child, but the sincerely beautiful and artistic performance of the average child that amazes audiences.

## 7

So, let the child turn to what it will, it shows always that potential creative force which only awaits opportunity for artistic expression. In eurhythmics is seen this same power of the child-soul to mold form into lines of rhythm—here into flowing, liquid lines most intimately revealing, one may feel, that life-force which engenders beauty.

In all progressive schools rhythemics is given an integral position in the program, as a means of developing expressiveness, coördination, grace. Its beneficial effect on young children is almost immediate. As rhythmic expression is the most fundamental and primitive of all the art forms of man, so it is the most natural and adequate form of esthetic and personality development for the young child. But its function is not limited to the kindergarten and primary grades. In schools which aim at the complete development of the child, rhythemics in some form is continued throughout the course.

In certain schools very significant work is done with boys, as well as girls, up to and even beyond the age of adolescence. The writer saw in the City and Country School of New York a wonderfully skillful adaptation of rhythemics to boy nature as it is around the age of ten or twelve. A fifth grade group of boys improvised, to music, a stage-coach hold-up and defense. In our own school the

teacher of rhythmic secures adequate response from the boys to such rhythmic exercises as galloping horses, Indians with bow-and-arrow, wands, hand-springs, etc. In the Edgewood School of Greenwich and the Organic School of Fairhope, Alabama, boys after the age of adolescence find delight in the English Folk Dances under the inspiring teaching of Mr. Raybold, who carries out the Cecil Sharp tradition.

I believe in making rhythmic one of the chief modes of personality development. There is abundant opportunity for creativeness and dramatic expression in the dances which different individuals and groups improvise. Such work calls forth imagination, symbolism and other rare creative powers. Perhaps never are children's faces so beautiful as when expressing ideas to music. For if the face reveals the soul, it reveals it most convincingly when the soul is putting out its utmost effort to body forth the forms of things unseen.

The expressive movement of the body to rhythm has an important effect not only on esthetic but also on nervous and psychological development. One wonders if the coming race, should all children be given this eurhythmic training, would not be a totally different race from that of to-day.

8

**EVEN** in play—or one might say—*especially* in play, the child is creative. Here are no hampering forms, no technique or modes already established to which the child soul must adapt itself in order to express. In play the child finds utmost freedom to be itself. In play the child, furthermore, is satisfying only its

own vivid desire. In play, therefore, more than anywhere else, the child shows those qualities of the true creator,—imagination, initiative, inventiveness, resourcefulness, persistence in the face of difficulties, and a marvelous power of adapting material at hand to an inner purpose. As I write, children outside are improvising a military camp. One boy had a vivid idea which came to dominate the group. First it was drill with wands; then mimic warfare from behind every vantage point; next a Red Cross unit sprang into existence and a stretcher was improvised out of two wands and a raincoat. There came up a rain. This, instead of putting a damper on the project, only heightened creativeness by suggesting the need of shelter. Raincoats spread over chairs furnished temporary shelter, but a more permanent form being desired the next move was to build a frame and stretch over it pieces of canvas, oilcloth, gunnysack—anything which came to hand. The next day a boy brought a pup tent. This has been set up in the back yard. Where and how will it all end? Such play of the imagination is bound by no external goals. In this fact inheres its charm; and this is the nature of a true creation, that the end is not foreseen from the beginning.

## 9

IN all these ways progressive educators provide—within their curriculum, not outside it—for creative expression on the part of the children. The school is seen as a child-home, full of beauty, of dignity, of atmosphere; a work-shop, a studio, where the artist which is the heart of every child can express itself

in joyous creations that have the dew of youth upon them. Such educators have caught, with Carleton Washburne, the vision of using schools "not as a means of training and instruction but as places where the life energies of the children may be liberated and where their souls may grow to their fullness in freedom."

## CHAPTER VIII

### SHALL WE MAKE THE CHILD INTO A WALKING ENCYCLOPEDIA?

*"The object of education should be the teaching of the mind how to act with vigor and economy."*

HENRY ADAMS.

"**D**O you want me to teach the children the capitals of the States?" asks the new teacher who has been trained in the old system.

"No. What are atlases for? Every home can own one at the price of a theater ticket. Don't clutter up the children's brains with useless material."

"What about the dates in history?"

"Let the children as a group make a list of the dates they think important to remember, and have them memorize those."

"But will they choose all the dates which they are expected to know?"

This teacher's query brings us face to face with one of the most momentous problems of modern education. How much ought a child to know? How many facts should a child acquire to be considered educated? How great a body of knowledge and of what kind should have been absorbed by him by the time he finishes the elementary school, secondary school, college?

Educators and laymen will never come to any exact agreement upon this question; because what



one person thinks important, another will think relatively unimportant. Plainly, the child cannot learn and remember everything. It is said that a man devoting a lifetime to one branch of a special subject could not master it thoroughly. How much information, then, should we consider a normal requirement for the educated person to have attained?

Since Edison gave out his extraordinary questionnaire to the world, the question "What do you know?" has had great vogue. Adults as well as children are brushing up their information and trying to obtain a working knowledge of what in current opinion are deemed the important facts, the knowledge of which would constitute culture.

Education is not, however, to be measured in such terms. It is not a process of acquiring facts. It is a process of acquiring powers, skills, mastery of the tools of learning. Of what value are unrelated facts? They are merely the materials of which knowledge is made; necessary, to be sure, in some measure, but not the most important thing in education. The ability to ascertain, to evaluate, and to use facts is of much greater worth. In other words, let us teach the child to think rather than force it to memorize a mass of undigested facts.

In the Middle Ages, when books were scarce, the scholar was obliged to convert himself into a living thesaurus of knowledge which he gleaned from those rare and precious manuscripts made available to him in the few libraries of the world. The ability to memorize and retain facts then constituted a large part of the requirements for scholarship. A learned man in that day was one who had absorbed the contents of many volumes.

But since that day the art of printing has brought books, magazines, libraries, into every town—placed them at every man's disposal. It is no longer necessary to keep on mental tap a vast reservoir of exact knowledge. It is only necessary to know where to go for the knowledge needed.

May it not be that too great a mass of definite facts, crowding upon the mind, really hinders it from reflection, meditation, judgment? On the other hand, the type of mind which is most analytical, most powerful in its concentration on a given subject, which pursues it through to the point of creative discovery or invention,—such a type of mind is quite negligent as to memory of ordinary facts. Therefore, psychology would seem to show that the effort to develop in the child an encyclopedic mind would be inhibitory to the successful development of powers of thought.

Yet what do we see going on in our schools today? There is a great mass of factual knowledge to be studied; absorbed, regurgitated; a sense of hurry and strain in the all-too-short period for recitation; and a resultant inhibition of thought on the part of the child.

There is little time for thinking during the process of studying the lesson, because just so many pages must be covered and memorized in a given period of time. There is little opportunity for thought in the recitation, because there can be no possibility of real questions of thought on the part of the children leading to discussion and analysis of the subject; for a class of forty children obliged to cover a recitation in history or geography in half an hour have no time for anything but quick and

accurate replies: that is to say, replies deemed accurate by the teacher in proportion to their correspondence to the words of the text-book.

This is not thinking! It is even antagonistic to thinking. Compare the youth taking part in such a scheme of education with a youth who reads at home or in libraries with ample sense of leisure; browsing over romantic periods of history or the lives of strange peoples; able to pause, to think, to dream into the subject. That is why a librarian speaking recently at a conference of librarians said that newspapers and libraries were the only real educators.

We should not, of course, decry the acquisition of as large a body of knowledge as is convenient on the part of the child. The more facts, even unrelated facts, that we have ready at hand the more material we have to aid us in understanding life and the experiences that come to us and to the world; provided, as has been stated above, that the mere memorization of factual knowledge has not inhibited the power of thought but has been made an aid to it.

A distinction may be made between memory-knowledge and what we may call reference-knowledge. The larger part of needed knowledge can be left to the latter classification. It is the duty of the educator to decide what amount of memory-knowledge is of the most relative importance and to teach that thoroughly to the child; beyond that, to train it in the technique of finding out information. Prof. W. T. Root of the University of Pittsburgh says that facts should not be learned by rote; that we need to be intelligently ignorant; that children should be allowed to take education more leisurely.

This possibility of taking education more leisurely is to the progressive educator one of the most needed changes from the current system so committed to overcrowded curriculum, to haste, and to strain.

## 2

THE body of the world's knowledge has expanded so tremendously in the last hundred years that it seems to many that there is a mountain-like mass before the child which must be accomplished before he is considered educated. Compare the different branches of knowledge available to-day with what were at the disposal of civilized humanity a hundred years ago. The whole subject of comparative religion has come within this hundred-year period; also archeology, or the knowledge through decipherable written remains of past and buried civilizations. The subject of history has been expanded tremendously, both by these archeological discoveries and by the researches of scholars in the last century. Comparative literature now reaches out to take in the literatures of Asia as well as the literature of Europe. The physical sciences have undergone a complete transformation. To physics have been added the intricate branches of gasses, electricity, the ultimate structure of matter and its behavior. Chemistry has tremendously expanded and become much more intricate through the investigation of the atom and electron; and commercial chemistry with its magic synthetic arts has become an exceedingly important factor of modern life. Biology has been added during this period, with its vast and important implications concerning not only past but pres-

ent life. Geology has undergone a "sea change" and would not be recognized to-day for what it was a hundred years ago; the reading of earth strata having added a new volume of the utmost importance to man's knowledge. The social sciences are quite new; the vast and intricate subjects of sociology, economics, and political science did not burden the mind of the student previous to 1875. One could go on and mention many other important subjects added to the body of world-knowledge which must be mastered by the student.

What are we going to do about it? Are we to be overwhelmed by this immense mass of knowledge made available by the research of the scholars of the past century? Shall we allow ourselves to become anxious and worried over it, communicating this sense of strain to the young child and driving it along—when it would slacken its pace—with the cry: "Hasten, there can be no leisure if you are to reach your diploma through successful absorption of the current body of world-knowledge!"

To tell the truth, this sense of strain, of anxiety, is completely an illusion. There need be no hurry, no strain, no overwork whatever, and yet there can be mastery of the contemporaneous cultural knowledge of the world.

It is amazing to realize that in the Middle Ages the school men complained of a crowded curriculum. With nothing to study but grammar, rhetoric, philosophy, language, a little history, and a little mathematics, they thought they had a hard time to master their contemporaneous standardized body of cultural knowledge. To us, to-day, their attitude of mind appears ridiculous. A thousand years from

now civilized beings of this planet may look back, and finding perhaps in the educational literature of to-day many complaints about the immense mass to be learned, will laugh and wonder what real cause there could be for such a worry.

## 3

EVERYTHING in life is relative. What we need is to get a due sense of proportion, learning how to subordinate the relatively unimportant to the relatively important.

There is the old fairy tale of the man who in his wanderings came across a mountain of copper with which he greedily filled his pockets. Going on farther, he came upon a mountain of silver. Wisely he emptied his pockets and filled them with silver. When later he came to a mountain of gold, he was shrewd enough to avoid all sense of strain and worry by immediately emptying his pockets and filling them with gold. Let this apply to modern education. He who runs may read.

The question of *what is important*, then, is in reality the most important thing that faces the educator as regards the making of the curriculum. The process of elimination must be invoked. Plainly, we cannot keep our pockets filled with the copper and silver of the past and gather all the gold we would of the present. There must be a good deal of casting away, of stern and ruthless elimination in the subject-matter.

This important need in education is being met by groups of educators in a scientific way. Geography, history and arithmetic are being carefully

overhauled by authorized committees of educators to see what can be eliminated. Text-book publishers are watching the results of these investigations and meeting the findings of such educational experts and committees by the publication of simplified text-books responding to the new situation.

Only a few years ago it was thought important in all histories to take up the successive dynasties of each country. All American histories were arranged in chapters corresponding to the successive administrations of the presidents. Our grandmothers learned the names and dates of all the kings and queens of England by the aid of a doggerel verse with which, perhaps, some of the readers of this book are familiar. To-day, any intelligent person will realize that there is not room in the mind for the names and dates of all the kings and queens of England; because, if we were to be fair to the world, we should include other countries such as Russia, Germany, France, Italy. And why stop with Europe? Let us take in Asia with its changing destinies,—Japan, China, India, Persia, Turkey.

It is plainly to be seen that in this mere matter of history an immense change has come and is still at work. J. H. Breasted, among writers of text-books, has the honor of having first reduced world history into a single brief volume which was readable and attractive and which departed entirely from the dynastic chronology with all its dull minutiae and routine. H. G. Wells followed soon after with his *Outline of History*, in which he has cast overboard the cluttertrap of ages and shown how fascinating and easy an experience it is for a lay reader to master the history of the world. Since then many

similar books have appeared, bringing world history into a condensed and interesting form.

In the subject of geography Charles A. McMurry of Columbia has made an enormous contribution toward simplification through his idea of abbreviation by teaching thoroughly the type of a thing through the one best example, and letting pass from the requirements exact information concerning all other examples. "A clear and detailed comprehension of a typical object in geography," he says, "is the key to a large area of geographical knowledge. This type, once clearly perceived, is the interpreter of very many similar objects. A single river or mountain, pictured out in its variety of relations, is a sure exemplar of many others of the same kind. The study of a type is, therefore, a short avenue to the interpretation of a large body of knowledge. In devising a plan for geographical study at least two important problems must be met: 1. The selection of a few important representative ideas out of the countless multitude of facts. 2. A method of approach to these ideas which shall instruct and interest the children. The quantity of geographical knowledge is practically infinite, a hundred times what any child can master. A wise choice is, therefore, imperative. If we can convince ourselves that the thorough mastery of a relatively small number of type objects goes a long way toward the mastery of the whole, wide and varied field of geography, *we may find an excellent means of unburdening the mind and yet of subjugating the world to our thought.* (Those persons who thoughtlessly gorge the memory with geographic names and facts are like children collecting shells by the seaside.")



Of the teaching of this same subject, H. B. Wilson, Superintendent of Schools of Berkeley, California, and G. M. Wilson, professor of education of Boston University, in their book, *The Motivation of School Work*, have the following to say: "The present movement in geography is toward the reorganization of the subject from the standpoint of the child and its adaptation to his interests and needs. The formal subject-matter organization of geography undertook too much. It undertook to give the child a complete encyclopedic knowledge of the geography of every country in the world—to fill him full of facts—facts of the Gradgrind variety—nothing but facts—all of the facts. Only the resisting power of human nature saved the child from becoming a mere storage house for the collection and preservation of unrelated facts. Why should a child in the sixth grade be compelled to commit the names of all the capes and bays on the coast of North America, including location and description, unless he is planning a trip around the continent in a private yacht? Even so, there will be time enough for all of this detail after he becomes the owner of the yacht.

"Facts in geography must be secondary. In teaching children the only rational aim must be the geography method and habit, and that can best be built up through the selection of real problems which have a vital connection with the interests of the child. Where such work has been successfully organized, the results are more satisfactory, even when tested by the accumulation of facts alone. The first step, therefore, in any plan for vitalizing and motivating the geography work must be

the elimination of a large part of the work that has always been connected with map study and other formal phases of geography."

Would that some educational genius could similarly succeed in simplifying arithmetic! Effort in this direction is earnest and active, but not yet productive of such significant results as in the fields of history and geography.

As regards the possibility of abbreviating the study of foreign languages, it would seem that the rapidly increasing intercommunication throughout the world and the constant coming together of large groups of various nationalities in the purposes of science, culture, education, etc., may force simplification in the form of some universal auxiliary language, possibly Esperanto. The students at Robert College, where the writer taught, had to become fluent in at least from three to five languages, in order to meet the needs of their cosmopolitan life of the Near East. They appreciated the idea of Esperanto as a universal solvent, for the poor fellows were obliged to miss a good deal of interesting and valuable cultural material on account of devoting so much of their time to the acquisition of languages.

At the Locarno conference of the New Education Fellowship attended by representatives from forty different countries where the discussions had to be carried on in three different languages, English, German and French, the method involved such an expenditure of time and energy that it was decided that at the next conference, which is to be held in Denmark, there would be only one translation and this in Esperanto. Monsieur Bovet, who pre-

sided over the conference, and who speaks four languages more fluently and easily than most of us speak one, was an ardent advocate of the adoption of Esperanto as the official medium for translation. No one who participated in this conference could fail to be impressed with the great desirability of a common language in a world where international communication and understanding are becoming so increasingly imperative.

The adoption of Esperanto as the sole obligatory foreign language study in all the schools of the world would not only greatly facilitate international travel, exchange and communication; but what is more germane to our purpose, would tremendously simplify the foreign language work of the students of the world, who would have only one auxiliary language to learn, instead of two or three; and a language so simple in structure that an adult can master it, for all but conversational purposes, within a week.

4

BERTRAND RUSSELL, who if he cannot speak of elementary education with the authority of a teacher in that field, has many enlightening things to say of it from the point of view of one of the modern parents reprehensive of current methods, indicates in an article in the *New York Times* his feeling as to the great needs in reform: "First, a drastic overhauling of the traditional curriculum, with a view to lightening it of everything not vitally important so as to make room for new knowledge and for old knowledge of which the old-fashioned pedagogue did not realize the importance; and at the same time

every available simplification of method. Second, a careful avoidance of excessive instruction, such as is calculated to produce nausea."

It is really the unintelligent, pedantic mind which feels that important things cannot be reduced to simple form. I remember a sociological conference at which two men spoke,—one of them the socialist mayor of a Massachusetts town who was to describe his administration; the other, G. Stanley Hall. The socialist mayor came first. After talking for two hours until we were bored to extinction—and he had to be pulled down literally by the coat tails—he told us in despair that he had not had nearly enough time to present his subject. G. Stanley Hall, having twenty minutes at his disposal, covered a very intricate subject most masterfully in that length of time.

One of the misconceptions of our current education is the tendency to teach too exhaustively the physical sciences. Biology, for instance, is taught first in laboratory work and the simplified outlines of it are left for advanced courses, whereas the reverse should be the case. I had the delightful experience at college which I could not now have under the group system in vogue, of taking an outline course of biology (without having had any laboratory work) under one of the most able biologists in the country. In a half-year course of two hour-lectures a week he made clear the great subject of evolution. I consider that one of the most valuable courses in my whole education. Not specializing in the line of natural sciences, it was all the biology I needed for cultural purposes. Each of the natural sciences could and

should be taught descriptively and briefly to those who do not intend to specialize later.

There is no need, then, for this feeling that there is not sufficient time to acquire the world's knowledge of to-day. There is no need of producing in the teacher and in the child the sense of strain and of crowding. It is a misconception which produces disastrous consequences on the child. It is, however, but a reflection of the whole tendency of modern life to be overwhelmed and mastered by the Frankenstein which it has created as a result of progress in the arts of civilization.

You will hear the average adult in our modern cities chronically complain that his or her life is crowded and strained. This is in many cases ludicrously unnecessary. The fact that modern science has multiplied tenfold our opportunities for work, for enjoyment, for culture, does not necessarily mean that we must be overwhelmed by the wealth and superabundance of our environment. Are we to be masters of our environment or is it to master us? Shall we be subject to anxieties and strains because in the same day we receive an invitation to a concert, to a lecture, to a bridge party, to a game of golf? We cannot accept them all. We have to choose. Let us choose wholesomely, eliminating from our minds all the lesser opportunities which we have been obliged to sacrifice. Otherwise we shall not enjoy the thing we do undertake and we shall carry with us always the divided psyche and the sense of strain. How many cases of nervous prostration are due to sheer inability to cope with the wealth of our cultural environment and its many enticing oppor-

tunities! In the twentieth century man must conquer this temptation of his environment to nervousness and strain or be overcome by it. If civilization is to survive, it must be through immense will power and discrimination on the part of civilized man.

We adults must first tackle and conquer this problem before we can solve it for our children. We must attain poise, the sense of tranquillity, of abundant ease and time. This atmosphere we must create in our schools. If it is pitiful for adults to be subjected to nervous strain unnecessarily from the richness of their cultural environment, it is criminal to inflict that same sense of strain upon the children.

One of the most important contributions of progressive education to the world is its success in meeting this problem of strain; of meeting it boldly and intelligently in such a way as to successfully eliminate it from the school life of the child.

## 5

AFTER all, what we need in order to become educated is the development of abilities, skills, powers rather than the acquisition of any certain uniform body of knowledge. The ability, for instance, to read rapidly and with comprehension—the intellectual curiosity of the child having been maintained and strengthened—is in itself almost sufficient accomplishment for education. If we stress the accumulation of facts, we are very apt to kill the quality of interest and zeal for knowledge. If, on the other hand, we help to train the child in speed and comprehension of reading and at the same time keep alive its native curiosity and desire for information,

we shall have an ideal foundation for all later stages of education as well as for life itself.

This is what the progressive schools do. By surrounding the child with books of great interest and children's encyclopedias which are of the utmost attractiveness, and by stimulating the interest of the child in different subjects or by letting it merely follow its own eager desires for different lines of investigation, they train the majority of their children to make research and to successfully bring back material in available form, an ability which will prove of the greatest value in almost every line of life activity. Add to that the development of the power of expression both in speech and in writing and you have the most important phase of the development of true scholarship successfully accomplished.

The current system of education fails of that, with all its effort spent on drill and on drudgery. Not only is this necessary foundation of scholarship not laid, but it is even prevented by the distaste which forms in the growing child's emotional nature toward the acquisition of knowledge. Thus, we have the all too universal complaint from secondary schools and colleges that their pupils show no interest in serious literature and no ability to get at its contents with understanding and mastery.

I should call that child well educated who had a reading comprehension and universal interest sufficient to enable it to read and enjoy our magazines of thought and culture. Such a person is on the sure road to culture. For the magazine world of to-day is a marvelous purveyor of knowledge of the most recent authenticity put in an attractive form. One

who has gained the habit of reading with enjoyment these more serious magazines, and of gleaning from the newspapers the events pertaining to world progress, has at his door a whole university of greater usefulness and penetrative power than our actual institutions of higher learning.

The brilliant mind as a rule prefers to glean its information for itself rather than to carry through a didactic program inflicted upon it by another mind which very probably is inferior to itself; or to be subjected to an educational system which from long necessity for meeting the need of the average person reflects standards of mediocrity and dullness.

A striking example of this is the case of Benjamin Disraeli. Raymond, in his recent life of this brilliant author and statesman, says of him as a youth, "The boy was a bad learner but an insatiable student; he hated the drudgery of the schoolroom but was never happier than when turning over the books in his father's library. 'I have read every book that I could get hold of,' Disraeli says of himself, 'and studied as little as possible in my instructor's museum of verbiage.' . . . His master at Walthamstow is said to have complained that he never understood the subjunctive. But he understood many things much more important, and *all that was really important he taught himself*. He preferred the immediate experience of the world to university study. . . . Later in life he might admit that socially it was a handicap to have missed Eton and Oxford; spiritually he conceived it was an enormous advantage."

In the midst of the process of education, subject-matter and curriculum may appear of great importance. But life viewed as a whole gives a better



sense of proportion, in which the pedantry too common to the schoolroom is clearly seen as ludicrous. H. G. Wells tells of his amusement when the students of Wellesley College were shocked at his not remembering who wrote *The Princess*, which they were giving in dramatic form during his visit to that institution. "I once knew who wrote *The Princess*," he states, "but I have since learned many more important things." And he considers the attitude of these college girls as that of the *précieuse* or pedant.

Skill is of greater importance than any body of knowledge—the ability, that is, to go quickly and efficiently after whatever information is needed, to digest it, and get it in form to use successfully for the required purpose. What we do with the knowledge thus gained after its immediate need has ceased to exist is our own business, not the world's. *The most successful people are often those who have forgotten the most things; that is, who have moved these used facts from the mind of consciousness to the mind of subconsciousness, where they remain in storage and do not clutter up the mental highways of traffic.*

6 .

WE must educate for mastery, not for rote-learning, that is clear. But one problem still remains. Shall we require every student to gain equal mastery in all subject-matter of the curriculum? Or shall we let the student who has a proclivity for reading neglect proficiency in mathematics; and the student mathematically gifted neglect the reading and literary skills? Shall we let those who despise foreign languages be exempt from them? What shall we do

in the case of the child who has some special talent or gift in one of the arts, or in mechanics, or electricity? To what extent shall we let him cultivate his gift at the expense of skills in the rest of the curriculum?

Dr. Eliot offered one solution of this problem by his elective system, which marked a revolution in college instruction. He boldly faced the problem and solved it by establishing a "laissez faire" policy which permitted the students to follow their own talents and inclinations. Colleges of to-day, finding such freedom of choice somewhat unsatisfactory, yet finding equally unsatisfactory the fixed curriculum, have made a compromise of one sort or another according to which the student, after having accomplished a certain minimum cultural curriculum, is left some choice of expressing his special bent in forming his program by focusing it around some center or centers of interest.

But what solution can we offer to this problem in the lower stages of education? Shall we require that the child attain equal mastery in all subjects of the curriculum in elementary education? Such is the practice in our present educational system. Proficiency is required in all subjects. A student is rated according to how he attains to this uniformity of success. We cannot but feel that this is a mistaken policy; one that must somewhere be abandoned for a method of allowing freer expression of individual tastes, talents, and proclivities.

Bertrand Russell gives what would seem to be a very reasonable formula for the education of the child with a strong talent. "Boys or girls who show a strong bent with a marked aptitude," he says,

“should be allowed to develop it from an early age, though not to the complete exclusion of other subjects. Roughly speaking, children of exceptional ability may be divided into three main types—artistic, literary and scientific. If I had to deal with a child that showed really marked aptitude in one of these directions I should content myself with giving him a minimum of instruction in matters which he would feel irrelevant to his main impulse.”

Our intellectual inclinations are on the whole pretty safe guides, because they result from temperament; and temperament is that native gift which distinguishes one soul from another, enabling various capacities and talents to function variously for the greater benefit and welfare of mankind. Beyond a certain reasonable minimum, every mind should be allowed to pick and choose according to taste out of the superabundance of knowledge available.

Even methods of work should not be too arbitrarily imposed by a school system. Emerson, for reasons of health and temperament which he and posterity judged sufficient, decided at an early age to browse after knowledge and not force himself to undertake work of too great continuity or thorough mastery. And by this method, totally opposed to what the wisdom of the pedagogue would prescribe, the Concord Seer worked out that body of philosophic writing which has been one of the deepest influences in the thought-life of America. If an educational system is to make place for such contributors to the human race, it must free itself from too much standardization, red-tape and bureaucracy.

The progressive schools are trying to solve these problems in one way or another. It is a difficult task,

however. For any school which would venture to let the child neglect proficiency in mathematics because of zeal for other subjects would be open to criticism; so, too, if it allowed literary creativeness to be developed at the expense of spelling and of handwriting; or if it allowed a passion for mathematics to usurp the pupil's attention to the neglect of literary skills. Any educator or any method of education making a radical change from the current system which requires uniform proficiency in all subjects of the curriculum faces a grave responsibility.

Clearly it would seem that there are certain skills which the elementary pupil needs and should acquire. These skills would include the technique of reading, of handwriting, of composition, the fundamentals of arithmetic well learned and ready for efficient use in any processes which may be deemed important to acquire, and the ability to analyze printed textual matter and master it for use in any required occasion. Progressive schools try to develop these important techniques by the fundamentally sound method of enlisting the whole-hearted coöperation of the child. As in the newer methods of teaching the technique of music and art, they create inspiration and desire first and let the necessary drills follow. The child will undertake arduous work to attain ends which it desires.

Put the responsibility before the child. Let it ~~through desire for expression~~, through interest in the acquisition of knowledge, through the zeal for some project self-chosen,—let it first in this way realize the need of technique such as can be acquired only by drill, and it will undertake the necessary drills in a way such as to attain success much better

than if the drills were put upon it arbitrarily) or apparently arbitrarily by a teacher or by a school system.

The trouble with the past system of education is that it has tended to neglect the factor of volition in the psychology of the child; giving too much importance to the intellect, and not realizing what a close-working and necessary partner the emotional nature is to the intellect. Make use of the child's emotions, turn them into channels of accomplishment, and you will have made its education more natural, more joyous, and more effective.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE CREATIVE CONQUEST OF THE CURRICULUM

*"We are not willing to be dominated or have the children dominated by subject-matter. We wish them to form strong habits of first-hand research and to use what they find; we want them to discover relationships in concrete matter so that they will know that they exist when they deal with abstract forms."*

CAROLINE PRATT.

**P**ROFESSOR CARSON RYAN of Swarthmore tells of taking a group of his students of education to investigate the progressive methods used at Carson College, the Philadelphia school for orphan girls. The fifth grade had been studying the history of Medieval Europe in a very creative way. They had devoted the whole year's work to stained-glass windows. First they had examined reproductions of famous medieval windows and made excursions to see specimens of stained glass in Philadelphia. Then they made prolonged research into the origins leading to, and the spirit animating, this form of art and religious expression. They studied carefully the technique of making stained glass. And finally they themselves designed and made stained-glass windows.

Here is a very radical change from the old-fashioned method of text-book assignment and recita-

tion. How much more joyous and inspiring for the child! How superior a method for the development of the habit of earnest research and study, of initiative, of imagination and of creative ability! One may ask, however, whether this group activity accomplished its chief purpose, which was to acquire knowledge and understanding of the Medieval period. The answer to that lies in the testimony given by Dr. Ryan's visiting class, which had also, as it happened, been recently studying the Medieval period. These college students reported that the children seemed to understand the life and spirit of the Medieval people better than did they themselves, and to also have more detailed knowledge of the period.

But perhaps such favorable results were due to these children being especially brilliant and gifted? No, the class was below the average as measured by intelligence tests. What had been done with them could be done with any group by the right kind of method and teacher.

Helen Ericson, writing in *Progressive Education* regarding creative methods as used in the Sunset Hill School of Kansas City, describes how a project in American history enlisted the imagination and effort of a group of children of the sixth grade. "They had been studying the Revolutionary Period of American History and became interested in the development of the American flag. This seemed to offer the opportunity for a simple research problem which might culminate in creative expression. As this group is imaginative and dramatic, the children responded with enthusiasm to the suggestion that they gather material for a play on this

subject. Books, magazine and newspaper articles which used data based upon documents and letters of this period were read by the children, and interesting facts were presented by the teacher to the class. Some articles were read aloud during the class period and the children noted facts which might be used in a play. Each pupil used her judgment in the details she chose."

After gathering the material and absorbing its atmosphere, the children collectively composed the play. They also studied the costumes, furniture, and properties of the period, in order to provide for correct presentation.

This project, it will readily be seen, combined many values,—historical research; literary creativeness; dramatic expression; opportunity for the development of initiative, executive ability, leadership; and what is even more worth while, the character development that comes from children learning to cooperate and contribute cheerfully to a creative work which is not for individual credit.

## 2

A SCHOOL inspector from Uruguay, visiting the Chevy Chase Country Day School, took great interest in the way the fifth grade children were studying geography. The class was making its first acquaintance with map study and place geography by collecting postage stamps. Each child had bought a forty cent packet containing five hundred different foreign stamps. The first step was to sort the stamps. This is not an easy task, as the names of foreign countries are in foreign languages, some in



non-Roman alphabets. The sorting, with the help of the teacher, calls for careful study and comparison of words, insignia, markings, etc. This in itself is a mental process of some value—and it is interesting to note that here the motor-active child may show more ability than the book-minded child of higher academic standing.

After the stamps are sorted a simple stamp album is made out of a loose-leaf note book in the following way. At the top of a page, under the name of the country, is written information about the country gathered from encyclopedia, world almanac, or geography,—its size, population, form of government, ruler, and two chief products. Under this information are pasted the stamps on hinges. Also the flags of the different countries are secured where possible.

In addition to what the children are directly learning by this method about each country, certain by-products occur. Many of the stamps show, in beautiful engravings, clear though minute scenes of native life and of fauna and flora. Sometimes history appears in pictorial form upon a stamp. A centennial stamp of Greece brought from home by one boy depicted Lord Byron being welcomed by the Greek army—with the dates, 1824-1924. The boy knew what the incident signified. There, on a tiny piece of paper beautifully engraved, were certain significant facts in concrete form: That Greece had fought for her freedom in 1824; that Byron had aided her; that she had become free; that the Greeks are grateful for such freedom. The sense of language, also, is gained as the children consult stamps of many countries. And above and below all this

is the sense of romance penetrating the subject-matter of geography—an emotional approach to an intellectual subject. Is not this the very thing that characterizes the true scholar, the ability to derive from things of the intellect an emotional satisfaction?

Geography and history lend themselves readily to the creative treatment. Both are subjects packed with romance and thrills, which the routine-minded pedants responsible for children's text-books in former generations were however amazingly able to conceal in masses of verbiage and unimportant detail. Now the whole presentation of these subjects is changing to a vivid depiction of life itself, and closely related to the daily environment and needs of the child. Also, recourse may be made to stereoscopic slides, excursions in the neighborhood to exploit available material of interest, and group projects of various kinds. Especially stimulating to the whole school are historical dramas and geographical pageants gotten up and presented by the children. In the study of costumes and accessories, and in the preparation of costumes and stage for the presentation, the whole school throbs with interest, with expectancy, and with participation; living for weeks or perhaps months in the atmosphere of a past epoch or of a foreign country,—culminating in the climax of actual performance.

The transformation which is taking place in the teaching of history and geography is vividly portrayed by Edward Yeomans. "I used to walk along South Street, New York, holding to my father's hand and over our heads for blocks stretched the bowsprits and jib-booms of great square-rigged

ships and the whole water front a web of spars and rigging. Were school children in New York taken to look at those matchless symbols of man's courage and craftsmanship and any connection at all made between those majestic things and the tawdry little things they were spelling out of books in schools? Never! And what were they unloading—and where had it come from—and what were they loading—and where was it going to? School children had nothing to do with that either. Those things were not in a school environment. *Now they are.* And that's the largest part of the difference between then and now. There are other important differences, but that's the great difference. And that's why a good school now is full of adventure—that's why children want to go back Saturdays and are glad when vacations are over."

The subject of English literature is rich in possibilities for creative teaching. Dramatizations, readings, discussions by the children, and original creative work stimulated by the reading of great literature—these and other means exist for the presentation, in an interesting, stimulating, and creative way, of "belles-lettres."

English composition, a subject which requires infinite drill, can yet be so based upon the interests and life experiences of children as to lose to a large degree its routine aspect and assume creative values. Out of excursions to museums, to factories, and to other concrete expressions of the community life, grow rich opportunities for oral and written descriptions, illustrated with drawings, snapshots, and cut-out pictures. The research method of studying geography or history calls for notes which are later

worked up into reports and presented to the class or to the whole school at assembly. This furnishes excellent motivation for written expression. The school paper, of course, has for generations furnished a motive for creative writing. And now the new teaching of literature, especially of poetry, is stimulating children into the remarkable creative work described in a previous chapter.

How naturally and easily written expression flows from creative activities is shown by the following account by one of our seven-year-olds of his contribution to the school assembly.

#### “OUR INDIAN COLLECTION”

“Yesterday Ward and I showed our Indian collection in assembly. I showed the Indian village that I had made and it was in a sand tray and Ward showed some curios on the table in the corner. In the Indian village there were wigwams and one of the wigwams is the chief’s and one is the medicine man’s. There are tripods and some weaving frames and at the door of the chief’s wigwam there is a totem pole.”

Even in the teaching of formal grammar, games and other devices can create interest and zestful effort. Spelling, which is as much a drill subject as anything can be, becomes vibrant with effort and excitement on the occasion of a spelling bee. Some educational genius has gone a step further and created a game of spelling “Baseball” which we have used very successfully in our school. It is played as follows: Bases are marked off as in baseball. The class is divided into two teams, each of which has a pitcher. The man at the bat receives the words from the pitcher of the opposing team. A word spelled right counts as a ball, while one spelled incorrectly

counts as a strike. Three strikes mean out—four balls mean first base. "Baseball" can also be used in the teaching of Latin or French vocabularies, and an ingenious teacher can make still further applications of it.

One can readily see the many advantages of this game. In the first place, it gives a motive for careful preparation. Not only does each side study hard, but the pitchers, who are also captains, will frequently coach the weak members of their teams. The onus of the drill thus falls entirely on the pupils instead of on the teacher; and the blame for negligence comes swiftly and heavily upon the careless pupils from their own contemporaries. Secondly, it gives amusement and an opportunity for relaxing cramped limbs for, if possible, the game should be played out-of-doors. Thirdly, and perhaps most important of all, it associates pleasure with the educative process. This and similar games help to make the child's mental attitude toward education one of eagerness and joy. There is formed a mental appetite and desire, which are as necessary for the assimilation of knowledge as physical appetite and desire are necessary for the proper assimilation of food.

How can foreign languages yield to this creative treatment? In two ways—first by prefacing the language study with a brief but vivid presentation of the history and customs of the language-race, a study which should continue throughout the course and enter as much as possible into the texts translated; and secondly, by using, as far as possible, the direct method of instruction. The teaching of modern languages in our secondary schools is poor; in this de-

partment of instruction the public schools have not kept pace with the splendid progress made in the commercial teaching of modern languages. In the teaching of French to children of elementary grades, progressive schools employ the direct method, and make much use of games and action.

Arithmetic, also, can be made to yield unexpected interest by the use of concrete methods—of games, of projects, of the latest form of standard tests which enable each child to keep a chart of its progress. A class studying mensuration made several excursions to a house being erected in the vicinity of our school. First they computed the number of cubic yards of earth excavated from the cellar, and the cost (the rate per cubic yard being kindly given the children by the contractor). Later they measured floor and wall areas, allowing for windows, and computed costs of plastering, woodwork, etc. This group project called for skill in measurement, which was done separately by two groups and checked for errors; practice in mensuration; and a study of actual construction work and of current costs.

In fact, I find that arithmetic, when taught by an able and enthusiastic teacher, is quite a favorite subject with children, very apt to be the most popular subject of the curriculum. Is this because it yields such definite results, bringing to successful students a sense of very definite accomplishment? At any rate, arithmetic need not be the *bête noire* of the curriculum. Margaretta Voorhees,—now at the Beaver Country Day School,—told me when I was visiting her class at the Park School of Baltimore that her children begged for extra work in arithmetic to do during the summer. It was their favorite subject.

The reason was standing there at the head of the class talking to me.

3

THUS we see that just as teaching of art subjects is being revolutionized by such methods as that of Cizek's in which inspiration and untrammelled expression precede and become an important factor in the development of technique, so the teaching of academic subjects is being revolutionized by the insistence on the part of progressive educators that such work, instead of being undertaken primarily to satisfy the demands of the adult world, should flow in the form of natural creative expression from the desire and potentiality of the child. This is not a mere matter of method. It is rather a new integration characterized by a fundamentally different approach to the child and its needs.

The training which the child received on the proverbial New England farm may be taken as an ideal pattern of creative education. The development of the little child on such a farm was the result of its own inclination and desire to help in the important work which it saw being done around it by the adult world. The tasks connected with plowing, planting and harvesting, and the care of animals; with the home-making products and housekeeping needs,—in such tasks the little child loved to share and to feel itself thus becoming a part of the important work of life. Thus gradually the child developed—day by day, year by year—greater ability and technique; and became entrusted, as strength and skill increased, with heavier responsibilities and with the use of implements which carried with them risks and

dangers. Finally complete apprenticeship was served and the child had become mature, capable, taking its place shoulder to shoulder with the adults on the farm.

The child enters zestfully into all these tasks for several reasons. The will to imitate, which is innate in every child, leads it to want to do the things it sees its elders do. Then there is the desire which grows in all children to be permitted a share in the necessary activities of life, by which sharing it feels itself of importance and dignity,—the child soul reaching timidly and aspiringly up toward those pinnacles of endeavor and achievement which it witnesses in the adults whose prowess and ability it admires. And most significant of all is the natural, innate tendency of the child to express itself in action, to expand its power over its physical environment, to find satisfaction in mastery and in self-expression of a useful kind.

That this training on the farm was excellent is evidenced by the number of young men who have gone out from it into notable success in life, along many varied lines of work. This proverbial success of the farm youth seeking his fortune in the city is due not only to the superior health which he brings with him, but to his greater capacity for work and his superior sense of responsibility. While other youths were passing irresponsibly the years of adolescence and of early manhood, the farm boy was undertaking earnest and serious tasks of import, his pleasures being taken in what time could be spared from his duties.

Can these same factors successfully be brought into action in the academic work of the child? That



is the aim of progressive educators. They would help the child to grow, to develop naturally in the expansion of its powers and skills, to find continuous satisfaction in academic achievements, just as the farm child found a fairly continued satisfaction in its achievements on the farm.

Certain obstacles must be cleared away before the child can proceed on its academic course with those same motives and satisfactions which we have seen in the life of the farm when at its best. The greatest difficulty to overcome is the gulf which seems to separate academic work from life itself. On the farm, as we have seen, there is no such gulf. Education is life itself and by means of life itself. It is concrete, it is active; both of which things appeal to the child. On the other hand, academic work has been abstract and sedentary and too much severed from life and life-interests. The progressive educator seeks, therefore, to remove these obstacles by putting action into the schoolroom; by bringing concrete material in so far as possible into the teaching of even abstract subjects; and, what is most important of all, by so organizing the academic work that it is seen to be important to life, a part even of life itself. When the academic work can be so motivated that it is entered into from the child's own eager desire for creative expression, then and not till then, does the curriculum contain continuous interest and joy for the child.

4

A METHOD, illustrated by the previous material of this chapter, has been devised which successfully

meets these requirements—the project method, as it has been called. The project is an activity chosen and initiated by the child as an expression of its own intellectual needs and desires. It is something concrete, bearing upon life needs; something which engages the child's interest as being essentially important and worth while. At this task the child sets to work with zeal and enjoyment just as the rural child participates eagerly in the various necessary projects of the farm. The province of the teacher is to furnish suggestions, inspiration, and guidance.

The name "project" is not as comprehensive and inclusive as the movement for more creative and active methods of learning described in this chapter. But it has the merit of being a well-known current term significant of the general nature of this energizing of the educational process.

The project is of greatest value when done co-operatively by groups, several children sharing in and producing the final achievement—an achievement planned by the group and seen by them as desirable and useful. It may be the making of some necessary equipment for the school. It may be an enterprise such as the raising of chickens, including the building of coops and daily care of the hens, and the sale of their eggs. It may be a dramatic representation or pageant which the children plan and work out in order to make concrete their knowledge of foreign countries. It may be an excursion to some point in the neighborhood to study the raising, the preparation, and the distribution of foodstuffs; or to study construction of various forms of human shelter. It may be a field excursion in geography or history. It may be the creation of a school-bank and

the keeping of accounts connected with it. It may be, even, as at one of the progressive schools, the making of an airplane. The range of possible projects is limited only by the imagination of children and teacher, the equipment and material available, and richness of the local environment.

Thus the project is seen as a most important instrument for injecting into academic work the interest and joy which seem so vitally necessary to the ideal education of the child. The project tends to transform the nature of the school from an institution for passive reciprocity and assimilation in which the work is abstract, textual, and largely sedentary, into a child home-of-learning filled with healthful, vigorous, and joyous activities.

John Dewey says: "More important than the mere piling up of information is an intimate acquaintance with a small number of typical experiences, with a view to learning how to deal with problems of experience. Careful inspection of methods which are permanently successful in formal education whether in arithmetic, or learning to read, or studying geography, or learning physics or a foreign language, will reveal that they depend for their efficiency upon the fact that they go back to the type of situation which causes reflection out of school in ordinary life. They give the pupil something to do, not something to learn; and the doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking, or the intentional noting of connection; learning naturally results."

## 5

AND what about the schools that have tried out this method? A few years ago the Ethical Culture School of New York City decided to establish an experimental class in order to try out a more creative approach to the formal curriculum. Miss Mabel R. Goodlander, who has had charge of this experimental work, made the following report in *Experimental Schools*: "In the experimental class we have tried to shift the emphasis of the primary school from formal studies to constructive work and play, to expression in varying art forms, and to first-hand knowledge of social and industrial activities related to a child's life. Facility in the use of the tools of knowledge we believe should be acquired to a great extent through their employment in projects which in themselves are of interest to the child."

The value of this creative method has been so amply demonstrated that it is now well established in the primary department of the Ethical Culture School.

Caroline Pratt, in the City and Country Day School of New York City, has carried out more completely than most of the new schools in this country the idea of the creative method. "We are not willing to be dominated or have the children dominated by subject-matter. We wish them to form strong habits of first-hand research and to use what they find; we want them to discover relationships in concrete matter so that they will know that they exist when they deal with abstract forms. We want them to have a fine motor experience because they them-

selves are motor and to get and retain what they get through bodily perceptions."

As a result of her experimentation and investigation, Miss Pratt finds that children at certain age levels naturally express themselves in certain activities. At six, for instance, children build cities out of blocks. At seven they build a miniature city in permanent form, constructing wooden houses which they paint, furnish, and wire, laying out streets, trolley lines, and waterways with a full quota of boats. At eight, the children run the supply store for the school, taking complete charge of all orders and accounting for the money. They do not begin reading, writing and arithmetic until seven. At that age, she has discovered, the average child emerges from the merely play world and desires to be taught.

A large degree of freedom for the expression of individual predilections and desires exists in the Mohegan Modern School, Peekskill, N. Y. Attendance at academic work is not obligatory. The director tells of one occasion when half a dozen of his class were absent mornings for three days. An investigation disclosed the fact that they had been making a dam and reservoir at the brook which flowed through the farm. The upper reservoir overflowed to a lower one. A mill had been made of bits of wood. From the lower basin the water flowed into rivers and quite a presentable relief map of headlands, capes, islands, and rocks. "Of course," says the director, Mr. James L. Dick, "it goes without saying that it would have been folly on the part of any teacher to arrest this spirit of doing things merely in order that they should continue their formal class work." And he sums up the aims and ideals

of the school as follows: "The Modern School stands as a protest against all the forces which tend to hamper the happiness and freedom of the child, fully appreciating the fact that there is something irrepressible in life striving for liberty of thought, action, individuality and society. We live in the atmosphere of experimentation and we endeavor to make every day complete in itself, believing that life is the greatest teacher."

## 6

CAN a child become educated purely by the project method, being allowed to follow out his own intellectual desires, curiosities, and interests? Such an experiment is to be made in the public school system of Raleigh, North Carolina, under the direction of Professor Thomas Alexander of Teachers College of Columbia University. The plan is to work out over a period of fifteen years an experimental curriculum built upon the child's interests, beginning with the first grade and adding a grade each year.

In most of the new schools, however, the project is not used to displace the curriculum, but to energize it and transform its nature. A curricular structure is maintained, but the various subjects are taught in such a way as to give opportunity for creativeness on the part of the child. As far as possible the academic work is connected with real life-needs, which become centers of interest for the child.

The project method can be applied to all subjects of curriculum. And the necessary formal drill can go on parallel with projects, or motivated by them.

Rural schools have an especially good opportunity to correlate formal subject-matter with life-interest projects. These projects succeed marvelously in bridging the gulf between the home and the school, between books and real life. Not only are the needs of the farm brought directly and actively into the school, but the school is carried out into the farm community, subtly aiding, directing, and enriching its industrial and civic life. Superintendent Edwin O. Broome of Montgomery County, Maryland, is doing a significant work in this direction. The remarkable educational achievement of Mrs. Porter in transforming a bit of Missouri rural life is well known to readers of that inspiring book of Evelyn Dewey's, *New Schools for Old*.

7

WHY should it not be possible to keep alive in the child through the school years its natural curiosity and desire for the acquisition of knowledge. This is innate in the child, but it is thwarted and crushed by ordinary school procedure. It is as normal for children to think as it is for them to run about and play. But they think normally about things which engage their attention and interest. To be forced to think about things which have not engaged their attention and interest is abnormal, arduous, and slightly painful,—difficult as it is for an animal to apply his mind to learn things at the behest of a master.

Children can be trained under the formal method and their minds can be developed, but it is not to the average boy and girl a pleasurable experi-

ence. In busy schools with large classes and a definite and crowded curriculum to cover, what opportunity is there for the child to take an active and creative part in its own education? It cannot even ask real questions and have them satisfactorily answered. The things it wants to know are brushed aside by the teacher as of no importance; whereas the things the teacher—meaning, of course, the system behind the teacher—wants the child to know are forced upon it willy-nilly. Hence, the child very soon learns that it must sacrifice its own interests and must waive the satisfaction of its own natural intellectual wants. Thus the desire for knowledge which really is innate to the human mind, not finding a satisfactory expression, begins to dwindle and finally appears to pine away as adolescence is reached.

Progressive education says this is the fault of the school, not of the child. And it demonstrates the truth of this statement by educating children up to and through adolescence in whom have been kept alive this curiosity, this desire for information; children eager to enrich their store of knowledge, to whom school means joyous opportunity, not drudgery apprehended and if possible avoided.

But in the average school we find that little by little the zeal is chilled. It endures through the third, the fourth, perhaps the fifth grade. It diminishes through the sixth, the seventh, the eighth grade. It dies down more strikingly through the years of secondary education. By the time college is reached, an attitude of apathy to studies prevails. Academic work is accepted as the necessary means to a diploma, but the average college student con-



siders it bad taste to indulge in fervor in class or in intellectual industry out of class. Cleverness in avoiding academic work, a speciousness which aims only at marks, a lack even of moral responsibility concerning cheating or otherwise attaining a diploma without real qualification for it,—this is what the college faculty bewail; <sup>to their own fault</sup> and when they try to stem this tide in college, it is like trying to hold back waves the impetus of which comes from a distance. *This situation cannot be completely remedied by any change in the college. It can be remedied only by going back and fundamentally changing the preliminary education which leads up to college.*

The trouble is that the work in which the school seeks to engage the child is not significant to him. It does not satisfy the needs which the individual child experiences. It does not contribute to the solutions of any problems which he has encountered in actual life. Therefore, in the average school we find him listlessly sitting, looking, listening, and answering when questioned—rather than initiating, doing, creating.

Yet we know definitely that growth and mastery can come to the child only as a result of vigorous self-activity. What is the remedy? "Why not secure interest and more effective effort in school work," ask H. B. and G. M. Wilson in *The Motivation of School Work*, "through a thorough motivation of all the pupil's work by giving him an opportunity to expend his energies upon problems and situations that to him are real and worth while? Why not substitute for the formal text-book routine of school-room practice, self-imposed tasks which the pupil is vitally interested in successfully completing? And

above content and method as final determiner of correct school practice, stands the child with his attitude, his interests, his motives and problems."

## 8

BUT someone may interject, is this an attempt to divorce education from mental discipline and in the training of the child permit it to neglect the formation of those habits of application so necessary to life? If so, there would be no net gain to the child but rather a loss, even though its school life were happy and zestful. No such danger is necessarily concomitant with the new creative method of education. When the project is properly guided to successful fruition and when to it is added the necessary additional academic material, there need be no neglect of proper mental habits on the part of the child, or of sufficient accomplishment as regards normal curriculum content. It is as progressive education demonstrates its ability to give more fully than do other types of schools the mental training and culture that are deemed important that it will win adherents in large numbers. That power I believe to be in the movement.

## CHAPTER X

### THE TYRANNY OF MARKS

*"Of all the unethical treatment to which we subject children, marking them is the worst."*

EUGENE R. SMITH.

WE are visiting a fifth grade recitation in geography at the Homer Eaton public school of Richardstown. There are forty-two children in the class. The teacher is not especially inspiring or illuminating. While she is trying to make clear the nature of trade-winds John, in a back corner, is rolling little pellets of paper and snapping them from the top of his desk in different directions. Bert, who sits in the rear of the aisle directly in front of the teacher and has the advantage of being small and thus able to escape observation behind the large girl in front of him, has his head on his desk. He has the air of being asleep, but he keeps one ear open and jumps up when he is called on by the teacher to explain the cause of the Sea of Sargassa. He doesn't explain it very well, but the teacher doesn't seem to notice that—neither do the other pupils.

The next boy called upon gets up sheepishly and answers the teacher's question with, "I dunno!", then sits down rather defiantly. His defiance is probably just a symptom of inferiority-complex. Meanwhile little Susie, up front, is frantically waving her arm. At last the teacher, nodding toward her, gives

her the desired opportunity to shine. Her statements, however, are not very correct. Perhaps her hand waving was specious, and designed to create a favorable impression, with an eye to marks. Now the bell rings, and the faces of all the children take on a more animated aspect.

A second bell rings. "Put away your geographies," the teacher commands. A wave of relief seems to run around the class—and with a half audible sigh of content the children make preparations for twenty minutes of silent reading. Rid now of the boredom of recitation, they become for the most part silently concentrated on the reading.

Let us visit another room and see a history class. Here the teacher is more brilliant. She knows a lot about history, and is willing to share her knowledge with the children. The children on their part aid her to opportunities by questions which seem however not to be based upon real desire for information, for very few are listening attentively. The children in the rear half of the room are very restless. Eyes wander repeatedly toward the clock. The bell at last rings and the teacher ends the period in a burst of enthusiastic speech. Two boys in the back grin at each other. "Glad she didn't call on me!" one whispers. Not having studied well his lesson, he had a certain appreciation for the teacher's talkativeness.

Are these exaggerated cases? There is enough of the typical in them to explain why the modern educator is inclined to throw into the discard this textbook-regurgitating, mark-eliciting form of recitation. Psychologically it is bad, and for many reasons. Nothing is so irksome to the bright, well-pre-

pared pupil as to have to sit and listen to material, which he has well mastered, set forth in garbled and inaccurate form by poorer or less prepared pupils of the class. As for his active share in the recitation, although this is a keen pleasure for the able pupil since it gives him an opportunity to shine, it is an open door to those personality-patterns of egotism, conceit, and superiority-complex which chronic public success indicates.

And how does the recitation affect the slow-minded or inferior child? Fear is the emotion which governs such a child—as the teacher picks through the list of names, with the probability of calling upon him—fear of contemptuous remarks from the teacher, laughter and ridicule from the class. This fear becomes a form of paralysis, checking the flow of thought, causing speech to halt and stumble, and achievement to be less successful than the child is really capable of. The sense of inferiority, gathering through successive grades, finally reaches a point where it causes habitual failure and produces unwholesome effects in the child's psychic nature and perhaps in his physical health.

As for the average-minded child, it handles the recitation as an adult handles a poker game—giving a false impression if possible concerning its actual state of knowledge of the subject-matter at hand, skillfully specious, shrewdly studying the teacher for any personality factor which it can use to further its chief need—that of obtaining good marks.

ONE may see the recitation most thoroughly utilized for the traditional purpose of securing marks, in the instruction-methods in vogue at the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis. Here it has been the custom to give the command, at the beginning of the period, "Man the black-boards!" Each one of the sixteen midshipmen composing the section takes a position at the ample black-boards surrounding the room, having secured from the instructor, in passing, a slip of paper containing a lesson question.

Sixteen hands poised in the air, chalk-holding. "Write!" comes the second command. Sixteen hands write vigorously, desperately, for a period of ten or fifteen minutes, during which all is silent save for the rhythmic tap, tap, tap of the chalk.

Each midshipman, as he finishes, stands at position. When all are finished, or the given time is up, the instructor has each pupil in turn read what he has written. At the end of each reading the instructor sets down a mark in his record book, for he is required to secure a mark from each student each day. By the time the last written recitation is read, the period is usually ended.

There is no time for discussion, even if there were the inclination. As a matter of fact, the midshipmen seldom ask questions concerning the lesson, except with the mischievous aim of exposing some ignorance of the instructor. One lieutenant-instructor fended off such a question with an answer which has become a historic precedent at Annapolis: "Look it up in the book! I am here to see that you study, not to teach you."

What are the results of this system? In certain directions, one must grant, admirable. A strict régime of diet and sleep adds an average of ten pounds per man to the freshman class. Toward the qualifications of a naval officer, the midshipmen receive a training to the excellence of which the record of the ensigns and junior lieutenants fresh from the Academy in the Great War bore abundant testimony. Even in such academic matters as the correct use of English they will stand favorable comparison with any other group of men in the country. Daily written work in several different subjects during a period of four years, marked not only for content but for form, each mark accumulating toward a record which forms part of the basis for professional advancement throughout the naval career,—this system produces results of a definite kind.

On the other hand, one may well imagine that Naval Academy recitations are entirely devoid of any human interest or play of thought. Stolid and passive acceptance of the mental discipline set for them characterizes the academic life of these young men. They do a lot of studying, but little thinking, and no creating.

The Naval Academy is an excellent type of the mental-discipline method of education. Along its own line and as regards the goal which it sets for itself, it is remarkably efficient. All the work of the academy is in a certain sense motivated, in that it leads definitely and competitively toward success in the chosen career. A whole section of students will do almost perfect work in every subject.

No midshipman comes to class unprepared. Few ever flunk.

With all these values, so highly considered in the traditional type of education, are certain fatal flaws, however. Midshipmen do their academic work largely because they have to, not because they love to. They lend themselves entirely passively to this cramming process, and the amount of culture they absorb is negligible. All their esthetic, their creative, their cultural powers weaken and die out in them—die out for lack of free air to breathe. "We do not have time to think here, sir!" was the naïvely indignant remark of a senior to a question of mine on Emerson's "Oversoul" which could not be answered by memory-repetition.

At the antithesis of the Naval Academy is the New School with its methods of freedom. It is democracy as over against autocracy. Each system has its values, each its accomplishments, and each its defects. But judged as concerns the forming of the critical intelligence, and the growth of man's expressive and creative self, there can be no question as to which method is the better. From the progressive schools come forth children with solidly founded cultural tastes; children open-minded and intellectually eager, whose life in the world is a process continuous in cultural development with the gains made while in school. In this important feature the drill-type of school is not highly successful.

### 3

THE futility of requiring the superior type of student to sit through the boredom of a recitation is



evident. In many public school systems methods are now being sought for freeing the gifted child from the worse-than-useless compunction of the recitation.

In the High School of the School of Education of the University of Chicago, for example, in the courses of social science the following free method is provided. The material in these courses is organized in units. Each unit requires for the great majority of pupils from three to five weeks of study for mastery. When the time comes for study, each pupil is supplied as a rule with mimeographed guidance sheets on which are given the minimal essentials of the unit, together with specific references to the books, magazines, and pamphlets in which a discussion of the minimal essentials may be found. The classroom is regarded primarily as a place for study, rather than as a place for recitation; and supplementary and reference books are assembled in the room for the use of the pupils during the class period. In mastering the minimal essentials pupils are usually required to make outlines and take notes, with the exceptions noted above. Assimilation and teaching tests are given from time to time. Problems which cause difficulty and which require elaboration are occasionally taken up in class for explanation and discussion.

Helen Parkhurst, going much further, has in her Dalton Laboratory Method abolished recitations for all children in practically all subjects. The pupils work out and report on assignments, which are so arranged week by week and month by month as to cover the required work by the end of the year. The classrooms, instead of being places for recitations, are laboratories for individual preparation of the

necessary material, through the use of text-books and reference books, with the teacher at hand to assist wherever necessary. Conferences are held in each subject at regular intervals for the purpose of elucidation, but not for marking. This method has distinct value as regards the superior child and the responsible child. In England, where only a small per cent of children, those most gifted and responsible, go on into higher education, the method has wide vogue and great success. Whether it is ideal for the irresponsible type of child is yet to be demonstrated.

The Winnetka Method of Individual Instruction devised and used by Carlton Washburne in the public schools of Winnetka, Ill., and growing in favor with many other public school systems, also largely abolishes the recitation.

In the college world the Honors System as used at Swarthmore and in part in many other colleges frees the abler students in junior and senior years from required attendance at lectures and recitations—the work done being individual with frequent conferences and final comprehensive examinations. At Harvard a new plan is being tried of releasing all students above the freshman class from classes and lectures for two and a half weeks the first semester and three and a half weeks the second semester. During this annual six weeks interregnum the students are thrown entirely on their own resources. Rollins College, Florida, is just trying out a plan, which so far has been successful, of abolishing lectures and class recitations entirely. Instead, instructors and students meet for conferences twice each morning. In the evening a lecture, a concert, or

some other cultural program forms part of the required curriculum.\*

Thus we see that there is a wide-spread and fast-growing tendency to greatly modify the formal nature of the recitation,—and that this reform, though most complete in the progressive type of schools, is not by any means confined to them.

## 4

GRANTING the need of measuring and recording in some definite way the progress of pupils in academic skills and achievement, it is not necessary to use the recitation as a means for securing marks. In progressive schools the formal recitation is discarded, the academic standing of the children, when desired, being arrived at by other means. In place of the recitation are activities, projects, research and reports. Or, if text-book work is assigned, the discussion of the lesson is in the form of a conference, in which the matter of marks is removed entirely from the consciousness of the children.

In such a handling of subject-matter under a skillful teacher, interest and sincerity prevail. The children ask questions because they really want to know and are not afraid to disclose their ignorance or lack of comprehension. Such questions are not discouraged, but welcomed. Due time is given for their consideration. Some other child can answer the question, perhaps; or the questioner is sent to a dictionary or encyclopedia to get the necessary information. The teacher contributes information as little

\* This tendency to abolish the formal recitation in the college is treated more fully in Chapter XV.

as possible, lest she cripple the investigating and creative powers of her pupils. In such a class conference one can actually feel the children thinking. Difficult points in the subject are cleared up. Contributions enriching the subject are made by this child and that from their experience or knowledge. Every mind is active, every child interested and alert.

Of course, the ablest teachers have always succeeded in arousing the interest and zeal of their students. It is the mediocre ones who make teaching didactic, mechanical, routine, and boring to the child. The true teacher, in any system, is a natural psychologist who knows how to draw out the creative side of a child's mentality, helping it to a successful expression which though designed and called forth by the teacher in accordance with the demands of the curriculum is yet creative.

The inductive method has been used by gifted teachers from the time of Socrates with great success. It is, in my opinion, unsurpassed as a method for enlisting the interest and creative expression of the child along lines of abstract thinking. In Plato's *Dialogue* one sees how subtly Socrates aroused ratiocination in a group of disciples by no means homogeneous in intellectual gifts or training. That is one of the distinct advantages of the Socratic method, that it can be applied to a heterogeneous group; and the modern educator has discovered that all classes, no matter how sifted down and segregated, must be, by the nature of the child, heterogeneous.

Socrates throws the ball of discussion rolling on some abstract, even abstruse subject, which hardly any of the group would be capable of analyzing and discussing unaided. But one after another venture

opinions, the group mind gets to work on the subject, flickers of light begin to appear and illuminate the vagueness of the theme,—the master hand of Socrates holding the group always to the point at hand. It is his skill which always brings back the discussion to the central theme and adds a word here and there which illumines it and inspires fresh thought in the mind of the disciples. Soon all are thinking in real earnest and venturing opinions, some of which are of little value, some of which are of great value. Socrates weaves these utterances into a pattern which approaches more and more a semblance of truth. Final touches he puts in himself; and the truth stands forth clearly outlined, the group having the glow and satisfaction of feeling that this discovery is partly their own achievement. This is what we may call a creative method of getting people to think, as compared with the didactic method which thrusts material already crystallized upon them for study and memorization.

The socialized recitation is an ingenious device in which different pupils in turn conduct the recitation. Properly used it has the advantage of exciting the interest and earnest participation of the whole class. One teacher in a progressive school organized his ancient history class in the form of a club. A student chairman conducted the recitation and a student secretary took a record of the proceedings, which, read at the beginning of the next recitation, served as a review of the previous lesson. These offices revolved each month, so that in the course of the year every pupil had held some office.

The socialized recitation has its dangers. Unless the child conducting it is capable, movement and

interest flag. Also, the elucidation of the subject will rise no higher than the level of intelligence and information of the pupil-teacher, unless the actual teacher sees to it that incorrect or unclear impressions are corrected. Used sparingly it not only adds interest and excitement to school work, but gives opportunity for the development of initiative and leadership.

The formal recitation can be turned into a game by dividing a class into two sides. The leader of each side prepares a list of questions to be put to the opposing side, which scores a point for each correct answer made. Children love this group competition. It has a social value in that the weaker members of each team are urged and coached to adequate preparation of the lesson.

Current events in our school, organized somewhat along this line, proved very exciting and stimulating to effort. In fact the competition became so fierce and the effort and strain so great that it seemed best to give up the competitive scoring, for the aim of progressive education is to inspire each child to contribute what it normally and wholesomely can—and not to allow situations of strain to arise.

Even in formal schools, where it is required that marks be regularly secured, the recitation can be easily converted into a conference or forum by giving a brief written test at the beginning of the period. The remainder of the period can then be spent in free discussions. I have managed to secure in this way, when I taught in schools of formal type, some very sincere and delightful sessions with classes in English and in history.

CLOSELY connected with the subject of recitations is the question of marks. Progressive educators greatly deprecate the tyranny of the marking and examination system, with its deleterious effects upon the psychology and health of the child. The Progressive Education Association in convention at Cleveland in 1927 showed a sentiment strongly opposed to the traditional marking system. Eugene Randolph Smith was greeted with universal applause when he said, "Of all the unethical treatment to which we subject the children, marking them is the worst. I hope all use of marks as something to torture children with are going to be abolished within a short time. Why should we make the ones who cannot do as well with reasonable effort unhappy, because they weren't built that way? Why should we make the ones who do the same work with the utmost ease a little top-heavy in their feelings about themselves, because they manage to do it without much work? It isn't a good foundation for habits in either case."

The trouble with marks, and all other reward and punishment methods of price-tagging academic work, is that they set up external motives for achievement rather than the ideal motive, natural to the child, of desire for self-expression. Artists, as we know, do their best work in response to some inner urge or inspiration. And children, declares the modern educator, love similarly to work for non-external goals. The very essence of progressive education being the aim of helping the child to develop to its best, the question of marks and examinations as hin-

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drances to such a desideratum becomes of high importance.

The nervous strain due to marks and examinations is realized by all educators. The question is whether this strain is a necessary and unavoidable concomitant of education. Is it a whip which must be held over the child, as the lash of the animal trainer is used to produce the desired education of animals?

W. C. Reavis, principal of the University of Chicago High School, as regards the teaching of superior children, declares emphatically in the negative. "After two years of experience in administering a system which has abolished marks and grades, the writer maintains that there are other appeals less artificial which afford a much stronger stimulus to a student. Approval for specific tasks, the challenge to give one's best, the opportunity to follow a genuine intellectual interest, the responsibility of being allowed to undertake work of one's own initiation, the privilege of making a personal contribution to the work of the course, any one of these motives is likely to be a more powerful challenge to the superior student to work at his potential level of efficiency than either school marks or excess credit rewards."

Unfortunately, it is the eager-minded child, the already highly sensitive, nervous child that is most affected by the strain of the daily recitation and the examination.

Mr. A's little girl of ten in Montclair began to have weeping spells, and to object to attending school. As the school was an unusually good one and Alice had always enjoyed it heretofore, Mr. A was



puzzled as to the cause of this emotional disturbance. Finally it came out. The new teacher was posting a list of the class weekly in order of their academic standing. Alice had been first for several weeks. Now she began to have fears that she could not hold this place, and the school work was becoming a strain to her.

In the case of many ambitious children, whether superior, as Alice, or less capable of achievement, the marking and prize system has been the cause of undue and unnecessary strain. Surely no such extrinsic stimulus is needed, since the love of study and of achievement are with such children the normal and wholesome way to self-expression and progress.

As regards the child that is getting poor marks, one who has observed the face of a little child when it is overwhelmed with the sense of failure suggested to it by others can realize that this is an injurious psychic experience for the child. The young child lives in a magic world where there is and should be no sense of failure; where the wish is father to the thought, and the thought in turn becomes achievement; and where all achievement looks fair to its creator. Very gently do young children need to be led from good to better achievement, or from poor to good. Condemnation, the harsh effect of severe standards, the causing of a sense of failure, should be avoided.

The result of a chronic experience of failure on the part of a child is to shut it from growth. There cannot be the natural expansion and self-expression under such circumstances. Whatever inherent powers the child possesses—its native gifts, whatever they be—have not the opportunity they should have to

shine forth. May we conclude, therefore, that the so-called process of education which such children undergo is in reality for them no-education, worse-than-education? Something that hampers them, imprisons their souls, presses them downward instead of lifting them upward.

Have we not all known such children, victims of the Juggernaut of education? To me they are like sick souls that need a course of treatment to put them on their feet. What is the treatment that they need? It is very simple. It consists in encouraging them and helping them to succeed according to their best ability, without any sense of time-pressure or pressure of an outer and arbitrary system impinging upon them. It may take half a year, it may take a year, for them to lift their heads again and learn to breathe a free breath. Then, they begin shyly to respond; to venture forth what knowledge, what ability they have; and their real education commences.

The tortoise is gifted with a unique means of protection. To escape its environment, it has only to draw in its head and close its shell and it is almost unassailable. Human beings have a similar recourse from the shafts of Fortune. They, too, escape the derision of their mates, the malapprobation of their contemporaries, by retreating within themselves and shutting themselves off from real contact with the outer world. But this is a dangerous condition, leading to diseased states of the psyche. Shall that which we call education help to induce such states? Rather should it be one of the primary aims of education to induce a healthy state

of psyche, using the process of mental training as a means to that end, not as a means of injury.

## 6

ANOTHER weakness of the marking system—even though we seek to defend it in spite of the deleterious consequences already shown—is the difficulty of arriving at any absolute or even adequate criterion and standard. The marking system is very like the prize system in art despised by many artists. Who is to be the judge? Again and again do we see, in the history of art, faulty evaluations of artists by their peers and contemporaries. How often the humble artist, disdained by academies and rejected by exhibits, has proven to be the great genius.

How can the work of the child be properly evaluated to a definite per cent? It has been demonstrated by interesting educational experiments how divergent are the views of different teachers as to the value of the same piece of work. The experiment was made a few years ago with a group of English teachers selected as representative of the finest experts in the country, who were asked to mark in ways unknown to each other a set of English papers. Results showed some marks ranging from 30 per cent to 90 per cent on the same composition and an average variation of about 30 per cent. This means that a composition marked 90 per cent in one institution might be marked 30 per cent in another institution. Would it not make a student dizzy to spend a week at a time under each one of this group of English teachers and find himself getting a different grade of marks at each place? What

would he think? How would he estimate himself and his work? Would he become cynical about marks as an adequate sign of value? Would he not come to the conclusion that, after all, marks are nothing but an estimate by one person of another person's work?

But, you may say, English is a subject difficult to mark; in an exact and definite subject like mathematics, certainly teachers can mark with better results. To test this point the same experiment was tried in mathematics, with only slightly better results. For instance, how should one mark an example which has an incorrect answer due to one little mistake, not in the process but in the fundamentals? Should such an example be marked zero? If not, what value should be given it between zero and one hundred?

An incident which occurred in the course of my secondary teaching well illustrates the difficulty of evaluating a pupil's work in terms of marks. A sophomore class in English in one of the well-known preparatory schools for boys, in which I was then teaching, had been encouraged to try some original poetry. To my surprise, the finest poem was written by a shy, country youth who had entered that year very poorly prepared in English composition. His poem was exquisite, a little gem of description of the mountain-country, when shadows fall at sunset time. Shadows like witches' fingers stealing out to grasp the sunlit meadows,—was the simile he used. The poem was naïve, fresh, original, beautiful in expression. Now, that boy, as it happened, was the worst in the class in composition work, if we grade on a basis of college entrance requirements. His

spelling was atrocious, his grammar incorrect, his sentence structure poor; and his average, I presume, if strictly marked, would be around 30 per cent or 40 per cent.

How should a teacher with discerning eye toward creative values mark such a youth? College entrance says: Mark him down to nothing if he spells badly and has grammatical errors. The world says: Let us prize creative ability; we can fix the spelling up with technicians to aid. And so it comes about that the standard which holds in college preparation may be just the reverse of the standard by which the world measures achievement. Many a man of prominence and leadership in his community, state, or country, gets his speeches and public writings edited or almost wholly composed for him by a secretary at \$3,000 a year. The secretary is letter perfect, of the type to pass at 90 per cent on the college rating. The big man of public prominence may be full of native errors in the use of language, yet he has ideas which he is making effective. The other man has the technical ability. Which shall we rate highest, then, if we are trying to evaluate youths who are growing, developing, aiming toward a successful career? Shall we mark them for technical perfection or shall we mark them for the value of their creative ideas?

## 7

**BUT** if we take the stand that marks are an abomination, a bondage to the soul, what shall take their place? Can we just eliminate marks and examinations from the consciousness of the child and leave

him to progress as he may from his own inner incentive and desire for proficiency and success? Some schools are making that daring experiment. They are abolishing entirely the outward incentive of marks and are using the more natural incentives of joy in the work, of desire to attain more perfect technique and mastery.

In the working out of group projects by children there is neither need nor room for any marking system. Here, the children are all working together to achieve something which they themselves desire to achieve. They are eager to do the very best that is possible, and the stimulus of the group desire is sufficient to carry along those in the group who by temperament and nature would be less careful, less industrious, the type who need something to spur them on. Here, the social approbation of the group provides the necessary stimulus and the evaluation is as in life itself, namely, the quality of the final achievement. This is one of the great values of the group-project method; namely, that it is a replica of life itself. Achievement is carried on from day to day without these extraneous and meaningless marks, yet checked up as to final value by the criticism not only of the group itself but of the whole school and of the parents and visiting public.

The progressive schools, in general, though they may in some form record for the office and the home the academic work of the children, do not confront the children with marks as a means of incentive, nor do they use the class-meeting as a mark-eliciting performance. Thus, though they may not abolish marks, they abolish the tyranny of marks in so far as the child is concerned.

Do these schools, then, make no measure of achievement and progress? There is a kind of test which has been devised for this very purpose, the so-called standard achievement test. These tests have been devised for the measurement of progress in arithmetic, in oral and silent reading, in spelling, in history, geography, and grammar. They are of great value to schools which have broken loose from a hard and fast curriculum, in that they make possible the measuring of academic achievement without the necessity of continual recitations, quizzes, and examinations. These standard achievement tests, given at least two or three times a year, reveal weaknesses which can be worked on and corrected. They are widely used in progressive schools. A grave responsibility rests upon both the makers and the users of such tests, of course, in seeing to it that they do not become a means of overstandardization. The standard tests, however, as used in the progressive schools have been free from any danger of misuse, and on the other hand have been of great advantage in assuring normal academic progress on the part of children who have been released from the routine of curriculum and recitation in order to enjoy a more creative form of education.

Professor John W. Bentley of the Psychological Department of the American University, Washington, D. C., uses an ingenious system of rating which accomplishes results worth while in providing stimulus, while avoiding the evils of the marking system such as we have shown them to be. The students are marked not according to any standard of competition between themselves but according to the standard each of his own ability, the ability being

ascertained by means of intelligence tests and graded A, B, or C. Each quarter the work of each student is measured in comparison with his grade of intelligence. A student of grade A intelligence doing grade C work is unsatisfactory in his work and is told so; for he is capable of grade A work and would be doing such grade work if working earnestly. That he is getting grade C shows that he is not working earnestly nor industriously. On the other hand, for a student of grade C in intelligence to be doing grade C work is satisfactory. He is doing as good work as he is normally capable of. For him to do grade B would be to be showing extraordinary effort and praiseworthy accomplishment.

The report systems used by many of the progressive schools describe in terms other than percentage not only the academic work of the children, but their character development, creativeness, effort, and so forth,—valuing the child as a whole and not as an intellect only. This report system is designed not only to keep the parent informed of the all-round progress of the child but to enable the parent to cooperate with the school in seeking to eliminate faults and to develop the desired virtues.

The following report of Rezo, in the third grade of the Ethical Culture School, is a good example of the above-mentioned system: "Rezo's interest in his work is very commendable. He takes much pride in doing everything well. He does good thinking and asks intelligent questions. Sometimes he asks questions which he ought to think out for himself, but they show, at least, that he is attentive.



“In English, geography, history, Industrial Arts, Fine Arts and Music, Rezo does very well. His spelling is a little weak. In arithmetic he needs to make a greater effort.

“What he accomplished does not measure up to his ability. Rezo certainly has improved tremendously in conduct. I hope his good self-control will continue. He is still not as dependable as he should be when the group is moving about through the halls. It seems to be hard for him to refrain from teasing the children, when he hasn't something in particular to do to keep his mind busy. This lack of control is serious. I hope he will soon be as thoughtful under such circumstances as he is when the class is working.

“In nature study, Rezo has been keen to learn, being helpful, and asking intelligent questions and responding well.

“In gymnasium, Rezo has tried hard, but has been mischievous. Once at work, however, he has done very well.

“In art, Rezo was found to have good native ability. His teacher believes that he has had a difficult time expressing himself in his art work. Having the tendency to do everything precisely and seeing others do the freer type of work has been confusing to him. He means to do the right thing by the group.

“In music, his teacher expresses her pleasure in seeing the improvement in Rezo this year. Instead of being a very disturbing element, as he used to be, Rezo has become coöperative and helpful in every way, and has good control.

“In domestic art, Rezo has done very good work,

showing a splendid attitude at all times. He has been an earnest worker. He has done average grade work with fine effort."

The majority of progressive schools keep office records of the work of the children. As a rule these marks are not shown to the children. Occasionally it may be helpful to a child to be faced with evidence, in the form of rating, of lack of achievement.

I would say in summing up the matter, that every progressive school, if it uses marks, uses them in a way adapted to the psychology of each child, so as to be an aid to self-understanding, and not a cause of fear, self-consciousness, or strain.

An excellent statement of a recording system neither the most radical nor the most conservative is made by Rachel Erwin of the Winbrook School, White Plains, N. Y.: "In the Winbrook School we give no marks to the children. We want them to work without marks as a motive. Their interest in the materials or in the subject that they are studying and their own satisfaction resulting from their sense of achievement motivate all the school work. We study very carefully each child for the purpose of helping the teachers to know exactly what is best for each individual and for making a report to the parents twice yearly on the progress of the child in his studies and in character growth. These reports are sent out February 1st and June 1st in the form of a letter to the parents. In wording such reports, we keep in mind what will be most helpful to the parents in their dealings with the child. These are for the parents only; the children do not see them."

To the child there is a very powerful stimulus in the marking system. There can be no denial of that. It is a distinct cause of effort on his part and an important factor in day-by-day achievement. On the other hand, the objections to this external and artificial stimulus of marks are well founded in child psychology. Certainly the child below the sixth grade can dispense with marks and progress more happily, more healthfully, and more normally in accordance with the laws of child growth and development. Above the sixth grade the weight of definite standards impending in the further stages of education becomes a factor to be considered—so that the matter of marks cannot at present be settled purely on its own merits, even in progressive schools.

If marks must be, let them be used with that subtle wisdom which Christ meant to teach us concerning man's duty toward institutionalism when, after violating the standards of Sabbath-keeping He said, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath."

## 8

CLOSELY connected with the question of marks and examinations is the question of grades and promotion. What shall we do with the child who does poor work in several subjects? Shall we have him repeat the grade, setting him back the ensuing year with children younger than himself, while he sees his own mates and friends moving on to another room? This custom, which has been prevalent in our school system, of failing a child in a grade with the necessity of repeating the same grade the following year, has

had such bad effects educationally that even in the public schools there is a definite movement seeking to minimize such demotions. Many teachers prefer, and are allowed to do so, to pass a child on from the grade, if it is humanly possible, even though the work for the year has not been satisfactory.

What happens when a child is kept back a grade? If the child has spirit and is of the motor-active temperament and is really intelligent, as is so often the case even where the academic work has been poor, such a child will bitterly resent remaining behind with a younger group of children. He will lose all interest in study, the subjects of the curriculum already dry to his taste becoming even more distasteful when repeated. He sees himself failing in class before the eyes of younger children, children, perhaps, not as intelligent as himself. He expresses his power for initiative and leadership often in mischief, or best, in a sullen indifference to academic work. This is the beginning of his academic downfall; and unless some new factor enters in for his salvation, in the natural course of events he will form more and more distaste for education and seek to escape from the educational system as early as possible, going out into work in order to find the satisfactions of achievement that he cannot find within the four walls of the schoolroom.

This is no imaginary case which we are describing. It is an actual type of boy and girl, the failure of whose educational careers carry on up into adult manhood and womanhood. Many is the business man who can tell you this same tale with a note of bitterness, that he had through such an experience missed a higher education which he now realizes

would have been of great value to him. So there are in the schools of to-day boys and girls who will in later years look back ruefully at wasted school-days and too early a prurition into the mart and the world.

Marietta Johnson goes so far as to claim that no child should have the sense of failure; that it should each year be helped to express itself in different lines to the best of its ability; and that its work each year should be what naturally flows out of its interest and not in submission to a formal program with standards extrinsic to the child, set for it by the adult mind according to patterns deemed necessary for culture. Therefore, in Mrs. Johnson's Organic School at Fairhope, Alabama, and in the school which she helped to found at Greenwich, Connecticut, the Edgewood School, there are no grades but only life-groups arranged according to age; for instance, the eight-year group, the nine-year group, and so forth. The children pass on automatically from one group to another as they reach the proper age. A similar practice is followed at the City and Country School in New York City, conducted by Caroline O. Pratt.

Another method of elimination of the grading and de-grading of pupils is the Winnetka Method of Carlton Washburne referred to in a previous chapter. According to this system of individual instruction there is neither promotion nor demotion by grades, but only a steady and continuous progress according to the individual pace of each student. Frederick Burke, as head of the San Francisco State ~~Normal~~ School two decades ago, launched this idea upon the educational world, of abolishing

the "lock-step" in education, as he called grade promotion. His idea fell then upon cold ears. But the genius of Washburne, his one-time pupil and disciple, and the progress of educational theory, combine to make propitious at this time the gospel of individual education and the freeing of the child from slavery to mass-standardization.

All public school systems are studying the question of individual differences, and seeking to break up those groups—namely, classes—which have always been considered as homogeneous but which now are seen as being most heterogeneous. The leaven is working, and the old traditions are giving way to new educational theory and practice based upon a better understanding of the psychology of the child.

## 9

JUST as there are definite evils connected with demotion, so there are evils connected with the opposite practice of double promotion. It is bad for a child to be kept back and humiliated before its fellows, it is bad also for a child to be pushed ahead and set up as a paragon of mental ability. If it is bad for a child to drop out of its age-group by having to repeat a grade, so it is bad for a child to move out of its age-group by double promotion. A very interesting article was published anonymously in the *Atlantic Monthly* a few years ago analyzing and describing the bad results of such a system of extra promotions on the author, who stated that he had hardly in mature life been able to recover from its social consequences; a social inferiority-complex manifesting itself on the one side in shy-

ness before his fellow men, and on the other side in desire for display and approbation—serious faults which had run like somber threads through the whole fabric of his career.

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As the reader has already perceived, it is not easy to come to definite conclusions about this matter of marks, examinations, and promotions. So long as college entrance, standing at the goal of primary and secondary education, presents definite demands both as regards subject-matter and percentage of mastery, progressive educators do not find themselves free to develop in practice, from junior high on, any significant reform of the traditional marking system.

One wonders if the day will ever come, when colleges, as Marietta L. Johnson claims they should do, will accept all intelligent and earnest youths of a certain age, however qualified academically, who desire further education, and lead them onward from where they are to where they want to go. This is what adult education does; and this is the system in vogue in progressive schools with children up to adolescence. Perhaps the forces of progress, working from the adult down and from the child up, will finally overcome the impregnable citadel of college and its helpless vassal, the secondary school.\*

*We can hope!*

\* Cf. the following significant statement of President Hibben of Princeton University: "If we find a boy deficient in credits, but who has in his favor a career of leadership, a record of broad influence on his companions, an outlook on life that distinguishes him morally, that kind of boy, despite academic shortage, is the kind of boy who should be welcome at college."

One may say that life itself examines and grades us. True, but the world demands of us accomplishment in one line only, and that the line of our own choice. It gives us ample time for preparation and it does not ask for a demonstration of ability until the candidate feels able to perform it. Then the test the world makes us is very definite and very thorough.

Even if the college world did not project its power down to lower education by means of the examination system, even if all educators were free to free children from all necessity of meeting definite standards of achievement,—one cannot but feel that the welfare of the child rather than the needs of educational machinery would indicate a definite—though broad, flexible, and humanitarian—system of measurement of progress and achievement. But in such a system of measurement the child's welfare alone would be the consideration, and all the harshness of bureaucracy would be abolished.



## CHAPTER XI

### THE TEACHER A GUIDE AND NOT A TASKMASTER

*"The teacher I want for my children is somewhere abroad on this earth. He has a deep and abiding faith in childhood."*

ANGELO PATRI.

**T**HE progressive teachers are comrades to their children. In matters of discipline they do not represent the autocratic government of the past. Student participation in the school government and the general atmosphere of freedom in a progressive school serve to establish a basic harmony between teacher and pupil. Similarly as regards the academic work, the teacher in a progressive school is no longer the autocratic enforcer of curriculum and of grade standards. Rather is the teacher a guide to knowledge; a comrade to the child on the path of learning; a sincere helper to the child for attaining the fruition of its intellectual, moral, and spiritual destiny.

Because teachers are sympathetic and understanding, because they help the child to be its best self rather than use severe and arbitrary disciplines, we find the children in progressive schools unafraid, naïve, sincere, spontaneous, daring to be and to show their real selves.

The progressive teacher meets the child's questions, and converses with him, as with a peer.

Would that we could abolish everywhere the supercilious condescending attitude of the adult toward the child. We teachers and parents need to have a better spiritual understanding of the child. The child is not merely an immature intelligence. It is a soul, and in essence is coeval with ourselves. For the soul is not bounded by earth-years. The difference of a few earth-turns around the sun, between the adult and the child, does not mean that the soul of the child is necessarily younger than that of the adult. Clearly, as to soul, the comparison must be one in degrees of perfection, not in earth-years.

The fact that the soul manifests itself at birth in a helpless body and an unformed mind, indicates simply that the young child is limited as to its physical and mental vehicles and as to information about this planet in which it has newly come to take residence. That it has only imperfect means of communication with the outer world does not prove a paucity of spiritual life within. The child's ideas, whenever they are clearly expressed, vie in quality with the ideas of adulthood; for in the world of ideas the child is as much at home as the adult, and as unlimited. Nothing in the adult world can surpass in exquisiteness of sympathy, of justice, of nobility, the ideas of the child.

✓ We should always meet with reverence, therefore, the thoughts which a child expresses. In this Platonic world of ideas, we must meet the child sincerely, tenderly, respectfully, as coevals or peers. If there is the slightest trace of superiority, of condescension on the part of the adult, the child's soul closes up like the petals of a delicate flower when too roughly or too inconsiderately handled. For the

child is a sensitive organism which unfolds, develops, expresses itself freely, only in an atmosphere of sympathy and love. In the course of long years of institutional discipline, the child little by little retires within itself and ceases to express; and that most precious gift, its **personality**, becomes obstructed, hindered, and impoverished.

Therefore progressive teachers pay respect to the opinions of the child, and encourage it in the expression of them. This sympathy and understanding of the teacher is a very important factor in progressive education, which lays much stress on development through self-expression and creativeness. Hughes Mearns, who has succeeded in having children do such creative things with words, says: "We treat every opinion with respect, however ridiculous it may seem to us who are older and presumably wiser—with the same respect as a physician would consider a confessed symptom—and thereby we make it easy in our presence to speak out sincerely and disinterestedly. Outspoken sincerity we must have, for that is where the new education begins."

✓ Above all things, the teacher must not resent individuality and power in the pupil. The quality of envy is common to us all. Sad as it may seem, it often exists in the relation between teacher and pupil. The gifted child of more brilliant mind than the teacher is apt to cause resentment, which may express itself in petty tyrannies; a mean desire to humble the superior soul of the child and to keep it from the brilliant expressions of its personality. So Haydn resented the opinionatedness of his pupil Beethoven, to such an extent that they finally had to part in unfriendliness; Beethoven making some

rude remark to the effect that Haydn could no longer teach him anything, Haydn wishing in vain to mold Beethoven into the musical forms which he himself conceived to be perfect. Beethoven was right as to fact, though impolite as to statement. Haydn had no more to teach him. Here, the pupil was a greater genius than the master. Such instances occur all through the process of education. What shall be the attitude of the teacher in the training of a brilliant child? Must we not welcome such an occurrence and take delight in finding genius in a pupil, even when that genius is accompanied by a certain amount of opinionatedness? The teacher must be humble. He must not seek to curb that which is wholesome and normal in the gifted child, the expression of its individuality.

✓ The progressive teacher is aware that she is handling human material, the most fascinating material in the world, more fascinating even than any material the scientist, the business man, the artist handles. No wonder the teacher in a progressive school enjoys her work, even though it may call forth every ounce of her energy. Her teaching becomes an art as well as a science, and the teacher an artist. Everything that is creative in her is called forth for the sake of her children, everything that is creative in her children is appreciated and aided by her to expression. In this delightful "rapport," this give and take between teacher and pupil, always on a creative plane, there is indeed a joy such as the formal education seldom offers.

X Here comes a new relationship between pupil and teacher, when the pupil is allowed to do the thing <sup>he</sup> wants to do. What a happy situation as regards the

child when the teacher is aiding ~~to~~<sup>him</sup> to accomplish things of his own desire, projects self-initiated, in order to perfect which the child realizes the need of adult aid and is grateful for it. Here we have the possibility of that most perfect relationship between age and youth,—service and aid from the greater maturity of the one; and gratitude, respect, and loyalty from the other.

✓ The wise teacher, however, assumes direction only when necessary. She lets the child try its building powers, as far as possible, without aid and without too great an assumption of authority. One visiting a progressive school and seeing a project in the course of development might well wonder which were pupils and which the teacher, for all are working together. Often it is some intelligent child strongly possessed of qualities of leadership who makes the suggestion and gives a modest order to the group. The teacher keeps his or her hands off as much as possible. It is better even for the children to make some mistakes and learn through them than for the teacher to guard the group too carefully against all false steps or imperfect work.

How hard this method is for the old-time teacher whose training has been to plan all the work for the children, to direct at every step, to prevent all mistakes beforehand, and to get as speedily as possible correct work from the pupils along a line set by her under pressure of a curriculum which is her master as she is the master of her pupils. This absolutism of government reaches down from the imperious demands of an abstract curriculum, through superintendents and supervisors and teachers, to the youngest and tiniest pupils of the grades, directing

them at every step. But the teacher in a progressive school has a more fortunate position and opportunity. She does not feel in any binding and limiting way the pressure of a curriculum or school system or demands of a principal. She is free to study the child, to find its needs, to help it develop to its best and express itself along the lines of its talents. How much more delightful is this handling of children than under the old pressure system of regimentation and drill!

From the teacher in a progressive school is removed a great part of that strain of teaching which comes from the obligation imposed by a school system to force all the children along at a given pace. What a pathetic task this is if one analyzes it intelligently! This crowding upon the heels of children, punching and prodding the laggards to keep the pace, so much mass of child-humanity to be moved obdurately against its will, forward it knows not where. Let us pity the captains, the lieutenants, the sergeants, the corporals of these regiments of children, officers who take no joy themselves in this drilling process. They are not to blame. The system strains them, just as they are obliged to strain the children. It causes them to become nervous, to become worn prematurely. It leaves too many of them overtired at the end of every day and haggard at the end of every term.

We do not find harried teachers in progressive schools. Here the teacher is free, as is the child, to express herself creatively. In fact, she is called upon to be creative at every turn. And since creative work is thrilling and satisfying, there is a joy about this

teaching which compensates for all the efforts that may be required.

The opportunity to practice creativeness which a teacher finds in a progressive school tends to increase, through practice, the creative habit. One teacher new to a certain school has become so enthusiastic in planning projects for her children that she sometimes telephones the director after school hours from her home, to tell him about them. She says that she gets a joy from creating these ideas similar to the joy an artist gets in creating. (As she is a writer, she knows that joy, too.) When in the training school, where original ideas were distinctly not desired, she states that her mind was then empty of any such educational ideas. Thus it is seen that we grow by expression, teachers as well as pupils.

The progressive teacher refrains from much speech. For progressive education does not view children as empty vessels that must be filled, but as living organisms that grow through exercise. Therefore, if any talking is to be done, it usually is more important that the child should do it than the teacher. The student as a passive recipient of wisdom and learning from the lips of the teacher is passing from the educational scene. College students, asked to report their ideas as to ways of improving college instruction, cite as one of their chief objections the lecture system. Even in the typical recitation, the teacher would be surprised to find how large a percentage of the hour he or she consumes.

In E. A. Hotchkiss's *Project Method in Classroom Work* will be found a very interesting and

- illuminating stenographic report of a history recitation which "is typical of the method of procedure in most of the regular classroom recitations throughout the country, especially in the upper grades, high schools, and colleges. In the course of the hour the teacher responded seventy-six times, while the sum total of responses from the members of the class was only eighty-one; also that the number of words spoken by the teacher during the recitation was 1,055, while the total number of words spoken by the members of the class was 764. This would indicate that the teacher consumed about 58 per cent of the entire recitation with questions; while the remaining 42 per cent of the time was taken up by the students in answering. On the whole, the teacher's questions were thought-provoking in type. However, the answers given by the pupils do not reveal any considerable amount of purposeful thinking on their part."
- This kind of a recitation, involving chiefly memory responses from the children, in which the teacher assumes the entire responsibility for directing the course of events, is of course not characteristic of the progressive school. Nevertheless even progressive teachers have to be on their guard against monopolizing too much of the daily program with their own talk. The very freedom of the program might tempt an overreadiness to share one's knowledge with one's pupils. It is a wise teacher who knows when and how to say the thing needed, and when to stop talking.



It is evident that progressive education requires an abler kind of teacher. That is what the progressive schools are looking for. Their directors spend days and days upon the road searching the country over for these able teachers—teachers that are adaptable, sensitive to children's temperaments and moods and needs, yet strong enough in personality to master them and govern them when necessary; artist teachers, creative teachers, who can kindle creativeness in children; teachers who, regardless of their subject-matter, can lead children to think, to express, to expand, and to grow. And the teacher for a progressive school must be a natural or trained psychologist of children; for progressive education accepts the responsibility for the training of the whole child, not of its intellectual centers only.

It is very important for the carrying out of progressive methods that able teachers be attracted into the profession. These newer methods which give so much freedom to the child cannot adequately be carried out by mediocre teachers. In fact, for the commonplace routine-minded teacher the old system of fixed curriculum and supervision from the top down may be necessary in order to produce definite results. The success of the progressive method is involved in the type of teacher which it can procure.

For instance, once the old formal discipline is remitted a teacher must be keen and quick and able to aid the children into self-discipline, knowing how much of movement and noise is a necessary and allowable concomitant of proper activity and how to

hold these numerous activities of the children within a certain social discipline. To anyone entering a progressive schoolroom, there seems to be a certain confusion and bustle that results from activity. "But out of the occupation," says Dewey in *School and Society*, "out of doing things that are to produce results and out of doing these in a social and coöperative way, there is born a discipline of its own kind and type."

✓ In order that such a coöperative and social discipline shall be produced there must be an able teacher in charge. It requires insight, technique, mental énergy, and forcefulness of personality to keep children in harmonious condition and in working order under such conditions of freedom. The progressive teacher must be alive at every finger tip, keenly responsive to the group of children under her care, anticipating their needs, and keeping them moving as individuals and as spontaneous groups rather than in regimentation.

Again, in the freeing of the child from too fixed a curriculum and from text-books, the mediocre teacher feels at sea and is unable to produce results from the children that are worth while. Dewey points out this difficulty of the progressive method when he says, "The question is often asked (in regard to the new education) if you begin with the child's ideas, impulses, and interests all so crude, so random and scattering, so little refined or spiritualized, how is he to get the necessary discipline, culture, and information?" His answer is that we must direct the child's activities and lead them to the necessary goals. It requires a very high type of per-

son to direct the child in activities as much as possible of the child's own choice and aid it to secure worthwhile results.

Again, in the matter of creative work and the arts, it is not enough merely to let the children express themselves "ad libidum" with mediums of form and color. Says Dewey, "If you simply indulge this interest by letting the child go on indefinitely, there is no growth that is more than accidental. But let the child first express his impulse and then through criticism, question and suggestion, bringing him to consciousness of what he has done and what he needs to do and the result is quite different." It takes a sort of genius in the teacher to produce work of genius from the pupil. Not everyone could get from children the kind of work which Cizek or Mangravite can get. How important it is for children to have in their early formative age contact with creative rather than with formal, bureaucratic, mediocre teachers.

The commonplace personality feels at home with routine text-book work. The amount of cultural education at present required as entrance into grade teaching is so limited that the average teacher in the grades has normally little background of culture to supplement the work of the text-books. Especially is this true in the case of non-departmental teachers who are obliged to cover every subject of the curriculum. It is small wonder that they hesitate to depart too far from the information given in the text-book; that they discourage questions from the children and flounder badly when questions are asked. This floundering can be ob-

served by a keen visitor in any public school, and the fear of the teacher of having too many questions thrown at her.

Now, since the very essence of the progressive movement is free expression; since what we want most in children is intellectual curiosity, question asking, the burning desire to get at the bottom of things, to get knowledge from human contacts, and to form broader horizons,—how absolutely necessary it is that the teacher have a large body of knowledge and of culture to draw from so as to be capable of answering miscellaneous questions; and that she be honest and sincere enough and on such comradely relations with her pupils as to be perfectly willing to acknowledge when she is not able to answer the questions asked. *Under the old system of education, the teacher is supposed to teach the children and the children to absorb from the teacher or the text-book all the knowledge they are to get. But the situation in a progressive school is different. The teacher does not pose as the purveyor of knowledge but as the guide to knowledge. She is there to help children find out anything they want to know.* She can show them how to use the encyclopedias, and other reference books for any desired information. If she does not know a desired fact, she does not hesitate to say so. She will find out and report the next day, or let the children undertake the research. So children and teacher are comrades together in quest of knowledge. Neither pupils nor teacher hesitate to acknowledge ignorance in any matter; for their one desire is to find out what they do not know rather than to cover up the fact that they do not know. Thus pedantry is

avoided, and a sincere intellect and spirit is developed in the children.

3

BUT where are these ideal teachers to be found? The average school executive may say, "Why, give me a school manned with such teachers and I, too, can turn out a better educational product. For after all, the teacher makes the school." And true it is that the teacher is a very important factor in education and deserves a great part of the credit for the development of this progressive movement. The work done in any particular progressive school is not merely the expression and the theory of the director. It is rather the coöperative work of the whole faculty. And since the teachers are more or less free to express their own ideas in the classroom, there is a great deal of creativeness on the part of these teachers, a very splendid contribution by them to the work of the school and to the practice of progressive education.

↘ One might well despair, then, of perfecting education along these new lines from very lack of teachers, were it not that certain factors aid in obtaining the kind of teacher desired. In the first place the creative nature of the work makes it attractive to many who would otherwise not take up teaching, or continue in it if they are already teachers. They are willing to teach in progressive schools at a salary which is not in itself a sufficient compensation, finding their further compensations in the joy of creative work with children—the joy that the scientist feels in experimenting, in finding new paths. Many

young women whose families have sufficient means to make them not too dependable upon their own earnings are turning to the progressive field in education, bringing a rich culture to the classroom and to the work of the progressive school with little thought of salary, glad to have an opportunity to express their love for children and their educational abilities in this inspiring field of work. Young women of this type have usually had a more cultural home environment, a broader education, and more travel than the average teacher.

Secondly, many of the progressive schools are able to pay higher salaries than the average, and thus attract teachers who are very capable and who have taken post-graduate training in the progressive methods. The reason that progressive schools can give this larger salary is that they are managed by coöperating groups of parents who wish such a type of teacher for their children and who are willing to pay the necessary price. In such schools there is usually a deficit at the end of the year which is always met by voluntary contributions from the parents, whose aim as regards the budget for the school is not to restrict it to a point which would sacrifice the obtaining of the right kind of teacher.

Thirdly, progressive schools are finding a rich field for able teachers in the group of married ex-teachers, who, having either reared their families or having but one child, yearn to get back into the teaching work. Such mother-teachers are, in the viewpoint of progressive school executives, highly desirable. They have had experience of motherhood. They have a sympathy for and understanding of the child such as the non-parent can never attain. They

also have the stability of temperament of the married person. This is no slight factor in the matter of teaching. Moreover, these teachers who have left the profession of teaching for home-making are very apt to be the most beautiful, the most magnetic, the most gifted and capable of the group which started in to teach upon graduation from the normal school. Now, if they have the gift and temperament of the teacher by nature they are very apt to find the lure of the classroom still surviving in competition with the uninspiring life of the apartment house. Of how much greater advantage is it for the world, as well as for themselves, to render that economic service of which they are most capable. Why should they not teach, and with the salary that they get engage a good housekeeper to maintain their home? During the school day they may bring their children to the school they teach in. These married women are a very fine type of the progressive teacher.

4

IT is a pity that the profession of teacher is not more honored in this country, as regards recompense and social standing. In certain historical periods, and in countries where the teacher has been one of the most highly respected members of the community, able men have chosen that profession. But in America—where the world of industry and finance offers not only the largest incomes but the best opportunities for social prestige, for travel, for culture, for association with the country's leaders—it is but natural that the ablest, the most dynamic,

the most gifted young men of to-day should be drafted into these lines of endeavor.

I hold here no brief simply for larger salaries and more social recognition for teachers. My plea is for the child. I want to see it come about that forceful, creative, inspiring men and women become attracted to the teaching profession, so that the children of this great and prosperous country may have educational contact with the best that modern civilization has to offer in the way of culture and of character. What short-sightedness on the part of men of means, to be satisfied to commit their children to teachers of a mediocre quality which they would never tolerate in their business associates or in those who purvey to their comfort and pleasure.

However, things are changing for the better. It was to be expected that this country should at first expend its energies in the pioneer work of clearing the forests, wrestling with the difficulties of nature, and exploiting the marvelous physical resources with which we have been blessed. This has called men of the greatest energy and power to the world of affairs and they have been needed there. There can be no regret at this. They have contributed their ability to the remarkable material progress which this country now enjoys. Perhaps it was more important, surely one would feel so, that Alexander Graham Bell should turn from the profession of teaching to that of inventor. But since our homes are now well supplied with telephones, our families with automobiles, our forests cleared, our mines developed, the country almost surfeited with railroads, we have reached a point where the human



energy of the race will naturally reach out into other directions.

The intelligent parent of to-day is more concerned with the education of his children than in the past, and more discriminating about the kind of education that he wants. He is no longer satisfied with mere schooling. He wants to see his children developed in the best possible way, and he realizes that it takes a high order of teacher to do this job right. There is a great difference in the attitude of the practical American business man toward the kind of teacher who can develop his child's personality, aid it to overcome its faults, and help it toward its ideal development, physical, mental, social, and spiritual,—than is his attitude toward a teacher who is merely purveying a subject which is of no special interest to either parent or child. Naturally the practical man of affairs does not feel any great respect for a teacher whose stock of trade consists only of Greek, Latin Grammar, the writers of the Johnsonian period, French verbs, etc. He pays for such efforts on behalf of his children in much the same way as he would pay for the efforts of a good mechanic in fixing up his car. But he yearns, perhaps, for another kind of teacher for his child; for educational contact with rich personalities, with great minds that can fire the imagination and enthusiasm for knowledge and learning. And toward such his attitude would be one of the highest respect.

Therefore, we may feel that the lack of respect which the teaching profession receives from the general public is perhaps as much the fault of the teaching profession and of the system of education as it is of the parent and laity. We do not mean to

criticize too harshly existing conditions. We only intend to urge every possible effort toward improving the profession of education so that it will attract the very finest personalities in the world, people of caliber to lead in this important work of developing the child as a whole, not teaching it merely subject-matter.

The day will perhaps come, and not in the too far distant future, when those who dedicate their lives to the full and ideal development of the child will receive honor and dignity, a salary which will afford them opportunity for continuous culture, and a place in the community and nation in which their contacts will be with the great achievers in other lines. Then the very finest of our young men and women will take pride in being educators.

Progressive education would seem to be leading the way toward this end. Because of its wonderful opportunities for creativeness, because of the close sympathy and coöperation of progressive parents, the progressive school even to-day offers unusual opportunities to the teaching profession. And perhaps the greatest opportunity it offers to a teacher is to learn to become an educator. Were all schools to become as the progressive schools are, a second home for children coördinating closely with the parental home, the educator would find his place in the community assured. *For the creative man and woman, working in no matter what field of human endeavor, there is always recognition.* And we want, for progressive education, above all things creativeness.

## CHAPTER XII

### TREATING CHILDREN AS HUMAN BEINGS

*“Education should not aim at a passive awareness of dead facts, but at an activity directed towards the world that our efforts are to create. It should be inspired by the shining vision of the society that is yet to be.”*

BERTRAND RUSSELL.

**I**T should not be thought, as a result of reading the previous chapters, that progressive education is merely a combination of principles and practices empirically evolved. No, it is something deeper than that. It is based on a groundwork of unity which gives coherence to the whole system. This unifying concept which underlies all progressive methods is the *concept of the child as a human being, possessed of certain rights and privileges.*

The progressive educator approaches the child, not as an empty vessel waiting to be passively filled, not as a “*tabula rasa*” blankly destined to be written upon by assertive adults, not as a weak and helpless creature over whom the teacher has unlimited power,—but rather as a human being like himself, to be treated with courtesy, with respect, and with adequate understanding of the child’s essential nature.

This change in the adult attitude toward the child is part and parcel of the finer and truer appreciation

of human nature and of the more humanitarian ideals which characterizes in general the civilization of to-day as compared with the civilization of yesterday. Progressive education, from this point of view, is admirably described by Morton Snyder in a leaflet of the Progressive Education Association as being: "Not a method, or a technique, or a plan, but a genuine movement, broad in scope, comprehensive in character, irresistible in appeal. It is, in the field of education, the inevitable striving for something better which is part of the life of America—and of the world—in this century. As a part of the great liberal trend in human affairs, it is akin to other movements in the realms of public health, industrial relations, social conditions, and international affairs. It is an alliance between the sciences and idealism; *it is the expression of a new ethical and spiritual attitude on the part of men and women toward childhood and youth.*"

So long as children, from kindergarten through college, are viewed as subjects of an educational autocracy from which there is no escape, there is a tendency to deal with them arbitrarily and to rest contented with ineffective and unpsychological methods of instruction. If we wish to see where the art of teaching is most effectively and most happily used, we have only to turn to the field of adult education where the voluntary nature of attendance forces the use of methods that enlist interest and coöperation.

In reading the following statement \* by Frederick P. Keppel, President of the Carnegie Corporation, of the usage necessary in adult education, one is

\* *Current History*, January, 1928.

struck with the applicability of the same idea to the education of children: "The adult is a voluntary student. He cannot be compelled to continue as can the college student. He must be held by the appeal to his interest. . . . His education must be related to his daily experience, his daily experience drawn on for his education. Therefore new teaching methods must be used, a new kind of book written and a new school atmosphere created. Indeed, there should be no school atmosphere. For here teacher and pupil must meet as common investigators rather than as teacher and pupil. In short, adult education is a new kind of education, comprehending a new science if not a new philosophy. It has also a new promise. . . . It becomes apparent that what we now call education gives insufficient preparation for the task that falls upon a people in whom is to be vested control of their destiny. There must be more of education quantitatively and, probably, an education different in kind."

Yes, an education different in kind is needed for all, children as well as adults. And this is the aim of the progressive movement, to supply that new kind of education which will woo and win the interest of the child instead of taking advantage of compulsory education and of the superior size, strength, and knowledge of the teacher to use coercive and dictatorial methods.

And those who see progressive education at work see a new type of child emerging. It is as great an evolutionary step in human relations, and fraught with as momentous consequences, as the change in the status of woman which began with the rise of

chivalry. The chivalrous respect and courtesy to woman, the appreciation of her charms, and the self-imposed code which obligated man to substitute for force the gentle art of wooing and of winning her interest and loyalty,—this change of attitude brought about an enormous advance in feminine psychology and spiritual development. So a similar attitude toward the child of to-day on the part of the adult will lead—nay, is already leading—to a remarkable development in the nature of the child.

In the age of chivalry, woman was for the first time (as regards the secular world) treated as a spiritual being. It is the same transformation in attitude which characterizes the progressive educator's approach to the child. For the first time in history we are becoming interested in the *child itself*, in its character, its psychology, its essential nature. Not only are we to-day making remarkable researches as to what constitutes the essential child, but we are also paying respect and deference to this child in our midst. *We are treating it like a human being. We are for the first time offering the child education, instead of demanding from it submissive acceptance of an educational system prepared without any consideration of the child's nature, needs, and desires.*

Tyrannical methods of education, as used heretofore, have been with the best of intentions toward the child. And the chief factor of tyranny, the impersonal autocracy of the curriculum, is an inheritance from the days when knowledge was scarce and unavailable in printed form. At such an epoch the curriculum was the only means to knowledge, hence to human progress. No wonder it weighed

heavily in man's estimation, overbalancing even the value and prerogatives of the individual. But in the present age, with knowledge all about us, easily available, it is not the curriculum which should be sacred but the child itself, its personality, its essential nature, its potentialities.

It is in this connection that Dewey made his great contributions to progressive education. The reader will pardon me for quoting again in this connection that vibrant message of his already quoted in Chapter I, which might deservedly be called the *Magna Carta* of the child. "The child is the starting-point, the center, and the end. His development, his growth, is the ideal. It alone furnishes the standard. To the growth of the child all studies are subservient; they are instruments valued as they serve the needs of growth. Personality, character, is more than subject-matter. Not knowledge or information, but self-realization, is the goal. Literally, we must take our stand with the child and our departure from him. It is he and not the subject-matter which determines both quality and quantity of learning."

This is in fact the central core, the essence, of the progressive movement. Progressive education seeks to discover the essential child, and to aid it to that development which is normal to its own individuality. Of what value is any specific subject-matter in comparison with this goal of full rich development of personality along lines of its own gifts and predilections? Hitherto children have had to struggle against the school system in order to indulge their own individual cultural tastes. Now we see the very reverse becoming true, that the new

school is endeavoring most earnestly to discover and to meet the child's own needs. It is indeed, as Dewey remarked, as profound a revolution in human thought as the change from the Ptolemaic to the Copernican system. *The great discovery of progressive education is that the curriculum should revolve about the child, and not the child about the curriculum.*

A discussion of progressive education from the above point of view has seemed necessary in order to make clear that this new education is not dependent upon this device or that. It is rather a new educational spirit, a reorientation of the adult as regards the child. The different methods used in progressive schools are the results of this new attitude toward the child, rather than in being themselves causal in nature. It is not these methods that have made progressive education what it is, but the spirit of progressive education that has made these methods what they are.

And it follows as a corollary to this, that no educator can effectively carry out progressive education by means of the adoption of some of these progressive methods and principles unless he has conceived and embodied as his line of approach to the child this new attitude of consideration, of understanding, of sympathetic comradeship. If the teacher has the right attitude toward the child, the right methods will evolve of themselves; but if the progressive attitude is not present in the teacher, methodology will not avail.

After all, Marietta Johnson is right in seeing the child as a spiritual being, and in conceiving the



province of education to be that of aiding the child in the unfoldment and expression of that spirit which is within it. Writing to the author a statement of her vision of progressive education she closes with the following striking paragraph, which could almost be taken as the keynote of progressive education: "After all, I believe that the fundamental, all-inclusive and comprehensive need of the growing child is spiritual. If we could meet his spiritual need, giving him love and understanding, keeping him sincere, unself-conscious, fearless, and joyous, his nervous system will coördinate and thus normal physical growth will be assured and his native endowment will be used to highest capacity, thus insuring the best intellectual growth. So if I were to indicate in one word the great need of the child, I would say it is spiritual or emotional."

What clear-eyed beauty, what dignity, what charm we find in these modern children who have been guided in progressive schools into a gracious flowering of personality and spirit! Surely it is a new race evolving, one from which we can hope much. As Huxley gave love as one of the qualifications for the discovery of truth, so it may also be stated that intelligent, wisely directed love on the part of the teacher is leading to marvelous discoveries concerning the child and his potentialities; discoveries which will lead not only to richer development and greater happiness on the part of the child, but also eventually to a higher general culture and to a fairer and sweeter civilization.

## PART III: FROM NURSERY TO COLLEGE

### CHAPTER XIII

#### HOW YOUNG SHOULD A CHILD GO TO SCHOOL?

*"The nursery school idea is a recognition of the immeasurable educational importance of the early years in a child's life, and a definite plan to supplement the sometimes limited knowledge of parents, by aiding them in the science and art of child-training."*

DR. ELIZABETH L. WOODS.

**H**OW young should a child go to school? A generation or two ago the age was six. Then the kindergarten came along and took children at the age of five, at first only scatteredly but finally as a universal institution almost universally patronized. Private kindergartens took the next step, of accepting children as young as four. And now comes the latest enterprise for organized child training, the pre-kindergarten or nursery school\* which accepts children from eighteen months of age up to the kindergarten age.

As in all forward movements, the innovation first comes and then people ask, "Is it right?" Before

\*The terms "pre-kindergarten" and "nursery school" can be used almost interchangeably. The designation "nursery school" for educational care of children under kindergarten age came from England as a part of the influence from the nursery school movement there; whereas the designation "pre-kindergarten" is the previous indigenous American usage.

discussing the propriety or benefits of the nursery school movement, therefore, let us first try to ascertain its causes.

Since the enrollment of children in kindergartens and nursery schools is entirely voluntary, it is clear that these institutions represent some actual need, conscious or subconscious, on the part of the modern mother for organized educational care of her young child for a part, at least, of the day. What is this need, and how has it come about?

The old-fashioned family lived in the country, even when the father got his support in town or city business. The home was surrounded with an ample yard with trees to climb, swings to swing in, and with plenty of holes waiting to be dug. If the soil was sandy the hole might go right on growing into an underground cave. In front of the house was no whirling, death-dealing traffic of automobiles. Back of the house vacant fields stretched away to woods and pastures. It was a magic world for the child—a world by no means to be desirably exchanged for the most enticing of schoolrooms (and schoolrooms were not so very enticing then).

Playmates? There were plenty of them. First, in one's own family, two or three nearly coeval, a younger sister conveniently bestowed by Destiny for the purpose of teasing, an older sister to help get up games and theatricals, an older brother to make toys, coasters, etc. And then right close at hand other families, with other children. Oh, there were plenty of playmates to be had—with all the fun and good healthy character training that came from playing together.

And then there were adult neighbors who helped

add to the joy of life, as well as to the character training. For instance, there was that motherly but circumspect Mrs. Jones who used to give us the most delicious hot gingerbread, on the condition, however, that we first scrub our hands and offer them for inspection under a reading glass.

We did not then yearn to attend school at the age of three, at the age of four, or even at the age of five. Had our mothers invited us to join classes of instruction at these early ages, we would have opposed the resolution with all the vehemence and persistence of which we were capable. But our mothers proposed no such thing. They enjoyed having us around, playing, laughing, happy children. Although they had no governesses to look after us, they had a large and efficient staff of older children so that we were very little immediate care to them. And the proverbial Irish maid-of-all-work, a family retainer, cheerfully shared the responsibility of the children when they were within her reach.

No, our mothers did not send us to school at an infantile age, and they would very much have resented the attempt of any educator to organize such a thing as a pre-kindergarten or nursery school in their village.

But things have changed since then. Scenery has been shifted and a new and entirely different set meets the eye. The home is no longer what it was. Neither is the school. The home of the town or city dweller is no longer an eminently happy and desirable place for children. And the progressive school, far from being a forbidding place for children, has become a place of freedom, of happiness, of enticement; so that what the young child regrets is not

being made to go to school, but being kept home from it.

The large family now is a rarity. The child, if at home, is alone with its mother and itself, or possibly with a neighboring child. In the suburbs the yards are small. The trees are ornamental, not to climb. Automobiles whizz by and make the street a necessarily forbidden place. Mother does not stay home as much as our mothers did. She has more civic responsibilities, more social obligations. The maids, no longer family retainers, are not ideal disciplinarians for children. The house-mothers experimented with prove either too inefficient or too rankerous and resentful of having to take care of other people's children. And we, the only child, do get heartily tired having no one but mother to play with and quarrel with.

Now a new school is started in the neighborhood, which takes children at four and sometimes as young as three. We see them gathering in the morning, a happy, hearty group, seemingly glad to arrive for the day's entertainment. We see them go into the homey-looking building at nine, and wish we could be with them. Later we hear sounds of music. The children are having their rhythms. How we should love to be with them! And a children's orchestra! How thrilling! Then they all come out doors and have such a fine time playing together. And we have only pussy and our blocks to play with. Positively, we are missing something. And then one day, hurrah! mother says she is going to let us go. We are going to start to-morrow!

Mother, meanwhile, has also had her attention drawn to the new school which offers to take full

responsibility for her child from nine till four; to amuse it, to train it, to feed it, to nap it, to call for and deliver it. This sounds rather attractive. Betty is getting on her nerves a little. She is becoming quite willful. There is a bit of friction developing. The days are beginning to drag at times. It seems so hard to keep Betty happily occupied. Mother has neither the equipment nor the technical skill required for this. But most of all is needed, perhaps, other children and life in a group.

But Betty is only three and a half. Her mother is a little ashamed to undertake separating her from home. Grandmother would certainly disapprove. And would some of the neighbors and relatives think she did it just to get rid of the child for the day, so she could enjoy lunch-parties and lectures and shopping? Of course, it would be of great advantage to her to be free that way during the day, but she would not for a moment think of such a thing if it was not also best for Betty. However, there could be no harm in going over to see Mrs. Brown about it, whose little Jimmy, also only three and a half, has been going to the new school.

Mrs. Brown is quite enthusiastic about the school. Not only is Jimmy happy there, so happy that it is a keen disappointment to him if anything prevents him from attending, but his behavior has improved, even at home. He is quieter, less disobedient, more resourceful. And he has improved in his eating habits. He has learned to eat spinach and carrots and lettuce and makes no fight about it now. He loves his teacher, and has found his contemporary group a source of great delight. A new social world has, in fact, opened up to him.

So Betty's mother takes the next step, which is to visit the school, and talk with the principal. She is favorably impressed with everything she sees—lovely teachers, charming, homey school environment, splendid play-equipment, happy and lovely children. She confides to the principal, however, her guilty feeling about the seeming neglect of her parental duty were she to delegate the care of her child at such a tender age to a school.

“Madam,” responds the director, “the child, you yourself, and society in general, has everything to gain and nothing to lose by your child being in an organized group under trained teachers, instead of at home with you. In the first place the average modern home, with its nice furniture, its over-heat, its lack of equipment, is no place for an active child. Secondly, your child is beginning to match her will against yours. Too long has she been the center of things. It is dangerous to her character-development to have you too much at her beck and call, and for her to be able successfully to use her will against yours. Here at the school she will exercise her will (which after all it is normal for her to use and to whet against others), in the midst of a group of her coevals who will not run at her beck and call. Thus she will find her normal place and worth in the world, and discover how far it is wise, and when it ceases to be wise, to assert individual desires. Her periods of willfulness will be dealt with by teachers trained in dealing with the characters of little children, with much experience in such matters, with an acquired technique of management, and with time and devices for dealing with such outbreaks. For instance, the most compelling discipline is

simply to remove the child temporarily from the group which the child has come to love. You cannot do that at home, because you have no group. I should be very much surprised if you did not find Betty much more obedient and harmonious at home after she has been here a month or two. . . .

“And now as to yourself. You are a cultured, capable woman. You have mental and physical energy. Why should you spend it all on a job for which you are not especially qualified, if a school and trained teachers can do the job better than you? Is there any reason why you and the world are not the gainers from your being able to devote your abilities, for six or eight hours daily, to other lines than that of child training? If the child is actually better off in school than at home (of this you should of course become convinced), does not society profit by the consequent release of your energies into other fields of activity? I do not mean release for mere pleasure, because I do not think a woman of your caliber would spend free time in such a way. I mean release for cultural, for civic, for humanitarian purposes, or even for professional work, if you wish. I understand that you were very successful in executive work before marriage. Consider the economic gain to yourself and to the world, of your abilities being put to work for the world, instead of being spent wholly on the training of one child. . . .

“And do not think that you are thus renouncing the care of your child. You will still have her at important periods of the day, and all day Saturday and Sunday. You are not abnegating your responsibilities. You are merely permitting the school to



share them with you in such a way as to distinctly aid you and the child. . . .

“And remember, we work in closest coöperation with the home. If you have any problems, no matter what, in school or out, concerning the child, do not fail to come to us for any help we can give. And on our part, we will communicate to you our observations and keep you in touch with any problem we see as regards the normal development of intelligence, character, and health.”

The mother is convinced. She sends her child to the school. And her friend, Mrs. Graham, who lives in the next block, sends hers. And so do a lot of other mothers. There is some criticism from relatives for a while. It soon stops, however. Grandmother bewails for a time the lightness in which mothers hold their responsibilities, until she is taken to visit the school and see a performance of the children. She is charmed with their good manners, their smiling happy faces, their lovely teachers. And when Betty actually leads the orchestra, grandmother is too proud for words. She is now one of the chief boosters of the school.

Thus the pre-kindergarten has appeared on the educational horizon. And it has come to stay, there can be no question about that. It represents what Professor Gesell calls the downward extension of the kindergarten. If the average child benefits by attending a kindergarten at the age of five, it is almost equally true that the average child will benefit by attending a pre-kindergarten or nursery school at the age of three. It is a natural development of education downward into a territory which before this has been unexplored educationally, but in

which exploration and experimentation are now producing very beneficial results for the child. And what is perhaps even more of value, the nursery school is making very important discoveries for the parent and teacher of young children, to aid them to the best possible theory and practice of child-training.

## 2

THE new intensive, scientific study of the child in the pre-school period has sprung up as a result of modern psychology, which has discovered that our personality and behavior patterns reach back to very early causes. The ideal time to mold character is in these pre-school years. Physical, mental, emotional and social habits are hard to change after that age. In the opinion of child psychologists the foundation of physical, intellectual, and temperamental development are laid down before the end of the fifth year, and probably earlier.

"The child's personality make-up," writes Dr. Arnold Gesell of Yale, "consists in the countless conditioned reflexes, associative memories, habits, and the attitude which it acquires as a result of being reared by personal beings."

Now if the child's contact with personal beings is chiefly responsible for the kind of character it develops, and if the personal being it chiefly has contact with in the pre-school days is the mother, how important it is that the mother should understand child psychology, should realize the dangers of the child forming wrong personality patterns, and know how skillfully to avoid dangers, and conversely how

to build constructively for a healthy and normal personality in the child.

The cult of the body has been emphasized now for a generation, and the modern mother knows much about physical hygiene and the forming of good physical habits in the child. Now she must add to her responsibility as a parent the knowledge of mental hygiene and the forming of good mental, emotional, and social habits in the child. In addition to being a logical and natural downward development of the kindergarten, the nursery school has therefore become also a research station in the psychology of the pre-school child and a training school for actual mothers and for prospective mothers and teachers.

The whole movement is very new. In 1920 Dr. Gesell began the study of a group of two-year-old children at the Yale Psycho-Clinic. In 1921 the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station opened a "pre-school laboratory" of two groups of children; one of children from two to three years of age, and one of children from three to four years of age. These research stations have as their aim to increase the knowledge concerning pre-school children now available.

In 1922 the Merrill-Palmer School of Detroit, founded for the purpose of training girls "for the discharge of the functions and the service of wifehood and motherhood," opened as a natural branch of its activity a nursery school with Miss Emma Henton as teacher, who brought from England the knowledge and training derived from her connection with the nursery school movement there. An extensive training program was developed. Many col-

lege students enroll in the various courses offered in child-care and development, or engage in research work. These students come from different colleges (in 1924-25 eighteen were represented), and are given full college credit for the work at Merrill-Palmer.

At Iowa City, students have the experience of observing and handling the children in the pre-school laboratory, as well as training in research.

Mothers, in all these nursery schools, are taking advantage of courses which give them a training in theoretical and applied child psychology.

Also, students prepare at Merrill-Palmer, Iowa City, at the Institute for Child Welfare Research, at Teachers College of Columbia University, and at the Ruggles Street Nursery School of Boston, for the work of teacher in nursery schools.

Some of the more progressive teachers' training schools are providing training in the psychology of the pre-school child for prospective kindergarten and primary teachers. It appears necessary for the teacher who is to handle young children to understand their earliest characteristics and types of responses. They should know children from the ground up—their interests, their sociabilities, their behavior patterns—previous to the age level which these prospective teachers expect to deal with. Thus the Evanston National Kindergarten and Elementary College has affiliated with Northwestern University in order that the students of each may exchange courses in the psychology and training of the pre-school child. Similarly, the Cleveland Kindergarten and Primary Training School has become the Nursery-Kindergarten-Primary section of the

College of Education of Western Reserve University.

A very high quality of teacher is entering this new and fascinating field of the nursery school. Training for it is on a collegiate basis, requiring a four-year course unless there is a previous college degree. The major portion of nursery-school teachers have at least an A.B. degree. The training and teaching procedure is on a higher and more scientific basis than in any other department of education. "The nursery school," says Mary Dabney Davis of the Bureau of Education, "is developing a scientific attitude toward education such as nothing else has done."

A great hope on the part of all who are earnestly working in this pre-school field is that this scientific child-study will gradually permeate the kindergarten; and that the nursery school, dealing educationally with children from the age of three, will eventually become absorbed into the school system as a pre-kindergarten group, just as the kindergarten is already becoming an integral part of the primary school system. *Then the education of the child will become a continuous scientific procedure based upon child psychology, with all the scientific resources of our great universities available for guidance and teacher training.*

3

A STUDY of the kindergarten laws of the different states shows that the age limit of the school is steadily creeping downward. While the age required for kindergarten still remains five years in the

majority of local centers, about twenty-five states have state laws permitting kindergarten attendance beginning at the age of four. Five states (Arizona, California, Illinois, Maine, Wisconsin) have mandatory laws for kindergarten acceptance of children from the age of four,—a petition of from twenty-five to thirty parents in any locality making mandatory the establishment of a public school kindergarten aided by the general state fund. And three states (Colorado, Idaho, Montana) make kindergarten attendance from the age of three permissive. *Thus it is apparent that in the public consciousness there is a steadily progressive movement toward earlier educational opportunities for the child.*

In actual operation as part of our national public-school system, are four pre-kindergarten or nursery schools in Washington, D. C.,\* taking children as young as three; four or five such schools accepting three-year-olds in Grand Rapids, Michigan; † one in Kalamazoo; while in Oakland, California, eighteen nursery schools with the age limit of three years are provided for by the public school system. The movement is growing so fast that no statement can be guaranteed to adequately represent the latest situation as regards the public school adoption of pre-kindergartens.

As was the case with the kindergarten, the majority of nursery schools, however, are of a private nature, and will for some time continue to be so. In some localities, as in Chicago, a nursery school is

\* These schools are in the poorer quarters, and their main purpose is to take the children off the streets and prevent wrong habit formation.

† Middle-class clientele. School board furnishes rooms and equipment and civic clubs pay teachers' salaries.

established coöperatively by a group of parents, each of whom contributes part time to the operation of the school. This is a possibility open to any neighborhood group of parents. It should not be undertaken, however, without a realization that the proper organization and operation of a nursery play group calls for careful study of the scientific field of the pre-school child and for at least one teacher adequately trained in this field. To aid parents and teachers in organizing small nursery school groups a correspondence course is projected under the auspices of child experts of Teachers College, Columbia University.

A very important aspect of the nursery school movement lies in its contributions, already referred to, in the direction of parental education. Most of the nursery schools established in this country give attention to the need of training parents, through observation and experimentation, in the knowledge of child psychology. In many of these schools parents coöperate by contributing one to two hours daily.

A great deal of literature of a scientific kind is being put out from these research centers concerning the habits and behaviors of the pre-school child.\*

Thus it will be seen that these schools, though at present few in number, are doing a very important work in extending down to a very early stage the frontiers of our knowledge regarding the educability of the child. Where, as regards age-limit, this movement will end, one cannot tell. If behavior pat-

\* A few typical titles are: "A Symposium on Present-day Parenthood"; "Educate the Parent Through the Nursery School"; "Psychological Aspects of the Pre-school Child"; "The Nursery School and Parental Education"; "The Behavior of the Pre-school Child"; "The Nursery School as an Integral Part of Education."

terns and personality begin to form at birth, there is no logical reason for this organized research recognizing a downward limit at the age of two, or one and a half. Indeed, Dr. Watson, and other individual psychologists are conducting research in the case of the infant from birth. It may be that the nursery schools will eventually extend their clinical function to include the infant from birth, thus making education in practice, what it is in reality, a life process.

The first state to recognize officially the need of public instruction for parents is California. The Superintendent of Public Institution describes the plan in the *Elementary School Journal*: "As a beginning it is proposed to organize eight classes, four in the northern part of the state and four in the southern. Each center will offer (1) a course for mothers of pre-school children, (2) a course for fathers of adolescent boys, (3) a course for mothers of children between the ages of 6 and 12, and (4) a course for mothers of adolescent girls. The classes will meet once in two weeks. Part of the time will be devoted to lectures on child psychology, character education, and similar topics, and part to discussion of problems brought in by the parents and to the organization of simple projects in child training. In carrying out this scheme the board of education will enlist the aid of such agencies as the Smith-Hughes home-making staff, home-extension and university-extension workers, the bureau of child hygiene, and organizations dealing with delinquent children."

As regards progressive education, the implications of the nursery-school movement are most en-



couraging. In this new field of educational endeavor there are no hampering traditions, no institutionalism. The groups of children necessarily are small. The methods are free. The teachers know child psychology and are constantly watching the children's reactions. Here at last is a section of education in which the child is naturally recognized as the center of attention. Everything is arranged for the benefit of the child. Self-expression, creativeness, initiative, are encouraged. There is room for the social enjoyment; in fact the social development of the child at this stage is recognized as of the utmost importance. Marks and examinations do not exist. The teachers are comrades and lovers of children.

In a word, we find, at this new age level, all educational authorities recognizing and practicing the progressive principles. Perhaps the atmosphere of freedom and reality in the nursery school, permeating the kindergarten and primary grades, will eventually reach up through the whole school system, and of a truth the little child shall lead the way to educational reform.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE FAILURE OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

*"The source of whatever is dead, mechanical, and formal in schools is found precisely in the subordination of the life and experience of the child to the curriculum. It is because of this that "study" has become a synonym for what is irksome, and a lesson identical with a task."*

JOHN DEWEY.

**I**N things of the mind the American student is too docile," writes a French critic, Professor Albert Feuillerat, after spending six months at Yale. "His critical sense and his desire for originality are blunted. It is a curious thing that these young men, capable of throwing themselves madly into battle, these born adventurers who find fierce delight in surmounting real obstacles, are almost pusillanimous when they have to engage in a struggle with ideas. That comes without doubt from their being trained to learn rather than to think."

Here is no fulmination, no stentorian challenge, as of one presenting an idea which he knows will be rebutted. It expresses accurately, vividly, and yet quietly the fault of our American system of education.

I shall add to the statement of good Monsieur Feuillerat, another. It is this: That our preparatory schools, true to their name, are always preparing their pupils for an education, but never giving it.

That is why, when they reach college, they are unable to think.

It is like a man who works and slaves to amass money so that later in life he can enjoy travel and cultural pursuits; and who, when the moment comes, finds himself unable to change his mental habits and enjoy the culture for which he thought he was preparing. His preparation was a mistaken one. So is the preparation for higher education which goes on in our secondary schools; a preparation not for higher culture, but for habits of mental childishness which makes our college youths seem babes-in-the-woods to European intellectuals. For you can not train people, during the four most formative years of their lives, to learn rather than to think, and then expect them, when they reach college, to do that kind of thinking without which there can be no true education.

And the fault is not of the secondary schools, but of the colleges. And with poetic justice, the punishment falls upon the colleges, chiefly. In having, so to speak, commanded the secondary schools to hand over to them non-thinking, fact-crammed pupils, they pay the deserved penalty of receiving material with which they can do little.

In the olden days, when college entrance requirements were simpler, there flourished many an academy which gave real education, training thinkers; whereas now the entrance requirements of the colleges put such a repression and slavery upon the secondary schools as to all but crush out education itself during those four precious years subsequent to adolescence.

What is the remedy? Since the colleges, in spite

of their honest attempts to reform, remain tyrannical, I might suggest, did it not seem facetious, the draconic remedy of abolishing the colleges.\* For, honestly speaking, I should rather see real education being given in our secondary schools, with the college non-existent, than to see the youth of our country being mentally straight-jacketed during those four years of secondary school.

## 2

LET me make clear the two chief ways in which the college plays unfair with the preparatory school: first, as to curriculum; and second, as to method.

As regards curriculum, the college selfishly and most shortsightedly tends to force upon the preparatory school all the disagreeable tasks it conceives necessary to education, all the formal subjects for mental drill, the abstract subjects unconnected with life; reserving for itself the more pleasurable and inspiring subjects such as modern history, sociology, economics, government, biology, geology, philosophy, modern literature, etc., etc.

*LIES!*  
 And so the secondary schools have to teach Latin, French, and Spanish (not German now; ~~thank God for one burden less!~~) to boys who have no yearning after languages; they have to teach them algebra and geometry when every page is for many pupils drudgery, and no goal of future usefulness inspires; they have to drill them in certain English classics

\* The junior college movement would tend in this direction if it came to include in one unit the last two years of secondary school plus the first two years of college. See page 328.

selected by their college masters—classics which for the most part the aforesaid college masters (except for the English faculty) have never read nor ever will read.

Is this the best intellectual food we can offer our American youth—at the age when emotions are eager and character most formative? This, of all times, is the time for inspiring subjects, subjects closely connected with the life unfolding about one. This is the ideal age for the teaching of sociology, psychology (the understanding of one's inner self), economics, modern history and literature, the story of evolution, the earth-story (geology), the star-laws (astronomy); and for tracing briefly but clearly the progress of civilization from its dim beginnings to the glorious present, not failing to forecast in prophecy the future as an inspiration to effort and ambition for race-service.

Not only does the present curriculum of the preparatory school fail to arouse and cultivate the power and habits of true ratiocination, but it fails lamentably to arouse and maintain interest; with the result that the average American boy, at this stage of his education, finds most of his inspiration and expends most of his energy and ability in extra-curricular activities, foremost in which are school athletics. Is it any wonder that this all-devouring interest in athletics, taking thus its inception in the formative years of adolescence, grows into a Frankenstein in college days? The problem of college athletics and other campus activities, which is weighing heavy upon college presidents to-day, owes much of its force to the sterility of the educational program in the secondary schools. Thus again, do the

lower schools get their revenge upon the college.

Why do our children not take their secondary education more seriously? The following incident will throw light upon the question. A son of a friend of mine, home for the Easter holidays, was sent to me for coaching in Latin. His mother had consulted me anxiously about his work, complaining of his low standing in his courses. As he comes from brilliant parents and grandparents, his scholastic failure was rather puzzling. It was all the more puzzling because he showed his real mental character by the kind of books he brought out with him to read on the car. Thayer's *Life of Cavour* was one of them. Why should a boy who reads Thayer's *Life of Cavour* for pleasure be such a poor student? The puzzle was soon solved. I asked him what studies he was taking. He told me. Algebra, geometry, Latin, English, and French—all abstract subjects, all subjects having no connection with life. What an intellectual program to offer a gifted seventeen-year-old boy at a time when the greatest war known to man was waging; when invention and progress in arts of living were going on apace; in a world full of fascinating facts and happenings! Is it any wonder his interest lagged?

Another boy of nineteen, part heir to a great metropolitan newspaper, failed to get into Princeton because of low marks in Latin and geometry. In order to enter he must take a year's work in these subjects. Not an inspiring prospect for a boy who during the summer vacation was already reporting for his own paper and rubbing elbows with the world! His parents wished him very much to enter college, but his decision was made to the contrary.

He abandoned education and took up his career in his own newspaper. A pity to drop education at this age! Especially so in the case of a youth with such a career ahead of him. Why could he not have had enough foresight and patience and will power to finish his preparation for college, you will say? That is just the point. He got tired of preparing for an education. Had he only been given a real education during these eager years, instead of a preparation for education, I am sure he would not so soon have abandoned the road to knowledge.

Imagine for him a course in sociology based largely on research work in his own city; in civics and government with a study of Congress at its work; in modern history with all its subtle, live problems; a course in English composition which should consist largely in the coöperation of his teacher with the demands of the newspaper world. But no, it was Latin and French and algebra and geometry and ancient history and book-English for him, a course preparing him for college where his real education was hypothecated. But alas, instead of finishing his preparation, his preparation finished him!

3

NOT only does our secondary education err in its curriculum, but also, as I have stated, its methods are compelled to be faulty, due to the pressure of the collegiate demands. These demands create the standard of value for the secondary school. Every private school knows that it is ultimately judged by the percentage of college entrances it makes. Of course every public school is so judged, too, but for

the private school it is a question of actual survival. Therefore, as the end of the junior and senior years approach, teachers and pupils are in a fever of activity preparing desperately for the preliminary and final college entrance examinations. Pupils are anxious, because by now they have some realization of the need for study, some sense of responsibility in order to meet successfully the test before them. Teachers are anxious, because their professional standing is at stake.

So, after two or three months of intensive work, largely on sample college examinations of past years, in a hullabaloo of mental sweat and agony come to an end the four years which we call secondary education. No time here for thought, for intellectual maturing, for such ripe attitude of mind and heart and soul as should characterize the closing days of one great educational epoch. Only exertion and sweat and mental agony.

It is not only in these closing years of secondary education, however, that false values are set up. The grip of the college reaches down even to the first year of secondary work. Always the standard is, whether the boy or girl is adequately advanced for that particular year, toward the goal of college entrance. This often inhibits real education. For example, in a freshman class in English which I taught in a leading private preparatory school for boys, there were two boys who for maturity of thought and real creativeness stood first in the class. Yet their written work was so poor in spelling and sentence formation that I was compelled monthly to give them the lowest marks in the class. I could only mark by college standards. For were these boys to



be passed by me, and so be sent on up the line to fail lamentably on the fatal day, it would reflect upon the school's judgment and upon my own.

4

THE *reductio ad absurdum* of the preparatory school is the so-called cramming school, which makes its success from the careful study of examinations extending over many years, and prepares its pupils very carefully in those parts of the subject which seem likely to be given in the coming examination. This analysis is an art. For instance, if in geometry a certain theorem has been given frequently in the last five years, it will probably not be given this year because the examiners will think it will be too well known; or it may be given because the examiners are fond of it. In several subjects there is a distinct limit to the number of major questions that can be asked. By a study of the past examination papers of a particular college, one ascertains the questions which are the particular predilection of that examiner. If some of these questions have not occurred for two years, they are likely to occur this coming year; on the other hand, the majority of questions which occurred the year just past will not appear this coming year.

Thus the aim in a cramming school is not primarily to teach all of a subject thoroughly to their pupils, for to attempt to do that would be to risk losing all in the case of the average poor student of a cramming school; but rather, after covering the subject once, to pick out a repertoire of leading questions and drill the pupils thoroughly on these,

until they can answer with their eyes shut or standing on their heads. The chances are ten to one that a pupil so prepared will slip through the examination. He may find some questions there for which the cramming school has not successfully prepared him; but if he answers well the questions with which he is familiar, he will probably pass.

It is a great game—a gamble, you might say. It resembles poker in some aspects, the famous shell game in others. It is an absorbing game in which preparatory teachers, college aspirants, and college examiners all take part.

What part does the college examiner take in the gamble? Why, he has to scratch his brains to think up questions that are not already too well known and expected. He must not for the life of him make up a paper which is too easily anticipated by his opponents. Therefore he is frequently forced to resort to strange and recondite questions. They are not fair questions, in a way, because they are so picayune that the best prepared scholar could hardly be familiar with the answers. But the examiner justifies them on the ground that other questions in the examination will prove over easy.

It is a great American game. I know something of it, for I have played at it as student, as preparatory teacher, and as college examiner and maker of examinations.

The gifted head of a cramming school connected unofficially with one of our great universities received until his death a few years ago an income from his educational work greater than that of the president of the university. In fact, a generation of

this work had put him in the millionaire class. He could very comfortably have retired, but the game had too strong a hold on him. His happiest moments were in the classroom, preparing his followers how to sap and undermine the grim walls of that antique institution of learning which faced his classroom windows.

Could our friend Professor Albert Feuillerat of France visit one of these cramming schools, he would understand why these young men, when they come to college, do not think. They have never had, in all their educational process, time to think. It is true, that the American ability does not lie along the lines of abstract thinking. In this respect we are children. That this is due to lack of interest, rather than to lack of mental power, is evidenced by the very keen thinking that we do in practical affairs, equal if not superior to the world's best. Whatever opportunity therefore inheres in the educative process for training how to think should not be wasted. It is a pity that the higher institutions of learning, the colleges and universities, instead of aiding the secondary schools toward this much-desired end, should actually inhibit any tendency toward thought by the stultifying nature of the pressure already described, which they exert upon the lower schools.

5

**WHAT** is the remedy for this situation? It must be, in order adequately to meet the problem, two-fold. *First, the colleges must develop a broader, fairer, and more really efficient method of entrance exami-*

*nation which will leave to the secondary school complete freedom of method. Secondly, the college should allow the secondary school to reconstruct its curriculum along the lines of its own needs.*

As regards the first point, much of good has been accomplished already through the efforts of the College Entrance Examination Board. The comprehensive examination which they offer as substitute choice for the old-style examination is a step in the right direction, away from pettifogging detail toward a broader treatment of subject-matter. In many colleges a wholly new concept of entrance requirement is being established which takes into consideration steadiness and earnest application in the previous academic career, natural intelligence as shown by intelligence tests, character as certified to by educators and responsible friends, and even health as an indication of physical capacity for the strain of the college years. These specifications do not supplant but supplement college entrance examinations or certification. While this innovation does not greatly liberalize methods of instruction in the secondary school, it has one great advantage of making it much more difficult for the undesirable, fact-stuffed student to slip into college through the back door of the cramming school.

One college, Dartmouth, takes the even more liberal position of accepting without examination students from secondary schools who have stood throughout their course in the first quarter of their class: on the theory that such youths, no matter what the program of their preparation, evidence a capacity and industry which makes them desirable

to the college and indicates success in their college career.

In England and on the Continent methods of examination have been both broader and more searching of intellectual ability and thorough mastery of subject-matter. In Germany at the close of the secondary school period the pupil is examined in both written and oral form by a committee consisting of all of his teachers in the final year, together with the head of the school and an official inspector. The corps of examining teachers must submit an exhaustive report of the pupil's mental and moral development in school, including such items as clearness and quickness of comprehension, imagination, creativeness, powers of expression, special gifts and special activities in and out of school, success in study circles, sport, student life, leadership, personal defects, financial and social conditions at home, and future intentions as to occupation. The written examination in each subject consists of a simple theme selected out of a restricted field of choice.

"For from three to five hours the candidate labors with his topic and does his utmost to display his resources in pertinent knowledge, in power of analysis and logical construction, in personal insight and conviction, in feeling for style, proportion, and fitness of thought and phrase—in short, in the elements of an intelligence bred by long experience in dealing fruitfully with the expanding ideas of a fruitful field," we read in Bulletin 20, 1927, of the Carnegie Foundation, on "The Quality of the Educational Process in the United States and Europe."

In addition to this written examination which is intended to reveal not knowledge of detail but intel-

lectual maturity, an oral examination is now (from 1927 on) required of all students, of a remarkable type especially significant to the needs and demands of progressive education. *This examination is in a field which the student himself chooses in advance, and to which he has given special attention. It is a test, not in subjects which he does not care for, but in the subject which he likes best and for which he has the greatest ability.*

Here we are at last getting to a reasonable form of examination. Life itself examines us according to this fashion. It asks the candidate for the church how well he can preach, not how well he can survey; it asks the singer how well he can sing, the artist how well he can paint, the teacher how well he can teach, the business man how skillfully he can deal with production, exchange, or distribution. The candidate for admission into the great university of the world is allowed to choose each his own subject, to take all the time he wants to qualify in it, and to come up again and again for reëxamination. There is no final failure, no ultimate bar to success in life.

So in this oral examination, the student is assigned a major exercise and given due time for reflection on it. He then handles it in free exposition, using what texts, maps, drawings, or other aids he may require. (How different from the game of hide-and-go-seek played by the American student and examiner in college entrance examinations.) The examiners note particularly "his intellectual grasp, his judgment, his comprehension of the whole field with which he deals, and his power of presentation."

The results of both the written and oral exami-

nations are weighed together. The final decision is arrived at by joint consideration and instead of being analyzed mathematically must be a direct judgment on the student's performance. *To exclude the possibility of a mechanical decision where mental and moral qualities are involved, any form of mathematical calculation is forbidden.*

Says William S. Learned of the Carnegie Foundation, commenting on this method in comparison with ours: "When the American situation is placed against this unusual perspective certain elements of contrast leap to view at once. Our notions of a smoothly working intelligence as the conscious product of the motions through which we put our students are so hazy that we scarcely have the courage to define it, much less test it. *Many of our teachers are themselves insufficiently schooled; they fail to recognize intelligence when they meet it; they fear doing injustice to the candidate in attempting to criticize processes that they have not consciously cultivated and that are not clear to themselves; they therefore fall back on the easy method of checking up information. 'Knowing' versus 'not knowing' is as easy as holding the spelling-book, and as fatally plausible in American schools. In the task of testing transient information the American teacher is undeniably efficient. We busy ourselves in improving the machinery for this purpose through multiple question tests and the like, in order that no fact may escape. But while much of this is useful as a preliminary, we are leading our teachers further from the concern which in Europe is central in the relation between the teacher and his charge. That concern is not with the question 'What facts can*

*this pupil give back?' but with the question 'Can he think accurately and resourcefully in his field of ideas?' We hopefully put all possible ingredients helter-skelter into the hopper and trust to luck for the result. The European studies the significance of what comes out and modifies the process accordingly."*

If American colleges would adopt such a method of entrance examination it would revolutionize methods of instruction in the secondary school. No one can reasonably object to our colleges and universities setting up as high a standard for applicants to admission as suits their own aims and purposes. Certainly, in the case of the more desirable colleges which have two or three times as many applicants as they can admit, it cannot be expected that they will let down the bars as for a Homestead rush. Naturally, and justifiably, they will select. All that the secondary school and the progressive parent can ask is that the basis of selection should be broad, logical, unhampering; so that boys and girls, in fulfilling the second great division of their educational career, will be able to receive a development as rich, as adequate, as expanding of personality, as we have seen made possible by progressive education in the elementary phase.

The tragedy of the progressive educator is the undue subordination of the secondary school to the college. Regarding this situation, Beulah Amidon, Education editor of the *Survey* and mother of two children, writes in *Progressive Education*: "So far, the progressive education movement has not made itself so clearly felt in secondary schools and colleges. Heads of 'new' schools lament the neces-



sity for taking children, at twelve or fourteen, out of the free atmosphere of the experimental schools, with their self-motivated projects, their spontaneous group activities, and making them adapt to the academic routine of the secondary schools. The secondary schools retort that they too regret the necessity for 'drill' and rote learning, but that there is no other way in which they can prepare their students for the college entrance hurdles. It is from the colleges themselves that the impulse must come which will carry over through the difficult years of adolescence the opportunity for normal growth and development we are beginning to make possible during the first eight years of school experience."

6

IN the matter of a modern curriculum, the secondary school is far behind the elementary school, which has within the last decade undertaken a very thorough revision of its subject-matter toward the goal of increased interest and pertinence to life-needs. But when we consider the curriculum of the secondary system, we find many traditional elements in it which are ill-adapted to the needs of to-day and we find lacking in it material which would be of immediate interest and value to high school boys and girls.

What is needed is that the high school should be allowed to constitute itself an absolutely independent unit in the educational life of the child. Just as the elementary school takes boys and girls during the pre-adolescent period and gives them what is deemed most necessary and worth while to them at

that stage of their chronological development, the secondary school should be allowed to devote itself to the actual educational needs of its constituency during the four-year period of adolescence, and not be required to prepare for hypothecated needs in some future phase of education.

The nature of the constituency of the high school has changed so greatly in the last generation that the traditional subject-matter has become entirely inadequate. No longer is this stage of education for the privileged few. It has become so universally sought and so universally tendered that its constituency is now a pure cross section of our population. In fact, secondary education bids fair, within a generation, to become as universal as elementary education.

The astounding growth of secondary school within the last generation is shown in the statistics of total secondary school enrollment by decades from 1893, as furnished by the Bureau of Education. In 1893-94 there were 480,358 secondary school pupils, *or only a little more than half the number now enrolled in our colleges*. By 1903-04 the number had doubled to 822,235. Within another decade the enrollment had almost doubled again, reaching the figure of 1,459,399 in 1913-14. It was within the next decade, synchronous with the war, that a still more amazing increase took place, and in 1923-24 we find the total to be 3,741,087, *or an increase of about 260 per cent, as over the previous decade*. Two years later, in 1925-26, we find the total enrollment to be above the four million mark—4,132,185, to be exact (these are the latest figures available). It is no longer a selective

process (economic or cultural) which creates the demand for higher education. Plainly the secondary school is drawing heavily from every class of our population.

These boys and girls, no matter for what motive they attend the secondary school, must be welcomed and given the very best and most suitable education possible. This is both the duty and opportunity of the state. For it is not only youth that suffers from an inadequate and obsolete secondary system, but ultimately society itself. *Why, therefore, should society continue to permit the college to prescribe the form of secondary education?*

It may be answered that in high schools those students who are not preparing for college are free from college preparatory restrictions. So they are, but they are not free from college preparatory influence. The better class of high schools and all private preparatory schools are geared according to college requirements. Not sufficiently proportionate attention is paid the general student, nor is adequate advantage taken of the freedom of curriculum and method available for the general course. This is because the shadow of the college, not content with eclipsing the classical course, casts a penumbra even over the general course.

Morton Snyder, Secretary of the Progressive Education Association, in an article regarding college entrance,\* states as a result of investigation among progressive principals the following situation: "*In reply to the question: Do you feel that the college requirements compel you to compromise*

\* In *Progressive Education*, October 1927, on the subject: "Selecting College Freshmen."

*with educational ideas which you hold for your school?, there was a general affirmative.* This would agree with observations made in a number of these schools, where the pupils' courses and the instructional procedure in the upper years were evidently compromises in the interest of admission success. In general, the instructional compromise is in the direction of drill technique, and the curricular compromise a substitution of a variety of book subjects for one or more of the arts, or of maximum Latin and mathematics for more science and history.

"The question: What special group of your pupils is unfavorably affected by the present system?, brought forth four principal replies, as follow: (a) artistically and mechanically gifted pupils are at a great disadvantage; (b) merely normal girls with non-academic minds have little chance; (c) pupils with linguistic or mathematical disabilities are seriously affected; (d) '*pupils not going to college are literally sacrificed.*' "

## 7

AND why, after all, should there be this invidious distinction, the student preparing for college being assumed to be the superior of the one not preparing for college? This is a false assumption, based entirely upon educational ideals of the past which modern psychology has already disproved. *Is the motor-active child in reality inferior to the book-minded child?* Not at all. It is simply a different kind of intelligence expressing itself in slightly diverse fashion. Into the expression and activities of both these types of students go those qualities which

constitute intelligence: reason, analysis, application.

*The progressive schools, in their elementary systems where they have free rein, know how to keep the motor-active child and the book-minded child happily and adequately occupied, side by side, in the same subject-matter. If given full opportunity in the secondary stage, they could and would do the same thing.*

In an excellent private day school for girls in a leading Ohio city, I was told by one of the teachers that from the group of girls in the senior class who were not preparing for college came the finest characters and the real school leaders, in the self-government association as well as in the other student activities and organizations. These girls, she said, were not able to attempt the college cramming course.

What was the matter with them? Were they inferior mentally? If they were, then by that same standard the leading men and women doing the world's work to-day are inferior mentally.

No, they were not inferior mentally to the girls who were cramming for college; they were simply of a different mental type. One of these girls took me in charge, to see that my visit was made as fruitful as possible. Her explanations of things, her intelligent conducting and tutelage, was such as to leave no doubt as to her real intelligence, as well as to the splendid quality of her character. She was the daughter of the proprietor of the leading newspaper of that city, a paper nationally known.

Why should this girl, and thousands like her over the country, be forced into this artificial cleavage from the book-minded, academic child? Each needs

what the other has to give. And an ideal curriculum, adapted to present-day needs, with opportunity for individual variances such as progressive education demands for all children, would enable these two separate types in our high schools—the academic-minded and the motor-active—to work side by side.

There are other defects in our secondary school system which can only be mentioned here. One is the uncultured and uninspiring quality of teacher so common to our secondary schools. A second is the narrow-minded and dogmatic nature of secondary instruction as a whole. A third is the psychological mistake of making the transition from secondary to university education before intellectual maturity is reached. The four-year type of junior college, if established, would rectify this fault,

There can be no question but that the same progressive methods which are being applied to elementary education to make it inspiring to the child would succeed with the secondary school student. There is great need of such reform. One of the most pathetic wastes of human energy is the sabotage of the high school boy and girl. Years that should be full of achievement, leading to the formation of an earnest and joyous attitude toward culture and to habits of serious application, are not only too much frittered away; but leave in the boy and girl going on to college a spirit of apathy toward academic work which is ruinous to the effective enjoyment of the privilege of higher education.

Let the lay public turn its attention to the secondary school and help onward the greatly needed movement of reform. Let every parent whose chil-

dren languish in the educational medievalism of the preparatory school press the demand for greater freedom and for more intelligent educational methods. And above all, of the colleges we beg that they allow the secondary school to become a unit in itself, organizing its curriculum and methods as best suits the needs of its vast and still growing constituency. Let us demand only in those graduates from the secondary school, seeking entrance into higher education, a trained mind, an earnest attitude toward study, the perfect technical use of their mother tongue, and a capacity to utilize adequately the precious and expensive privilege of collegiate culture.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE PROBLEM OF THE COLLEGE

*"Education is never worth anything unless it deals with problems that are vital to the individual. The trouble with the college is that it does not deal enough with problems that are vital to its students."*

HARRY A. OVERSTREET.

**C**OLLEGE youths to-day seem different from those of a generation or two ago, when higher education was a comparatively rare opportunity. Not only is a less scholarly and less academically gifted type of youth frequenting the college, but even many blessed with high intelligence seem to have a very irresponsible attitude as regards both their preparation for college and their work after they get there. This is worrying both parents and educators. It is, in fact, beginning seriously to upset scholastic traditions and to cause many dubious and anxious moments on the part of collegiate authorities.

The apathy, the insouciance, the youthful negligent attitude exists. Whose fault is it? The fault of modern youth? Or the fault of the college which has not become greatly modernized? Is it a case of pouring new wine into old bottles? It is said in educational circles that when a teacher finds it necessary to flunk more than a quarter of his class something is wrong with the teacher. The colleges and



universities, in flunking out from 25 per cent to 45 per cent of their freshman classes, may ~~or may not~~ be demonstrating faults in their system.

With this self-suspicion in mind the colleges are conducting a thoroughly critical search into their methods, even enlisting the aid of the collegians. A revolution in college instruction and curriculum seems imminent. But meanwhile the problem weighs heavily, both with the parent and the college.

The problem of each is two-fold. Of the parent: How can I get my child into a desirable college; and how can I be sure that he will study earnestly after he gets there. Of the college: How can we secure the most desirable students; and how can we induce them, after matriculation, to take college education seriously?

Take Hazel Gray, for instance. She is a highly intelligent girl, possessed of unusual personality and charm, daughter of a brilliant and intellectual father. She inherits from him a strong will and clear-cut mentality, and from her mother certain social graces. Things began to go badly with her in high school. She was doing poorly in French, poorly in mathematics, and below passing in Latin. It was perhaps due to poor teachers, although this particular high school ranked among the best in the state. When she came to college entrance preliminaries, she flunked half of them. A year later she flunked in the finals. She was sent to a private school for a year's cramming. When at the end of the year she again tried for college entrance she failed. What could be done about it? Her particular case was solved by matriculating her in a smaller college to which entrance was easy.

Now as to cause. What was the trouble with the girl? Lack of intelligence? No. Lack of will power? No, for she showed no lack of will power and application in activities in which she was interested. We cannot be sure that it was her fault. We cannot be sure that it was the fault of the school. *All we can say for certain is that for some reason the school had failed to enlist the interest and emotional participation of this girl.* And such cases are happening all over the country.

Sometimes the parents are more successful than Hazel's parents were in finally entering their child into the desired college. But even this gives no final solution of their educational problem, because very likely the same low grade of work, always on the verge of failure, continues to be done at college. The puzzle and the pity of it is, that so many of these young people who seem so inefficient in acquiring higher education are highly intelligent.

## 2

Now let us look at the problem from the college point of view. The college world has for the last ten years been swept off its feet by the deluge of young people seeking admittance. The total college enrollment has grown from 216,493 in 1913-14 to the amazing number of around 800,000 in this present year.\* It would seem as if everyone was trying

\* The percentage of growth of certain individual institutions is even more striking. The following figures, comparing enrollment in 1910 with that in 1925, reveal a situation that would seem to indicate the transformation of higher education in America. Boston University, from 1,566 to 9,872; University of California, from 3,294 to 24,112; Columbia University, from 7,411 to 30,021; Uni-

to get to college. And the desire is not, apparently, due to zeal for further study and culture so much as it is due to desire to enjoy the glamor of college life, to gain the distinction of a college degree, and to win thereby a higher place in society and in the economic world.

But who can deprecate even these motives? Do we not all wish for self-advancement? Are not all the uplift paragraphers in the press and magazines urging us to make the most of our lives? And do they not continually point out how much greater average income is earned throughout life by the college graduate as compared with the non-college man? Are there any of us who have been through college who hold lightly that privilege and the results that accrue from it?

Listen to what one newspaper paragrapher says: After pointing out how easy it is for boys and girls to work their way wholly or partly through college, with the help of scholarships, loans, and what not, he concludes: "*How then can any young man or woman in America forgo this greatest joy that they may ever know, the joy of college life and a diploma and the consequent enlargement and beautifying of their whole career?*"

Is this too flamboyant a picture of college life? Not if I measure it from my own experience. It may be keyed a little high, like publicity material; but it is fundamentally true that college education is the greatest opportunity that can be opened to the average boy and girl.

versity of Illinois, from 4,659 to 16,136; University of Pennsylvania, from 5,187 to 15,285; University of Washington, from 2,136 to 7,225.

At the invitation, then, of these columnists, the boys and girls flock to the college gates. That they have little money and less learning makes no difference to them. But it does make a difference to the colleges, which stand aghast at this uncontrolled flood evoked by modern journalism and responded to by the imitative and emulative temperament of America. The chief reason why the college does not, as industry would do, open wide its doors to clients is that *the college is in the extraordinary situation that the more students it accepts the poorer it gets, other things being equal*. For the tuition fee pays only from one-third to one-half of what the college education costs. In other words, the average college is from one-half to two-thirds an eleemosynary institution. On whom shall it then devote its charity? Not, surely, on every Tom, Dick, and Harry. It would seem as if this privilege of higher education should be reserved for those who have the capacity, training, and character to most earnestly profit by it and by means of it to later profit society.

When this doctrine of "aristocracy of learning" was first broached by President Hopkins of Dartmouth, a great howl went up from the newspapers. Nevertheless, Hopkins, amply supported by his trustees and alumni, set to work on a selective process which seemed necessary in a college besieged with some three times the number of applicants that it could admit. Although liberal in its *methods* of entrance, Dartmouth has been one of the first to put its applicants through a grueling investigation as to native intelligence and ability, application and responsibility throughout the high school course,

and sterling qualities of character, in addition to statement of academic standing as recorded by marks or examinations. The right and wisdom of this method of selecting from among the many applicants, however much it may be questioned by the outer world, won great corroboration in the sphere of the college when statistics showed that during the last academic year Dartmouth had cut down its freshman failures to about 10 per cent as against the customary 25 per cent to 40 per cent prevailing elsewhere and formerly prevailing at Dartmouth.

Out of 1,500 to 1,600 applicants each year, Dartmouth can take in only 550. The rest must content themselves with education elsewhere. This does not mean, the college explains, "that those denied entrance are necessarily not capable scholastically, or not desirable and attractive prospects in other ways, but simply that they do not rank with other men who, according to the data available, seem to be better prospects." And the *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* states that "the system now used for selecting candidates for admission seems to be producing a steadily better quality of students."

All the leading colleges (not state universities) which are similarly in great demand are using now a selective process. This seems inescapable. Nor can the public justly complain, not even the parents. It is the logical result of demand and supply.

The progressive educator dealing with youth in the pre-college stage does not criticize the college for using a selective process. But he does urge that this selective process be broad, intelligent, and adapted to youth as it exists to-day, not to classical

criteria of the past. And he urges even more pleadingly that the method of admission be such as not to straight-jacket students during their secondary school education, as regards subject-matter and method.

The progressive educator says to the college: "You want the best quality of youth. Good! We find your desire both reasonable and just. But do not apply such unreasonable criteria as to exclude a type of youth which, though not academically brilliant, has initiative, personality, leadership, character, in high degree. And do not so impose curriculum and methods on the secondary school as to compel us to greatly limit or annul opportunities for a rich development of the individual student along lines which he and society need."

One of the soundest and most effective of the progressive educators, Otis W. Caldwell of the Lincoln School, says in an article regarding the relation of progressive schools to college education: "There are many school officials whose objection to the college entrance situation is not that they do not deal with the right things. If secondary schools are correct in developing an education which uses the affairs of modern life as well as those of ancient life, an education which is devised to train interests and judgments regarding real problems, *should not the student's admission to his next institution rest upon tests of the type of things with which his education has dealt? Some of the colleges have long been trying to force schools to deal with dead and meaningless memory affairs. They have done this without much study and with almost no contact in the progressive educational movements in second-*

ary schools. *Fortunately this condition has changed in many institutions.* Until recently, however, the change has been chiefly noticed in the institutions of the central and western parts of the United States."

3

So much as regards the first problem of the college—which concerns also vitally the parent and secondary school—the problem of admission. The second problem of the college is even more difficult of solution, that of ideal organization of curriculum, and of method. A great awakening is taking place in the college world to the need of some change in order to better adapt the college to modern youth and to modern conditions. The lay public joins in a scathing criticism of the college. Magazine articles and books try to tell us what is wrong with the college.

"The Harm My Education Did Me," published anonymously in the *Outlook*, is one of the most bitterly ironic and trenchant of all these revelations as to how the college fails in its austere mission of purveying culture. "Public school and high school had been a disappointment, but I looked forward with eagerness to college. There I would find wisdom and beauty, fine minds with a vision of truth, older friends to help me discover what life was about. This was the expectant girl who, something over a dozen years ago, entered one of our well-known institutions of higher learning."

She was greatly disillusioned. "Freshman composition proved to be in the hands of a bent and yellowed creature in rusty black, with a certain

keenness of criticism and sardonic humor swamped in eccentricities." The following year it became understood why no one had ever quite grasped her assignments and why so many bewildered freshmen flunked out. She was breaking down mentally, and during the summer tragically collapsed into a permanent pathological condition.

Junior philosophy was entrusted to "an antique ex-minister with a Biblical beard, watery eyes, and a mentality approaching its second childhood. He came cheap, being too old to preach and having a very young second wife and a raft of children. While he droned conscientiously like a feeble bumblebee we ate chocolates, exchanged messages, and studied other lessons, not from natural perversity, but because, being practical young women, we saw no value in making notes on material which the professor had obviously 'read up' the evening before from our own large, dull green text-book."

But why go on? The exhibit grows worse as we proceed. It is depressing. From types of the inane and innocuous we are moved on to the types of warped personalities who do positive harm to the young lives entrusted to their care. The author says she hesitates to disclose her name because she does not wish to identify individual teachers, cited here not as individuals but as types in our educational system.

What is wrong with the college? After reading a half dozen articles of this kind—revelations from alumni or from the college faculty itself—we begin to wonder what is not wrong with the college. A cheering fact in the situation, however, is that the



colleges themselves are taking their faults to heart,\* are welcoming criticism from their students, and are beginning to try out solutions and remedies.

One of the most interesting phases of this whole movement of criticism is the part that the undergraduates are themselves taking in it. Dartmouth was the first college to invite such criticism. In 1924 the publication of the report of the Dartmouth students called forth an enormous amount of enthusiasm and inspired the other student reports, notably at Purdue, Harvard, Nebraska, Oregon, and Wesleyan. Their conclusions markedly agree, and show quite clearly what the undergraduate wants his college to be.

Another interesting and illuminating form of student criticism is found in the reviews, in student newspapers, written by upper-classmen regarding the different courses they have taken, as to content, method of teaching, personality of the professor, and ultimate value of the course.

A third opportunity for formation of student opinion is at the different congresses of the National Student Federation of America. Marvin Breckinridge, vice-president of the National Student Federation, outlines in an article in *Progressive Education* (October, 1927), entitled "The Student's Point of View," the opinion of students throughout the country, formulated through the above-mentioned channels, as to: the purpose of the college; the manner and extent of selection of students; and the subjects

\*A report of committee G of the American Association of University Professors begins with this sentence "American undergraduate education has been long felt to be unsatisfactory as to both content and method."

and methods of study. This article is richly illuminating as to undergraduate opinion and desires.

## 4

THE searchlight of criticism, from professors, from undergraduates, from alumni, from laymen, lighting up the deep and cloistered halls of learning, reveals the following chief weaknesses in the American college:

1. The chief complaint of college students—one generally admitted as justified—is that *methods of instruction are antiquated.* The lecture system was a device for purveying knowledge in the days when books and magazines did not exist but only dusty manuscripts which scholars transcribed and rendered in lectures for the benefit of those who could not have access to these precious tomes. But why compel modern youth to sit and listen to professors drone out lectures from notes, the material of which is available in book-form? The lecture system is strongly condemned by our modern college youth. Little more appreciated is the formal recitation, with its tiresome regurgitation of material absorbed from the prescribed text-book.

2. Even more fatal, if true, is the charge that *the quality of instruction is poor.* Especially is this so in the freshman and sophomore years, the very years when the quality of teaching should be most vital, if cultural attitudes and habits are to be expected of the college student. The fault lies perhaps in our system of appointment for college instructors, which makes Ph.D. graduates automatically eligible to give college instruction upon completion

of their doctorate,—qualifications of personality and of teaching ability being too little considered.

Not only is there no attempt to give teaching-training and teaching-experience to these candidates for instructorship, but (it is claimed) the methods of scholarly research required for a doctorate are apt to entail aridity, mental pettiness, and subservience to a system of thought. These delvers in books, upon leaving the cloistered shelter of the university life to take a college instructorship, find themselves confronted with enormous classes of college freshmen, raw callous youths undevoted to scholarly pursuits. How does the instructor go about it to win respect and leadership (absolutely necessary to successful teaching) from these virile, care-free, book-despising youths? That is the problem.

3. Another factor affecting the quality of teaching in college is the recognition and importance given to research and publication on the part of the teaching staff as compared with teaching ability. The surest road to preferment in the average college is frequency of publication. An instructor or assistant-professor who is an excellent teacher, fond of teaching, devoted to his pupils, and highly successful in his class-work, but who so gives his energies to teaching as not to produce published material, would stand little chance of promotion in comparison with others who were making a name for themselves in print, thus enhancing the reputation of the college. Whether or not this system of promotion is applicable to graduate instruction, it is certainly most inapplicable to undergraduate instruction, where what is most needed are simply good teachers of youth. Erudition to the *nih* de-

Significa.

gree is not necessary in instructors of freshmen and sophomores. It may become, and often is, obstructive to teaching efficiency. Yet the road to faculty success is that of erudition rather than effective teaching. If colleges persist in thus penalizing good teaching, it is no wonder if they fall short of that desideration.

(4) College presidents are administrators rather than educators. Whether or not selected chiefly for executive ability, they certainly spend too much of their effort on administrative details. What with visits to prospective donors, speech-making and attention to the general business of running a large institution, the average college president does not find time, even if he had the inclination, to be effectually an educator.

Added to this is the college tradition which makes each head-of-department, each professor and instructor, even, semi-independent feudal suzerains in their own domains. It is not the custom for a college president to visit classes (nor for a department head). How is he to ascertain the quality of instruction or the type of work being done in his institution? By indirection only. Not by the simple method of going to see for himself.

Presidents are not, it would seem, directors of education in their college worlds, but rather chairmen of faculties. This perhaps derives from an ancient practice when the university was a collection (a collegium), of separate faculties, each semi-independent, drawing endowments from separate funds, and coördinate rather than subordinate. To-day the college president is a responsible ruler in every part of his domain except that which pertains to educa-

tion, where he is limited and hampered by unnecessary traditions.

5. The curriculum of the college needs overhauling. Dr. Eliot broke the spell of medieval classicism when he inaugurated the elective system. But now we find that it is not safe to let college students pick and choose, cafeteria-like, out of an immense range of educational courses. The average college student has too little background and discrimination for adequate choice. Furthermore, instead of choosing for culture he frequently chooses for snaps. One of the quaint sights of Harvard in my time was seeing Gold Coast men (frequenters of luxurious dormitories, and notorious wastrels) taking courses at the Divinity School in mysticism and church history. The reason: lectures with no required reading or conferences; work required to pass, two or three days' cramming each semester.

If we throw the traditional humanities into discard as the required cultural curriculum, we must put something in their place. Such is the post-Eliot opinion. At present the average college curriculum is too little coördinated. Each department, like the barker at a circus, proclaims its attraction; and the student's choice, based upon insufficient data, is often disappointing. Furthermore, within each department are dozens of highly specialized courses dealing with scholarly minutiae.\* It is possible for a student to select among these highly specialized courses

\*"An examination of the catalogue of the school of arts and sciences of a great state university," says Professor J. H. Coffin of Whittier College, "reveals the fact that there are in full swing this year 1,666 courses. At such institutions there are delivered during each four-year period 557,568 lectures or quizzes. The average pupil attends 2,120 of this stupendous offering."

so that, even with the most earnest study, at the end of his college course he has no breadth of horizon and little real culture.

Knowledge of late has increased so vastly that the grasp of the human intellect has as yet hardly sufficed to synthesize and unify. Yet this important step must be undertaken by educational authorities before they can expect college youth to see head or tail in this highly elaborate system of university material which has grown by accretion. The college has not yet sufficiently mastered and simplified its abundant knowledge-material. It does not itself know just what constitutes culture. "The prospective college student," says Henry J. Doermann, "will search most college catalogues in vain for a statement which conveys in terms intelligible to him what the liberal arts college aims to accomplish. What college to-day has invited students on the basis of a clear definition of its purpose? What minimum cultural program shall we decide upon? This is a question to which the college has as yet no definite answer."

6. It is claimed by many that college students are not interested in their academic work because it is too unrelated to life. Although the curriculum has been much modernized during the last generation, college learning still remains chiefly book-learning. The great reform which promises to revolutionize elementary and secondary education—the philosophy and practice of the progressive movement, that we learn by doing, and that education can be acquired in and by means of life activities—needs to be applied to the college. This does not mean necessarily that the college must become a

vocational or professional institution. But it does mean that college students should find in the courses which they take both material and methods which give them a sense of vital and necessary experience, a sense of living as well as thinking, a satisfaction in their academic work, and a realization that this work is of distinct value and importance to them.

## 5

THE chief reform being experimented with at present in the colleges is in the matter of instruction-methods, curriculum-reform, and of bringing college culture closer to the life needs of the student.

How best to purvey knowledge to college students? This is the problem which all progressive college executives and faculties are investigating and experimenting with. The lecture system is being critically scanned. It has many weaknesses. It tempts professors to repeat the same material year after year, requiring from them the minimum of effort. It is tiresome to the student—the thing they most object to in their criticism of academic methods.

In place of lectures and formal recitations, certain colleges are trying the system in vogue in England, that of leaving the students very much on their own responsibility to make research and perfect themselves in the subjects of their choice, coming up for a final comprehensive examination at the end of the year. Swarthmore was one of the first to adapt this English method to American students, an influence due to a Rhodes Scholarship man, Frank Adylotte, who became its president. For the faithful student, the man or woman who goes to

college with serious intentions, this method has great advantages over the mechanical routine of the lecture and formal recitation system. At Swarthmore this "honors course," as it is called, is restricted to students of the junior and senior classes whose academic standing in the first two years has been high enough to indicate general ability and promise, as well as a sense of responsibility towards academic work. The honor students are freed completely from all regular college exercises and restrictions. They take no courses at all in the usual sense, though they may attend such lectures and classes as are recommended to them, or as they want to attend. No attendance records are made, no marks given, no term examination taken. The students devote their time to preparing for a set of comprehensive examinations in some broad department of human knowledge given by faculties of other colleges invited to Swarthmore for that purpose. The individual work of these students is guided and supervised by professors in the field of their own studies, with whom the students meet two or three times a month in small groups for conference, often in the professor's own home. Swarthmore is very well satisfied with the results of this system, which is being watched with great interest by other colleges, and by some copied wholly or in part.

The idea of releasing students from formal routine is carried out to an extreme extent by Hamilton Holt, president of Rollins College, Florida. The experiment of abolishing lectures and class recitations for all students is being tried for six months. Instead of these, instructors and students meet for conferences in the mornings; and in the evenings lectures,



concerts, or some other cultural program form part of the required curriculum. The *Chicago Evening Post*, commenting editorially on this interesting experiment says: "What is sought here is, manifestly, the stimulation of thought on the part of the student rather than the authoritative inculcation of knowledge and theories. The conference method is used to evoke the mental reactions of the individual composing the group. It brings forth the clash of viewpoint, the questions which need answering. The process of education is set at work within the mind of the student, instead of being wholly a labor on the part of the instructor."

At Harvard an experiment is being tried of giving an absolutely free period of two and a half weeks in the first semester, and of three and a half weeks the second semester. During this period there are no lectures or classes of any kind. The students are thrown absolutely on their own resources. For six weeks they will have opportunity to practice self-education. It will be interesting to see with how much intelligent initiative and cultural capacity the average student will use this freedom from all academic restraint.

In the University of Wisconsin is being conducted one of the most-watched experiments in all collegiate education. Meiklejohn, too daring in his educational ideas for the eastern small college, is invited to Wisconsin by its liberal president, Glenn Frank, and given full opportunity to carry out his idea of how to make education attractive and really cultural to college freshmen and sophomores. Classroom teaching is eliminated. A selected group of two hundred students will carry out a program of research for

one year on Greek civilization, and for the second year on Roman civilization, with "purposeful devotion in their attempt to reach some understanding of these two civilizations." This experiment, it will be seen, affects changes not only in method but in curriculum. It is but this year inaugurated. The whole educational world, and especially the humanists, will watch the educational adventures of these fortunate two hundred with greatest interest.

In general it may be said that what college students most want is an opportunity to study, think, and express themselves. Research instead of lectures; conferences instead of classes; group discussions led by an inspiring instructor instead of recitations,—these are the methods which are succeeding best, even with freshmen and sophomores. And these are identically the methods which characterize progressive education in the elementary and secondary stage. They are methods intrinsically sound and based upon psychological insight into the nature of the laws of interest and development.

## 6

THE second great reform being undertaken is in the matter of curriculum. The elective system being too much lacking in coördination and cultural unity, and especially dangerous to freshmen, it has been thought best, in many colleges, to have a required course for freshmen which will in a broad and cultural way interpret to these youthful students the chief departments of human knowledge which they will be at liberty to choose during their ensuing years. Such a course, covering as wide a range of

human knowledge as is possible, is called an "orientation course," because it is intended to orient, or direct the way of the new student whose criteria of culture are not yet established.

Columbia was pioneer in the development of the "orientation course," as a sort of adaptation of the social sciences to the needs of college freshmen. It was felt that whatever the later demands for specialization would be, the student's course must first offer him an opportunity to know something of the economic, political, and cultural background of modern civilization, and by means of familiarity with this material to find some criterion upon which to base further choice of studies. (As regards this secondary purpose it might be called an "exploration course.")

Of this Columbia course in Contemporary Civilization (as the catalogue calls it) Professor H. T. Carman states the aims as follows:

"To inform the student of the more outstanding and influential factors of his physical and social environment; (2) to survey the historical background of contemporary civilization; (3) to raise for consideration the insistent problems of the present; (4) to enable the student to understand the civilization of his own day and to participate more effectually in it; (5) and finally to give the student, early in his college course, objective material on which to base his own further studies."

As regards methods of instruction, the course, which is required of all freshmen for five periods a week throughout the year, meets in sections of thirty divided according to grade of intelligence as shown by intelligence tests. The daily class is con-

ducted along the line of oral quiz and discussion, not on the lecture plan. Group instructors are chosen from the departments of history, economics, government, philosophy and psychology with great care as to their ability to enlist interest and coöperation from the students.

This "orientation course" at first met with strong objection as being too radical a departure. Some of the faculty drafted for this work grudgingly surrendered their specialization standards in these subjects, disliking to teach down to the level of the freshman mind or to undertake what seemed too general and too superficial a presentation of their subjects. To-day, however, those objectors are staunch supporters of the course. There are very few, if any, faculty critics of the course. As regards the students, they are heartily in favor of it. The last two senior classes of Columbia College voted it their most valuable course.

At the University of Minnesota the "orientation course" includes the physical as well as the social sciences. Under the former topic, *Man in Nature*, are treated: Nature as Environment; Man as a Product of Nature; Human Behavior, Social Behavior. Under the second subject, *Man in Society* are treated: The Adjustment of Man to the Physical Equipment of the Area Which He Inhabits; The Economic Order; The Political Order; Cultural Expression and Development. In addition to this, the requirements of the course make it necessary for the instructor at the very outset to teach students the technique of study, the use of the library, and the scope of and problems of selecting university courses.

Dartmouth College in 1919 established an initiatory one-semester course in "Evolution" required of all freshmen, and added to this the following year a required second semester course in "Problems of Citizenship." The catalogue describes the course as follows:

The course in "Problems of Citizenship" deals with selected social, economic, and political problems of recent or current interest. It supplies methods of investigation and reasoning in accepted principles of history, economics, political science, and sociology. The aim of the course is to awaken the student to an intelligent consideration of life problems with which he as an individual and a citizen must cope; to encourage discrimination in reading; to orient towards the college courses in fields just mentioned.

The mistake was at first made at Dartmouth of giving these courses by the lecture system, with correlative readings. The students did not sufficiently respond, and the method of instruction has been greatly improved by abolishing lectures and dividing the freshman class into small groups of fifteen men each with carefully chosen instructors. These group meetings resolve themselves into little forums, in which the students are free to express themselves. In order to stimulate thought on their part, they are given assignments from writers who present opposing views on the same subject. Thus they learn, at the outset of their course, the fallacy of the idea that text-books are infallible—the greatest difference, as a Dartmouth undergraduate told me, between his high school and his college instruc-

tion. This same undergraduate informed me that so earnestly interested did the freshmen become in these group discussions that they frequently carried them over to their dormitory life. This is the acid test of whether college culture is genuinely taking hold of undergraduate thought and life.

Many colleges and universities are recasting their freshman curriculum from the influence of the orientation courses here described. The orientation course has in it the possibility of starting the student at the very beginning of his college life on the path of culture. Hitherto it has not been until the junior year that earnest cultural work has been customary. Also the orientation course appears to solve the problems of curriculum, giving that cultural unity which has been lacking since the elective system did away with the prescribed curriculum of the Humanities (mathematics, ancient and modern languages, philosophy) which had for centuries been accepted as a necessary and ideal unity of culture. This traditional group of studies will never come back as the ideal of culture. In its place the orientation course offers a logical substitute,—a minimum unity of knowledge centering around the world in which we live and move and have our being. The success of the orientation course will depend, however, quite as much upon its method of presentation and the quality of the teacher, as upon its subject-matter.

Joseph H. Coffin, professor of philosophy at Whittier College and a student and practitioner of the newer philosophy of education, considers the orientation course as the most important step yet taken for the simplification and functionalization of

the curriculum. "This year," he writes in *Progressive Education* for October 1927, "there are sixty, out of the approved list of one hundred and sixty-eight colleges, which are giving "orientation" courses. The general tendency is toward the development of serious and substantial courses in Contemporary Civilization, Problems of Citizenship, Evolution, Reflective Thinking, Insistent Problems of To-day, and the like. Those courses are driving at solution of personal and social issues. *What needs to be done in order to functionalize [to correlate learning with life-problems] the college of liberal arts is in essence the development and extension of the idea of orientation. This requires further analysis of the fundamental life functions, the rearing of a generation of faculty men with sufficiently broad outlook; a simplification of the curriculum about the orientation course as the core of educative precepts; and a conscious pointing of the orientation course towards the solution of life problems.*"

7

WHAT is being done toward removing the gulf that, in the college cloisters, separates learning from life? A most amazing experiment is being conducted at Antioch College, to join learning to life in so thorough a fashion that students throughout their college career (extending over six years) work half time at a vocational job. When in 1920 Antioch was foundering, with little left but a tradition, Arthur E. Morgan, organizer of the progressive Moraine Park School of Dayton and flood engineer of world-note, was asked to take the presidency. This

he did on condition that he be allowed to completely reorganize the college. The trustees resigned to give place to an entirely new group and the college was reorganized from the ground up. In other words, Morgan was given as complete an opportunity to carry out his educational plans as if a new college had been founded for him. To this successful man of affairs, not himself holding a college degree, came at the prime of life an opportunity to say his word regarding college education in the only way that words can be effectual,—by exemplifying them in deeds.

The word Morgan has had to say to the world regarding education, through the Moraine Park School which he organized, and through Antioch College which he has reorganized, is similar to Dewey's message of learning through doing. *At Antioch it is learning and doing. The two things run along simultaneously, and closely coördinated.*

The students, in pairs, select jobs along the line which they want to make their life work—a job in the world of business, in the world of engineering, in the world of teaching, in the world of home-making, etc. Each one of the pair works at the job in installments of six weeks, at the end of which period he is replaced by his "buddie" and returns to continue his academic work at the college.

The benefits of such a system can readily be conceived. First, the academic work is powerfully motivated by the vocational work—its need being felt as an actual life-need. Secondly, these boys and girls are gaining those habits of diligence, responsibility and initiative the lack of which (except in students' own extra-curricular activities) is so much deplored



in the average college. Thirdly, the attitude toward life is one of active coöperation, not one of parasitic self-indulgence.

The greatest weakness in college life in general is, indeed, this attitude of irresponsibility and insouciance which is apt to carry over for five or ten years into the college graduates' life-work. A business executive told me a few months ago that she was through with engaging college graduates. They are too capricious, too hard to train into business habits, she said. And indeed, what can be expected but capriciousness from youths who for four years have had no responsibility except that of evading flunk marks!

Perhaps the greatest contribution of Antioch to the problem of college education is its success in eliminating this capricious, irresponsible, collegiate quality which amounts to moral weakness. Antioch students early in their course acquire habits of responsibility, of deference, of industry. When they graduate and go out into a career they are not obliged to reconstruct their habits and their attitude toward life, with the many failures, temporary or permanent, which characterize the careers of college graduates. In addition to these advantages, the Antioch graduate has the further advantage of entering a profession which he has already trained for and in. This vocational aspect of Antioch will commend itself to some as heartily as it will be criticized by others.

It should be understood, however, that the Antioch program is cultural as well as vocational. And it has instituted an innovation as regards curriculum which goes a long way towards the formulation of

that ideal cultural minimum which should be required of every pupil seeking a college degree. This required cultural course starts from the same premise as the orientation courses being tried at other colleges. But it attempts an even more inclusive and logical orientation of the student as regards his place in the universe, and it extends throughout the whole college course.

As regards methods, Antioch began in 1927-28 a new program of self-directed study for all students above the second year. Students of the four upper classes are not required to attend daily lectures and discussions. A syllabus outlining the work of an entire semester is given to the student, who is left free to master the subject in his own way. The faculty are available for help when needed, but the student is advised not to seek help until he has done his best to master the problem alone. *Emphasis is thus placed on the development of the student's ability to think for himself*—also, the time factor is removed, as an obstacle to slow students. As for lazy, inefficient, or irresponsible students, "rigorous oral and written examinations," warns the catalogue, "will be given at regular periods, and students who cannot carry responsibility will be asked to leave."

What are the results of Antioch? The first graduating class went out into the world two years ago. One of them came to me as a teacher. I found in her the admirable qualities which I would expect the system to develop—conscientious attitude toward work, adaptability, initiative. Many employers, I understand, are equally pleased with Antioch graduates. On the cultural side, also, I think the claim of Antioch is true: that it stimulates all-round cultural

development and sends out graduates who "are determined to see life as a whole and to work for lasting values." In other words, the vocational aspects of Antioch are not a detriment to the cultural, but rather, if anything, a stimulus.

"The contribution of Antioch to a new type of college education is being made without sacrificing academic excellence," says *Antioch Notes*. If this is true, all honor to Antioch and to its president. There is little enough of culture acquired at the ordinary colleges, frequented by what Elbert Hubbard called "remittance-men." If Antioch can give as much and even more of culture than the ordinary college, in addition to its splendid character training through responsibilities, it has won a great point for the validity of the expression in the college field of the practical, active, pioneering temperament of America.

8

*The Antioch movement throws light on the question of how to induce college youth to study. So does Simmons College, and any technical or professional school.* In all such institutions one does not find youth idle and self-indulgent; recreation and pleasure are sought after responsibilities are cared for, not in place of responsibilities; students work earnestly because they see clearly the relation between their education and their life-needs.

"The intellectual orientation to life," says Dean Henry J. Doermann in his *Orientation of College Freshmen*, "necessitates an understanding of the major activities involved in living. The occupations which people engage in and which occupy approxi-

mately one-half of their waking hours must be included in "the intellectual grasp on human experience" which characterizes the liberally educated man or woman. The notion that cultural education is to express itself in leisure-time activities is just as faulty and as grotesque as the religious training which implies that a man's religion is to be gauged by his activities on the Sabbath. Culture is not an activity, nor does it result from passing examinations in "liberal studies." It is an attitude of mind and feeling. Its possessor will exhibit that attitude in all that he says and does. The man who knows all the best that has been said and thought but who does not know anything about the occupational activities of his time, their relationship and interrelationships, is neither liberally educated nor intellectually oriented in the modern world.

"We are profoundly concerned that the present generation, and the next, should find in the work of their age, as our forerunners did in theirs, the subject-matter for noble thinking and for noble speech. *Vocational guidance which eventuates in purposeful choice brings into play the career-motive. No other motive has the educational potentialities which this one has. No orientation is complete until a life-career has been found, all orientation is simplified once it is found. The student who has a dominant life-career purpose will be found to be ruled by one of the most steadying of all influences. It gives meaning and importance to all of his experience.*"

A comparison of the high uniform quality of academic endeavor in any institution where the students are striving definitely for a career, with the general

low level of academic endeavor in other types of educational institutions will reveal, perhaps, that of all the faults and failing of the modern college, the most serious is the gulf that separates learning from life. Remove that gulf, and without changing or remedying any other factor, you have created an earnest body of college youth.

Nor have the humanists who would separate learning from life any logical foundation in referring to the classical education of past generations. That curriculum, that classical system of the past was definitely connected in the minds of the great majority of college students with a career motive. *The college, in those so much lamented and idyllically painted days of our grandparents, was distinctly preprofessional, leading to the so-called learned professions of teaching, of law, of medicine, and of the church.* Few attended college who were not preparing for one of these professions. The work of the average student, therefore, was motivated by career, and was in general of earnest quality. It was not merely for culture, or even mainly for culture, that our forebears attended college. College was for them a necessary stage and an actual preparation for a professional career.

It is only in recent years that a large if not preponderating group of young people go to college without any intention toward one of these learned professions. It is from this group of youths without serious aim or educational purpose that college wastrels develop. It is for that reason that some colleges are now asking, as part of their selective test, "What is your aim in going to college?" It is for that reason that colleges are using their orientation

courses with freshmen as a means of helping to wise choice of career, a choice which will give dignity and importance to the academic work of the ensuing years. We need not lament this practical tendency invading the American College. It is an expression of the American temperament. The sooner it finds its normal outlet in college curriculum and college life, the sooner an equilibrium will be reached and the college solve the problems which are now agitating it.

To conclude, one may feel that in spite of the failings of the American College in meeting the demands of the present day, great changes are imminent, even already taking place, which are as revolutionary as the change taking place in the elementary system. The most progressive college of to-day is as far removed from the college of a decade ago as schools giving progressive education are removed from the stereotyped schools of the past. Already there is the entering wedge of progressive example and precept. The other colleges will eventually feel obliged to copy those educational programs and methods which, in the practice of the more progressive institutions, prove to commend themselves to the intelligence of the general public.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE JUNIOR COLLEGE—A SOLUTION

*"We can look upon the junior college movement which is now spreading throughout the United States as the most wholesome and significant occurrence in American education in the present century."*

RAY LYMAN WILBUR.

**WHAT** is to become of all the youths of both sexes who strive unsuccessfully to enter the sacred precincts of the college? And what about the myriads of motor-active youths in secondary schools who, though dumbly longing for higher education of some sort, do not even venture to try the college entrance course?

The problem of the college is not solved simply by shutting the doors on these youths. For the responsibility of the college toward youth and toward society must be broad and catholic enough to meet in some satisfactory way the problem of all who have the worthy desire to enlarge their educational horizon beyond the station of the secondary school. To merely turn these young people away because there is not room enough in the colleges for them or because the college curriculum is not adapted to them, must be seen from the larger social point of view as a failure on the part of the college rather than as a failure on the part of youth.

For it will soon be realized—is in fact already coming to be realized—that society has some form of educational obligation to all those who sincerely aspire to further knowledge or technical training, regardless of their present educational status. Nor can the matter of cost to society be held as a justifiable or insuperable obstacle. In the first place costs can hardly be weighed in the balance with perfection of human lives. And secondly, *our economists, in showing us how the unprecedented industrial prosperity of America rests largely on the factor of highly educated intelligence in the average man, demonstrate (it would seem) the economic advisability of carrying this average American intelligence to as high a degree of training and perfection as it is willing to make effort toward.* The returns in national prosperity will be a hundred-fold for all the money put into the experiment. One single invention or discovery could add more annually to the wealth of the country than the total annual cost of education.

Some such realization as this, perhaps, is responsible for that remarkable educational development known as the junior college. The halls of learning being packed to the doors, and thousands still clamoring for admittance, it becomes necessary to hold overflow meetings. Where shall these be held? Instead of bringing youth from all sections of the state into one central locality already overcrowded educationally, the idea is conceived of organizing small junior colleges (freshman and sophomore years only) in different sections of the state, to care for the higher educational needs of youth in these sections. These local junior colleges would also tend



to relieve the pressure in the freshmen and sophomore classes of the state universities, which cannot, by the obligations of their foundation, select and turn away in the seclusive manner of the privately endowed college. A third immediate advantage is that many who could not afford to leave home to attend a university could afford to attend as day-students a local junior college.

These are perhaps the more immediate considerations which have given birth to the strictly junior college, as distinct from that private school type of junior college which is in reality only a finishing school. And [it is natural that the movement should reach its first demonstrable position in that state of immense distances, immense resources, and immense initiative,—California. Thanks to the efforts and achievements of this progressive state, the junior college is no longer a theory to be discussed pro and con; but an actual accomplishment, a movement which is growing even more rapidly than the public consciousness can take it in. For while many people of intelligence hardly know that junior colleges exist, or what the implications of the junior college are, three states of the Union are already firmly committed to the junior college as an integral part of their educational systems; all state authorities of education are taking cognizance of this trend; and many cities are projecting civic junior colleges.

California now has thirty-one public junior colleges (organized in accordance with a state junior college law of 1921) which in the academic year 1926-27 had a total enrollment of 6,301 students. The states of Washington and Texas have also recently committed themselves to the junior college.

It is estimated that at present there are in the whole country one hundred public junior colleges, and in addition a still larger number of private junior colleges.

What is the attitude of the university toward the junior college, and what are the implications of the junior college movement as regards the university? No generalization can be made as to this, since the universities of the country differ in their stand regarding the junior college. But the attitude of the favoring universities, such as Leland Stanford which gave birth to the junior college movement, is that the existence of the junior college as an educational unit taking over the present work of the freshmen and sophomore years will release the university for much more successful work with that higher educational group in which lies its real sphere. Thus Leland Stanford is looking forward to the year 1934 as a time when it will devote its whole attention to students above the sophomore year. Johns Hopkins announces an even more immediate severance of its educational resources from the lower level group of freshmen and sophomores. Beginning in 1928 it will become a graduate institution. And the city of Baltimore is discussing as a natural corollary to this, the founding of a junior college.

The university, which has long begrudged the percentage of its educational resources and energy demanded by those callow youths, the freshmen and sophomores, breathes a sigh of relief at the thought of being able to devote its faculty and educational plant to a more finished product. The education of the freshmen and sophomore classes is indeed be-

coming an undue burden to the university, which is geared for a finer quality of production. The registration in the state universities in recent years has been so tremendous that the freshmen classes have become unwieldy.

Nor is the university, evidently, able to do its full educational duty by its freshman class, as will be seen by the statistics of failure. At the University of Minnesota, for instance, of 1,100 freshmen entering in 1920 fifty-eight per cent left the university before completing any course; and only twenty-eight per cent, or 308 students, graduated with satisfactory records. At Northwestern University, of the class of 1925 at the end of their third semester in college, forty-nine per cent were found to have dropped out. The average of failures (taking the college course as a whole) is for ten eastern colleges thirty-four per cent; for three mid-western universities, forty-five per cent.

*Nor are these failures due, it would seem, so much to lack of intelligence as to lack of interest.* A study of a delinquent group at Northwestern University showed that out of one hundred and three students investigated, only four failed because of a mental ability below the standard required for college work. "No result of our study," says Professor Howard in his report of this investigation, "is more significant and interesting than the discovery that the average intelligence of the group is quite as high as that of the general student body; and that the most complex items causing failure are those which concern the state of the student's interests."

Clearly, the university is not proving successful

in meeting the educational needs of its younger clients. Such mortality is a condemnation rather of the institution than of the individual. To tell the truth, the university is not sufficiently interested in its lower classes. Its whole machinery is aimed at the production of scholarship, and fits the upper classes and the graduate students much better than it fits the unformed mentalities and emotional natures of freshmen and sophomores. Therefore, the university may come to welcome whole-heartedly a junior college movement which promises not only to relieve congestion but to rid the university of its most pressing problem, that of the freshmen and sophomore classes.

## 2

A NEW and striking development of the junior college on a four-year basis bids fair to make even greater changes in our educational system than the establishment of two-year junior colleges already mentioned. Several junior colleges now offer a four-year course, which presupposes a redivision of the previous educational life of the student into a six-year grammar school course, and a four-year junior high course; while the junior college, as thus organized, combines the last two years of high school with the first two years of college.

The two outstanding examples of this new type of junior college on the 6-4-4 basis are the Pasadena Junior College, established in 1924; and Stephens College, Columbia, Missouri, reorganized as a four-year junior college in 1927.\* The story of the or-

\*The state of California is now considering legislation which would reorganize its educational system on the 6-4-4 basis.

ganization of the Pasadena Junior College along these new lines is interestingly told by its principal, William F. Ewing, in *The Junior College*, issued by the Stanford University Press. The plan at first met with great opposition on the part of junior high teachers, senior high teachers, high school and college alumni, parents, and tax-paying citizens. But many public discussions of the subject extending over a period of six months brought about an overwhelming victory for the plan at the polls in March 1924; and in September of that year Pasadena Junior College opened with an enrollment of about two hundred students. The total enrollment for the year 1926-27 were 634 regular students and 446 part-time adult students (the junior college movement offers great possibilities for adult education). By 1929, the rest of the educational system of Pasadena will have become fully organized on the 6-4-4 plan. "The Pasadena Junior College is now an established fact," says Ewing. "It has received national as well as local recognition."

The extension of Stephens Junior College from a two- to a four-year basis is of even more significance educationally than the establishment of the Pasadena Junior College, for the reason that it is with the sanction, asked and obtained, of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and to be conducted for a trial period of five years under their supervision. The committee of the North Central Association appointed to supervise this experiment is composed of Dr. Charles H. Judd of the University of Chicago, Dr. L. V. Koos of the University of Minnesota, and Dr. George F. Cook, president of the University of

Akron and former Commissioner of Education under the federal government.

A study of the curriculum, teaching methods, and general educational purpose of these two above-mentioned junior colleges, with further analysis of the matter from a theoretical viewpoint, will reveal the following important advantages of this reconstruction of our educational system. Some of these advantages inhere in any type of junior college, whether two or four years in extent. We will present the following merits of the junior college movement, however, on the assumption of the four-year junior college as the ideal, and the future norm.

1. From the purely mechanical viewpoint, it is a distinct advantage to break up the two lower classes of the state university, already growing unwieldy in size, into a system of smaller units feeding into the upper years of the university.

2. As regards the needs of the community, it is an advantage to have the college brought to its midst. There are some who see as the logical and destined development of the junior college movement the extension upward of universal education by two years. Secondary education has already become practically a universal desideratum. Higher education bids fair to follow suit, as the vast numbers now seeking college admittance testify. Says Dr. Wood, president of Stephens College, "*It is the ambition of practically every father and mother that the son or daughter should have the practical and cultural advantages of a college education.*" Under the existing educational machinery, this has been reserved almost exclusively for an intellectual or a social aristocracy. Under the proposed reor-

ganization, *the liberal arts college itself would open its doors in every community now able to maintain a junior college. Through systems of consolidation, it would be brought to the doors of practically every community.*"

3. The 6-4-4 division of education is a much more natural psychological division than the present 8-4-4 system. The proposed change would bring the whole pre-university period within the years of adolescence—the four years representing the early period of adolescence being passed in the junior high school which could adapt its methods and curriculum to early adolescent needs; the next four years of late adolescence being passed in the junior college, which could adapt its methods to the needs of youth at this period. The present 8-4-4 period sends youth at too early a psychological age to meet the responsibilities of the complete freedom which the university offers. The junior college can, in its organization, adopt whatever degree of restraint or of freedom it finds feasible for youth at this so critical and versatile period of character formation. Europe has followed in its educational system a division which delays two years later than does our college system the initiation of youth into university life. Its psychology of education is sounder, it would seem, than our own, and it would be well for us to take a lesson from the more ancient experience of these educational friends of ours across the water.

4. The teachers for the faculties of junior colleges can be selected purely for ability to teach, thus eliminating one of the weak spots of freshman and sophomore instruction in college—the research scholar who is ill adapted to teach and whose main

interest and ambition is in scholasticism rather than in young people and the development of their intelligence.

5. One of the chief advantages of the junior college for general educational reform is the possibility of creating here a self-sufficing and independent educational unit. *At last the secondary stage of education can be freed, as regards curriculum and instruction-methods, from the tyranny of the college.* The opportunity is afforded the junior college of adopting the progressive method which is revolutionizing elementary education; of motivating the work, of correlating it with life needs, and of abolishing that gulf which, even more in the secondary than in the elementary stage of education, has separated learning from life.

It is the lack of rich cultural material in the college preparatory instruction of our present secondary schools which is the chief cause of the failure of secondary education to hold the interest of its pupils. If sufficiently cultural and interesting material, the logical minimum foundation of an educational career, is taught by right methods to junior college youth, in a way free from dogmatism and in accordance with the progressive idea of making education an opportunity for comparative research and expression on the part of the student, then it would seem to follow, as an inevitable consequence, that the trifling, half-hearted, or worse than half-hearted attitude of adolescent youth toward education which we find to-day in our secondary schools and in the first two years of college would be eliminated.

The gain to society in converting these years of



educational wastage and sabotage on the part of American youth into years of earnest educational effort and accomplishment should alone suffice to proclaim the junior college as the solution of the present educational dead-lock in secondary education, and the greatest movement, most pregnant with reform, on the educational horizon.

6. In another direction the junior college answers favorably the challenge of progressive educators—that any individual earnestly desiring further education should be accepted by the institution, no matter what his present educational status, and helped to progress as he desires. This is exactly what is happening at the Pasadena Junior College—the first instance of such liberality that I know of in our public educational system. While only properly graduated high school students are admitted to the “junior certificate course” leading to admission to the junior year of colleges or universities, any student may enter the “diploma” or “vocational curricula” (non-college-preparing); and if desired can make up deficiencies and transfer later to the college certificate course.

This is as it should be. Any serious-minded youth (or adult, for that matter) desiring to gain further education, should be helped to do so without disbarment due to previous condition. One of the most radical of the progressive educators has periodically astounded college presidents by proclaiming the right of every individual to higher education, without entrance restrictions. Such educational liberality will probably never be granted by the traditional college. Its plant and overhead is too costly to permit of universal hospitality. But the junior college

is in a different situation. It can, and probably will, admit all comers to its gates. It will demand not "How much do you know?"—but only "What do you want to know? How can we be of educational help to you?"

7. The possibility of the junior college as a distributing center for adult education in each locality is unique. Already adults in Pasadena are taking advantage of this opportunity. Last year 446 adult men and women enrolled in afternoon continuation classes.

Here we may see the rise in America of an adult education movement similar to that remarkable People's High School movement in Denmark, which educational authorities believe to be chiefly responsible for the remarkable intelligence and prosperity of the Danish people. The story of these schools, and their astounding influence on Danish life, is told in a fascinating way by Joseph K. Hart in *Light from the North*.

8. The junior college links up more closely with life purposes and life needs than does the high school. "It is the aim of the Pasadena Junior College," so reads its catalogue, "that no student shall leave its walls without, at least tentatively, having made some intelligent decision on a life work. It will be the continuous effort of the junior college to acquaint the student with his or her native endowments, the needs and requirements of the different fields of human endeavor, and instill in him the social point of view that will give him the right basis for a decision." This correlation between education and life does not mean, however, a neglect of broad cultural foundations (cf. previously described orien-

tation courses). *"It is expected that the student will make an effort to establish a basis for that breadth of culture which will give him a realization of the methods and results of some of the more important types of intellectual endeavor, and mental perspective that will aid him in reaching sound judgments."*

3

THE three chief objections to the junior college are: costs; lack of definite academic standards; and substitution for the old-time college cultural atmosphere and spirit, of a mere educational program of too brief a duration and of too practical a bent (and too local as to its body of students) to permit of the best in the way of culture that the college of the past has been able to bestow.

As regards expense, it is true that the junior college movement is apt to cause extravagance in city budgets. Local pride and emotional appeal for educational opportunity for the young may cause many cities to embark unwisely and unconsiderately upon the enterprise of a junior college. The danger of extravagant and unwise expenditure is however no real factor of limitation; all new inventions and improvements in the arts of living are open to the same danger. As regards the fundamental nature of minimum costs, it may be said that *cost in general means merely organized effort. The question as to junior college costs, then, resolves itself into the following consideration: Shall or shall not the community increase the amount of organized effort that it puts into education, an industry (one may look upon it as such) which like scientific research though*

*unproductive at the moment leads eventually to greater national productivity and wealth, as well as to intellectual and cultural enrichment.*

The question of educational standards is a serious one. It has taken long and arduous effort to raise the status of the college to a definite point. Educational authorities will naturally look askance at a new movement which may for the time being tend to bestow the dignity of "junior college" upon mere finishing schools possessed of but superficial educational standards. One can only say in answer to this objection that the same organized educational effort that has established a definitely recognized criterion for the standard college proper can in time establish similarly an acceptable standard for the junior college.

The danger which looms largest in the minds of college alumni, and of such culturists as George Herbert Palmer, is the threatened destruction of the old-time college spirit as generated in a body of men banded together for four years in a little world of cultural seclusion, with the aim of disinterested application to the humanities. (One wonders if Professor Palmer is not thinking here of the ideal rather than of the actual college.) The chief factor in this danger is removed, however, if the junior college becomes a four-year instead of a two-year institution. The junior college could then build up a cultural atmosphere of its own, different somewhat from that of the college, but none the less sound and effective, just as in England Eton and Harrow and Rugby have (with youth of junior college age) built up effective and powerful traditions, atmosphere, and school spirit.

Such is the junior college, which has its enthusiastic supporters and its no less vehement objectors. Like all large social movements, it will however progress on its own merits irrespective of the pros and cons of those who write or speak concerning it. If it fills a public need it will continue to grow, in spite of any imperfections and dangers inherent in it at the start. If, on the other hand, it is a mere experiment grafted needlessly onto our already heavily burdened system of education, it will collapse by its own lack of reality. It is too early yet to make dogmatic statements or to attempt predictions in this field.

4

THE interest of progressive educators is being strongly attracted to the junior college movement because it appears to offer certain ameliorations for the chief limitation confronting the progressive education movement,—the problem of college entrance and its crystallizing effect downward upon secondary school methods and curriculum. It is safe to say that none of the progressive schools are as progressive in their secondary department as they would like to be. All of them are hampered by the restrictions of college preparation. The junior college, whether of a two-year or four-year type, with its more liberal interpretation of what constitutes education and its freedom from tradition as regards methods, offers both a more attractive educational goal for the progressive secondary school graduate and a far greater freedom in that phase of education which we call secondary but which has been

so forced out of its natural orbit by the magnetic influence of the college as to become not an independent unit but in reality a period of "college preparation."

The junior college—new, propitiating, humbler in its educational attitude than the college; and closer, in its aims, to life-needs—bids fair to allow the period of education immediately below it to become a self-subsistent, independent, dignified unit. Also, it has an attractive appearance as being just the type of institution into which youth already progressively educated can go on to without having to suffer from disillusionment and bureaucracy.

## 5

*One of the most fruitful fields for educational philanthropy just now would seem indeed to be that of the junior college. There is both room and need for many new privately endowed junior colleges, preferably of the four-year type such as Stephens College, of sound though free educational procedure. The opportunities for higher education have not succeeded in keeping pace with the extraordinary recent growth in demand. Especially is this the case with higher education for women; but it also holds true, though in lesser degree, of men. The junior college, for the present, will sufficiently answer this need. And because of its immense experimental possibilities, it is safe to say that, dollar for dollar, money put into junior colleges of flexible progressive type will do more for the cause and progress of education just at this moment than money spent for any other educational purpose. For*

if these junior colleges succeed in making education fascinating, as the progressive schools are doing in the lower levels, then college education would indeed become "a new and entrancing venture."

Of such a type is the Sarah Lawrence College of Bronxville, New York, which will open in 1928. Of this unique educational experiment its president, Marion Coates, writes in *Progressive Education*, October 1927, under the title "The Junior College as the Next Step in Progressive Education": "The work of Sarah Lawrence College is not aimed in advance in any particular direction. It is proposed to accept the student just as she comes from her high school and experiment to see what the next step higher consists of in her case. The present plan is based, not on what the student has already gotten, but on what she wants and expects to get when she enters college. If she has come up from a "progressive" school and has her native curiosity still intact, she wants to know a great deal more about the world she lives in than she does. And to this end a curriculum has been outlined, and the work is organized on a tutorial basis to allow each girl to go as far as she likes in her search for knowledge and in any direction she likes without regard to boundary lines between the fields of knowledge."

Junior colleges of this progressive kind, if successful, would not only help to form a pattern for further junior colleges, but would also exert a powerful influence for progressiveness upon the existing academic colleges and also upon the high schools. Progressive educators may justly look upon the junior college in the light in which President Coates sees it, as "the next step in progressive education."

In the background of the mind is a hope, engendered by the possibilities of the junior college movement, which one hardly dares express. *It is that if children are given education by the progressive method, from the very earliest years through a junior college, they might by the end of that period be as far developed in culture, in intellectual power, in knowledge, as is the present college graduate,— thus being enabled to begin professional training and enter upon a self-supporting career two years earlier than at present.*

Such was Dr. Charles W. Eliot's dream as far back as 1890, when he urged the saving of time educationally by shortening elementary education to six years, and accomplishing secondary education in the next four years. The most serious cause of the failure of the modern college to meet the needs and enlist the zeal of modern youth being its lack of a career motive, gain in this direction would be most vital and fundamental to educational progress.

Apart from any such possibility, progressive educators and all who have the progress of education at heart, may well rejoice at seeing the domain of progressive education extended two years beyond secondary education by means of the junior college. Those who lament the present waste of youthful time and energy through slacking in those precious years, the teens, will consider with interest and enthusiasm *the eventuality of seeing youth go on, year following year, eager in the pursuit of education, serious, self-reliant, responsible, like those youths who in the pioneer days of our country helped to make history before they were of legal age.*