

## HOW TO LOVE A CHILD

### *The Child in The Family*

*For to be born is not to be raised from the dead;  
the coffin may give us up again but it will  
never gaze like a mother at us.*

ANHELLI<sup>4</sup>

1. How, when, how much — why?

I am presentient of many questions awaiting answers, of doubts seeking explanation.

And my answer is:

"I do not know."

Each time you put aside a book to spin the thread of your own thoughts, it means that the book has served its purpose. Whenever you skim over the pages, seeking rules and ready prescriptions, frowning at their paucity — you should know that if you do find counsels and indications, that this has happened not only despite but even against the writer's will.

I do not know, and cannot possibly tell, how parents unknown to me can rear a child likewise unknown to me, under conditions unknown to me; I repeat — *can* rear, not wish to or should rear.

"I do not know" — is in the realm of science like an emerging nebula, a nebula of looming new ideas, ever nearer the truth. "I don't know" is to a mind untrained to scientific thinking a tormenting nothingness.

I should like to teach others how to understand and love that wonderful effervescent creative "I don't know" as regards contemporary knowledge of the child replete with dazzling surprises.

Let me emphasize that no book, no physician, can replace one's own keen thought, own attentive perception.

One frequently comes across the opinion that motherhood ennobles a woman, that on first becoming a mother she matures spiritually. Yes, motherhood does, indeed,

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<sup>4</sup> A poem by the outstanding Polish poet — Juliusz Slowacki (1809-1849).

kindle a flame of problems embracing all spheres of extrinsic and spiritual life; but those problems may pass unnoticed, or be cowardly shelved for solution in some distant future, or one may grow angry that the solution cannot be bought.

To demand that anyone should provide processed thoughts is like asking a strange woman to give birth to your own child. There are thoughts that can be born only of your own pain, and precisely those are the most precious ones. They will determine whether you as a mother will give your baby the breast or the udder, whether you will bring it up as a human being does, or will bring it up as a female rears her young, whether you will guide it or drag it along on a leash of compulsion, whether you will play with it as long as it is little, finding in fondling it a complement to your husband's perfunctory or unwanted caresses; and, later, when it gets somewhat older, whether you will let it loose or even turn against it.

2. You say:

"My baby."

If ever, it is only while you are pregnant that you have the right to use that term. The beating of the tiny heart, no bigger than a peach stone is but an echo of your own pulse. Your inhalation provides it with air to breathe. The same blood runs through its and your veins, and not a single drop of your red blood knows whether it will remain yours or its, or will be spilled to perish as a toll collected by the mystery of conception and delivery. The bit of bread that you are munching is the building material for the legs on which it will toddle along, for the skin that will cover them, for the eyes that will see, the brain which will be illuminated by a thought, arms which it will be stretching out to you, and the smile to accompany the cry: "Mama".

You two are predestined to spend a crucial moment together: together, in a single bath of pain, you both will suffer. The chimes will strike the hour — the signal:

"On the mark."

And simultaneously it will say: "I want to live my own life" and you will say: "From now on, live your own life."

By mighty contractions of your entrails, you will expel the child, oblivious of his pain, and he will break through firmly and inexorably, oblivious of your pain.

A brutal act.

No, far from it — the two of you will perform a hundred thousand throbbing movements, imperceptible, subtle and wonderfully dexterous so that, in taking your share of life, neither of you should take more than is due you by law, universal and

eternal.

"My baby."

No, it is not yours, not even during the months of pregnancy or in the hours of childbirth.

3. The child you have delivered weighs ten pounds. There is eight pounds of water and a handful of carbon, calcium, nitrogen, sulfur, phosphorus and iron. You have given birth to eight pounds of water and two pounds of ash. And drop by drop what goes to make your child has been cloud vapor, snow crystal, mist, dew, the mountain spring and the scum of a city gutter. Every atom of carbon or nitrogen has been bound into millions of different combinations.

You yourself have taken only that which was to be gotten.

Earth suspended in infinity.

Its close companion — the Sun — fifty million miles away.

The diameter of this minute globe of ours is just three thousand miles of fire with a thin, ten-mile deep, cool crust.

Spattered upon that thin crust stuffed with fire amidst the oceans, is land.

Upon land, amidst trees and bushes, insects, birds and animals men swarm like ants.

Amongst those millions of men, you have brought forth one more — is it not so? — something infinitely minute, a speck of dust — a nothing.

It is so fragile that it may be destroyed by any bacteria which, even when magnified a thousand times is but a dot in the field of view.

But that "nothing" is the brother, the flesh and blood, of every sea wave, of the wind and the thunderbolt, of the sun and the Milky Way. That speck of dust is the brother of every ear of corn and blade of grass, of every oak and palm of every chick, lion cub, colt and pup.

There is something within it that feels and scrutinizes — suffers, desires and rejoices, loves, trusts and hates — believes, doubts, draws close and turns away. That speck embraces in thought everything: the stars and oceans, mountains and abysses. And what is the substance of its soul if not the universe, though dimensionless?

Herein is the contradiction in the human being, raised from dust, which God has made his dwelling.

4. You say:

"My baby."

It is not. The child is a common property, he belongs to the mother and father, the grandfathers and great-grandfathers.

Some distant "I" that was dormant in an array of forefathers, the voice of a disintegrating, long forgotten coffin suddenly begins to speak through your child.

Three hundred years ago, in war or peace, someone possessed someone else, in the kaleidoscope of crossing races, peoples and classes — with consent or by violence, in a moment of horror or amorous intoxication — someone committed adultery or seduced, nobody knows who and when, but God has written it down in the book of destinies, and the anthropologist tries to divine it from the shape of the skull and the color of the hair.

Sometimes a sensitive child fancies that he is a foundling in his parents' home. It may be so: his begetter died a century ago.

The child is like a parchment densely filled with minute hieroglyphs, and you are able to decipher only part of it, another part you can but erase or strike out and fill with a content of your own.

A ghastly law? — No — it is a magnificent law. It makes each child of yours the first link in an immortal chain of generations. Seek in that stranger that is your child the dormant particle of yourself. Perhaps you will perceive it, perhaps you will even develop it. Child and infinity.

Child and eternity.

Child — a speck in space. Child — an instant in time.

5. You say:

"He should be like ... I want him to be ..."

You search for a model, whom he should resemble, you search for a life that you desire for him.

It matters not that there is mediocrity, and plainness *is* all-encompassing. It matters not that everywhere is grayness.

Men strut about, busy and exert themselves — petty worries, mean aspirations and pedestrian aims....

Unfulfilled expectations, gnawing anguish, eternal longing....

Injustice prevails.

Arid indifference cuts like an icy wind, hypocrisy stifles.

Anything that has sharp teeth and claws, attacks, and everything that is timid, must lie low.

And men not only suffer but also wallow in filth.... What is your child going to be?

A fighter or just a worker, commander-in-chief or another rank? Or just happy?

Where and what is happiness?

Is there anyone who knows it?

Will you be able to cope?

How can you foresee everything, how can you shield the child?

A butterfly above the turbid torrent of life. How can you provide him with steadfastness without lowering his flight, to temper him without fatiguing the wings?

By example, by a helping hand, by counsel or word?

And if he turns his back on all you offer?

In fifteen years time — he will be looking into the future, and you — into the past. For you — memories and habit, for the child — instability and arrogant expectation. You doubt, while he looks forward and is confident, you fear while he is fearless.

Youth, if it does not jeer, repudiates and spurns, always wants to improve on the defective past.

So it should be. And yet ...

Let him seek, provided he does not stray, let him climb, provided he does not fall, let him clear virgin land, provided his hands are not bleeding, let him struggle, but be 'careful — careful.

He will say:

"I see things my own way. I have had enough of apron strings."

Don't you trust me any more?

Don't you need me?

Does my love oppress you?

Wanton child, you know nothing of life, poor child, ungrateful!

6. Ungrateful.

Is Earth grateful to Sun for shining? Is a tree grateful to the seed it grew from? Does a nightingale sing for its mother because once she warmed it with her breast?

Do you yield freely to your child what you yourself took from your parents, or do you only lend on repayment, diligently recording every item and totaling up the interest?

Is love a service rendered, for which you ask payment?

«The mother-crow is rushing to and fro madly, she almost perches on the boy's shoulder, pecks violently at his stick, flutters low over him, strikes her head hammerlike against the trunk of a tree, pecks at twigs and caws in a shrill, strained, dry voice of despair. As soon as the boy has dropped the nestling, she dives with wings outspread and drags them along the ground. Her beak works in an effort to cry out but there is no voice left in her, so she beats the air with her wings and keeps hopping round the boy's feet, insane and ridiculous [...]. When all her children have been killed, she will fly onto the tree and look into the empty nest; circling around she will be pondering something.» (Stefan Zeromski, 1864-1925).

Maternal love is a spontaneous force. Men have modified it in their own way. The entire civilized world, excluding the masses of people untouched by civilization practice infanticide. A couple who have two children as against the twelve they might have had are the killers of ten which have never been born, and among those was a particular one, "their child." Perhaps they killed precisely the most valuable among the unborn.

What ought one to do then?

Rear not the unborn but those that are born and are going to live.

Callow peevishness.

For a long time, I refused to understand that account must be taken of and concern must be shown for children that are born. I failed to remember that regardless of whether one lives under the slavery of national partition, is a subject not a citizen — all the same schools, places of work, hospitals and cultural conditions of life must be created along with children.

Today, I view unchecked procreation as evil and irresponsible. It may well be that we are on the eve of the promulgation of new laws dictated by eugenics and population policies.

7. Is the child sound?

It still seems unthinkable that the child and she are no longer one. Not so long ago,

concern for the child in the dual life was still part of concern for herself.

She so eagerly anticipated getting over the event, she wanted to be looking back at that moment. She believed that once it was over, worry and fear would be over, too.

And now?

Odd; formerly, the child seemed to be closer to her, more her own, she had felt more assured of his safety and understood him better. She thought she would know how to look after him. But once strange hands experienced, paid and expert — have taken him under their care, she herself, reduced to a secondary role, feels alarmed.

The world is already taking him away from her.

And a number of questions stand out in sharp relief during the long hours of enforced inactivity: what have I given him; how has he been equipped by me, what safeguards have I given him.

Is he feeling well? Why does he cry then?

Why is he so skinny, why does he suck so poorly, does not sleep enough, does sleep too much. Why has he such a big head, why the little legs are so wrinkled, and the tiny fists clenched tight? Why the skin is so red, why pimples on the nose, why does he squint? Why did he sneeze, why does he cough, his voice became hoarse?

Is it normal? Perhaps they are keeping something from me?

She stares at the helpless little creature which is unlike any other of the small and toothless mites she used to see in the street or in the park. Is it possible that in three or four months it will be exactly like they are?

And perhaps they are wrong?

Perhaps they take things too lightly?

The mother listens dubiously to the doctor's voice, watches him searchingly: she wants to read from his eyes, from the set of the shoulders, the lifting of an eyebrow and the frown on his forehead, whether he is telling her the truth, whether he shows any sign of hesitation and is conscientious.

8. "Is he pretty? It's all the same to me." So say insincere mothers who are anxious to emphasize their serious approach to educational tasks.

Beauty, charm, posture, pleasant voice — equally with soundness and sensibility they are the capital with which you have endowed your child; they smooth the road of life.

However, the value of beauty unsupported by other values should not be overestimated, it may lead only to harm. It makes a keen intelligence even more necessary.

The upbringing of a pretty child is different from that of a plain one. However, since there can be no upbringing without the child himself having a share in it, one should not be insincere with the child concerning the problem of looks because precisely that -- spoils him.

That alleged contempt for exteriors is a left-over from the Middle Ages. Man ''being sensitive to the beauty of a flower, a butterfly or a landscape, how can he remain insensitive to the beauty of another man?

Do you want to hide from the child the fact that he is pretty? If none of those in his immediate surroundings at home will tell, strangers both adults and peers will do: so, in the street, in the store, at the park, anywhere — by an exclamation of admiration, a smile or glance. A woman might say that this would involve hurting plain and ugly children. The child will understand that man's exterior conveys privileges just as he understands that a hand is given him to be used.

Just as a feeble infant may develop extremely well, and a fit one fall victim of an accident, so a pretty child may be unhappy, and one wearing the armor of ugliness — unattended and unnoticed — may live happily. For you must ever remember that life always strives to buy, defraud or steal any positive value once it has perceived its true worth. It is upon that equilibrated plane of thousands of oscillations that surprises are sprung on the educator, frequently voiced in a pained exclamation: Why?

"I am not concerned with looks!"

You set out from error and falsehood.

9. Is he clever?

The mother who starts by inquiring fearfully will soon be bossing about.

Eat though not hungry, though it turns your stomach; go to bed even though in tears, even if you have to be awake for an hour. For you must be, I insist that you shall be, fit and well.

Don't play in sand, wear tight pants, keep your hair tidy because I insist that you look your best.

"He can't talk yet.... He is older than ... even so, he doesn't yet ... He is no good at school...."

Instead of carefully watching the child in order to understand him, one picks on a random example of a "clever child" and imposes demands upon one's own: here is a model you must copy — and be like.

Abhorrent to well-to-do parents is the idea of their child becoming a manual worker.



Rather let him grow up unhappy and demoralized. That is not love for the child but parents' selfishness, not the good of the individual but the ambition of the community, not a search for the right course but the grooves of social convention.

There are active and passive mentalities, lively, apathetic, steadfast and fickle, submissive and vexatious, creative and re-creative, brilliant, straightforward and abstract, realistic and fictional; memory —outstanding and poor; ingenuity in taking advantage of knowledge acquired and honesty of hesitation, innate despotism and reflectiveness, and criticism; there is premature and delayed development, uni- or mul-tilateral spheres of interest.

But does anyone really care about all that?

"It will be alright if he somehow gets through four grades at school" — says the voice of parental resignation.

I can see a spectacular renaissance of manual work in the future with candidates coming in from all walks of life. However, for the time being, we are witness to the struggle of the parents and the school against any exceptional, atypical, weak or unbalanced intelligence.

Not whether bright but, how bright.

A naive appeal to the family to make a voluntary heavy sacrifice. Intelligence and psychological tests will effectively halt selfish ambitions. Of course, all this is still the music of a distant future.

10. Good child.

One should be careful not to confuse good with easy.

He doesn't cry much, doesn't keep us awake at night; he is trustful, serene and good-natured.

A bad child whimsical and noisy without any apparent reason, gives the mother more unpleasant than pleasant excitements.

Some babies, no matter how they feel, are either less or more patient as a hereditary feature. Here, a unit of ailment is sufficient to produce ten units of crying, and there — ten units of ailment give a reaction of one unit of crying.

One infant is always drowsy, its movements are lazy, it sucks sluggishly and its cry is unresonant and dispassionate.

Another is excitable, its movements are vigorous, it sucks vehemently and cries until it is livid in the face.

It may have a spasm, it chokes, and prompt action is needed to bring it round; at times, it can be restored to life only with difficulty. I know: an ailment: we treated it with cod liver oil, phosphorus and by a milkless diet. Yet this ailment need not prevent the infant from growing up into a determined adult of unusual vitality and outstanding intelligence. Napoleon in his infancy also used to suffer from spasms.

The entire present-day upbringing is set on having an "easy" child; consistently, step by step, it strives to lull, squash and destroy all that goes into the making of the child's willpower and freedom, his backbone and the forcefulness of his demands and aims. Well-mannered, obedient, good-natured and "easy", with no thought given to the fact that inside he will be will-less, and helpless in the affairs of life.

11. A painful surprise for a young mother is the baby's cry. She knows that infants cry but thinking of her own — she has overlooked the fact: she expected only charming smiles.

She is going to respect its wants, she will bring it up sensibly, in a modern way, under the guidance of an experienced physician. Her child should not cry.

But then the night comes when she lies in stupor, the hours of labor that seemed like ages still vivid in her mind. She has barely relished the sweetness of carefree fatigue, idleness without a pang of conscience, and rest after the struggle and the desperate effort, the first in her tender life. She has succumbed to the illusion that all her troubles are over now, because it that other one — draws its own breath. Replete with tranquil emotion, she is only capable of asking nature questions full of mysterious whispers without even waiting for a reply.

When suddenly ...

A despotic cry from a child, demanding, complaining of something, calling for help, and she cannot understand it.

Keep awake!

"But I can't, I don't want to, I don't know how."

That first cry by the light of the bedside lamp portends a struggle of the dual life: one life, mature, obliged to make concessions, renunciations and sacrifices, defends itself; the 4th, new and young, fights for rights — its own rights.

Today you do not indict it; it does not understand, it suffers. But the hour will strike when you will say: "And I feel and suffer, too."

12. There are newborns and infants who cry very little, all the better. But there are also some whose veins swell on the forehead when they cry, the top of the tiny

skull becomes tense, purple spreads over the face and head, and the lips become blue, the toothless jaw moves convulsively, the belly becomes screwed up and the hands draw tight into fists, the legs beat the air. Suddenly it stops, exhausted, with an expression of complete surrender on its face; it gazes at the mother "reproachfully," blinks begging for sleep but after a few rapid gasps, a similar and perhaps even stronger attack starts over again.

Can those tiny lungs, the little heart and the young brain possibly withstand all that strain?

For God's sake, the doctor!

It seems ages before he arrives; he listens to her fears with a condescending smile, he is so strange and inaccessible, a professional man for whom the child is merely one of a thousand. He has come, and will go in a moment to attend to other sufferings, to listen to other complaints; he has come early in the morning, and everything seems now to be brighter for the sun is shining, people are moving about in the streets; he has come just as the baby, worn-out by the sleepless hours, has fallen asleep and when only faint traces of the ghastly night still linger.

The mother listens to him, sometimes inattentively. Her dream of a doctor-friend, of one supervising her work, a guide accompanying her on a painstaking journey, fades forever.

She hands him the fee, and again she is left alone with a bitter conviction that the physician is an unconcerned stranger who does not understand. Anyway, he himself seemed somewhat undecided and said nothing definite.

13. If only a young mother knew how important are those first days and weeks and not so much for the child's health today as for the future of both!

And how easily that time can be wasted!

Having arrived at the truth, she should reconcile herself to the idea that as regards the doctor her child is an object of interest only in so far as he brings him income and gratifies his ambitions; so he means just nothing to the world, and is precious only to her....

She should reconcile herself to the present state of knowledge which only surmises, tries to find out, probes and moves forward — which knows without being sure, helps but gives no guarantee....

She should bravely face the fact: the upbringing of a child is not an amusing pastime but an assignment into which the exertion of sleepless nights, the capital of

onerous experience and much thinking must be invested....

Instead of remolding all that in the blazing heat of feelings into an honest awareness devoid of illusions, devoid of childish peevishness and selfish embitterment, she may arrange for the child and the nurse to be moved to a remote room because she "cannot bear to look at" the mite's suffering, she "cannot listen to" its pained calls; perhaps a doctor, or more than one, should be summoned again and again while she herself, having gained no experience, remains in torment, stunned and, stupefied.

How naive is a mother's joy at being able to understand the first indistinct speech of her child, when she guesses the meaning of the mispronounced and unfinished words.

Only now? ... Only that much.... And no more?

What about the speech of tears and smiles, the speech of the eyes and of the twist of the mouth, the speech of movements and sucking? ...

Don't give up those nights. They will give you something that no book, no advice, ever will. For the value is contained here not only in knowledge but also in a profound spiritual upheaval which keeps you from reverting to sterile thoughts: "What could have happened, how should it be, what would be right if ..." but teaches you how to act under actual conditions.

A wonderful ally of your child, a guardian angel, may be born during those nights — the intuition of the mother's heart, clairvoyance, consisting of the will to research, vigilant thought and undimmed emotion.

14. It has happened to me occasionally: I am summoned by a mother.

"Actually the child is alright, I can't see anything wrong with him but I should like you to examine him."

I examine the child, give some advice, answer questions. There is certainly nothing wrong with the child, he is agreeable and cheerful.

"Good-bye, Mrs...."

And on the very same or the next day:

"Doctor, the child has a high temperature."

The mother was able to notice what I as a doctor had been unable to see from a superficial examination during a brief call.

Bent over the baby for hours, having no method of making observations, she cannot

tell exactly what she has noticed, and having no confidence in her own abilities, does not dare to confess to the subtle observations, she has made.

She has noticed that the baby's voice though it is not actually hoarse, is somewhat dull. It chatters a little less or its voice is not as resonant as usual. The usual shiver that runs through its body while it is asleep has been somewhat more intense. It has laughed on waking up but not as heartily. It has been sucking just a bit slower, making perhaps longer pauses as if it were distracted by something. Wasn't it a grimace of pain that passed across its face as it was laughing or maybe it was only her imagination? It cast its favorite toy angrily aside — why?

By means of a hundred symptoms that her eye, and ear and the nipple of her breast have caught, by a hundred microcomplaints, it has been saying: "I'm indisposed. I really don't feel well."

The mother would not believe that she actually had seen what she did, for she has not read of any like symptoms in the book.

15. A working mother brings a few-weeks old infant to a free clinic.

"It won't suck. As soon as it gets hold of the nipple, it lets it go with a cry. It swallows greedily when fed with a spoon. Sometimes, asleep or awake, it suddenly screams."

I examine its mouth and throat but I can find nothing.

"Please, give it the breast."

The baby feels the nipple with its lips but won't suck.

"It's become so distrustful."

At last, it grabs at the breast and quickly as if in despair, draws several times and then lets it go with a scream.

"Could you have a look, it has something on its gums."

I look once more, a sore but a peculiar one: only at one spot on the gum.

"Oh, here is something black, a tooth or whatever?"

I can see it, it is something hard, yellow and oval, with a black line running around the edge. I try to lever it up, it has shifted, I lift it up — I see a small red cavity with a blood-red encircling rim.

At long last, I am holding that "something" in my hand. It is a single linseed scale.

A cage with a canary hangs over the baby's cradle. The scale was dropped by the bird and it fell directly on the baby's lip and then slipped into its mouth and was pressed into

the gum.

The course of my thought: stomatitis catarrhalis, soor, stomatitis aphthosa, gingivitis, angina, etc.

She: pain, there must be something in the mouth. I have searched twice.... And she?

16. If occasionally the physician is astonished by the accuracy and detail of a mother's observation, on the other hand, he finds with equal astonishment that frequently she is incapable of noticing even the simplest symptom, not to mention understanding it. The baby has cried from its very first day, she has not observed anything more. It cries incessantly! Does the cry come as a sudden outburst and immediately reach the peak or is it a sorrowful whine gradually mounting into a scream? Does it soon calm down, immediately on clearing the bowels or passing water, or vomiting (or spitting out the food) or will it scream suddenly and violently in the bath while being dressed or lifted? Does it complain by way of continuous weeping without sudden outbursts? What movements does it make while crying? Does it rub its head against the pillow or make movements with its mouth as if sucking? Does it calm down when it is carried around, or unwrapped, or when its position is frequently changed? Does it fall asleep deeply and for long after crying, or does it wake up at any sound? Does it cry before or after sucking, more in the morning, in the evening or at night?

Does it quiet down while sucking? For how long? Does it refuse to suck?

How does it display its unwillingness? Does it let the nipple go as soon as it has taken it in the mouth or while swallowing, suddenly or after a certain lapse of time? Is it stubbornly unwilling or can it be persuaded to suck? How does it suck? Why does it not suck?

If it has a cold in the nose, in what way will it suck? Greedily and intensely at first because it is hungry, but later quickly and superficially, unevenly, pausing now and again, because it is short of breath. Furthermore, what happens if it finds swallowing painful?

Crying is due not only to hunger and "tummyache" but also to any pain affecting the lips, gums, tongue, throat, nose, fingers, ear or bone, or may be due to a painful external injury of the rectum caused by the enema or to painful passing of urine, nausea, thirst, excessive heat irritation of the skin on which no rash has appeared yet but will yin a few months; crying caused by a piece of rough ribbon, a fold in the diaper, a bit of cotton in the throat, linseed scale fallen from a canary's cage.

Call a doctor for ten minutes but yourself watch carefully for twenty hours.

17. Books with their prepared formulas have dulled the eyesight and made the mind sluggish. Feeding on someone else's experience, insight and outlook, they have lost confidence in themselves to such an extent that they will not look and see independently — as if what a sheet of printed paper contains were a revelation and not a product of study — only someone else's, not mine, somewhere and of someone, and not today of my child.

The school has developed cowardliness and fear of betraying that I don't know.

How many a time, a mother, having put some questions on paper cannot bring herself to utter them to the doctor?

And how exceptionally unusual it is for her to hand him a sheet of paper on which "she has written some silly things."

While herself trying to hide her ignorance, how many a time she compels the doctor to hide his doubts and hesitation, and to make a definite statement. How unwilling people are in general to accept conditional answers, how they dislike it when a physician thinks aloud by the cradle, how often he is compelled to become a prophet — and becomes a quack.

Occasionally, the parents do not want to know what they do know, and to see what they do see.

Childbirth in the sector of society governed by a fanatic cult of convenience is something so unique and maliciously exceptional, that the mother categorically demands in exchange a high reward from nature. Since she has agreed to bear the sacrifice, hardship and ailments of pregnancy, and to the pains of labor — the child should be such as she would like him to be.

Even worse, having been accustomed to the idea that she can buy anything for money, she refuses to reconcile herself to the fact that within the reach of a beggar is something, that a tycoon will not be able to obtain even if he begs for it.

How often, parents in search of what has been put on the market under a general label "health", buy counterfeits which either will not help or will actually harm.

18. For an infant the mother's breast is always the same, regardless of whether it was born with God's blessing on the young couple or — a girl's promiscuous adventure; whether the mother whispers: "My little precious", or sighs: "What am I to do with it?"; whether her ladyship is obsequiously congratulated or a village girl has thrown in her face: "You harlot".

Prostitution which serves men finds its social complement in wet nursing for

the benefit of the woman.

Bear in mind the consecrated, bloody crime committed upon a helpless child — and that not even for the good of the well-to-do. For a wet nurse can feed two children: her own and another. The mammary gland gives as much milk as it is required to give. And the wet nurse loses her milk when the child takes less than the breast can yield.

The formula: full breast, small infant — loss of nourishment.

A curiosity: in less important matters, we are apt to consult several doctors but in so important one as whether the mother can feed the child herself, we are satisfied with a single piece of advice, occasionally insincere, suggested by anyone round us.

Every mother can feed her baby, every mother has a sufficiency of nourishment; it is only ignorance of the feeding technique that deprives her of this natural delight.

Painful breasts or injured nipples constitute a certain obstacle; but here the suffering is compensated by the mother's awareness that she has passed through the period of pregnancy without shifting any of her heavy burden onto the shoulders of a paid female. For feeding is a continuation of pregnancy, "now the child has moved from the inside to the outside, and once severed from the placenta, has gripped the breast and no more drinks red blood but white."

Blood? Yes, the mother's, for that is the law of nature, not one of the assassinated milk brother, which is a man-made law.

An echo of the vigorous fight for the child's right to the breast. Today, the housing problem has become acute. What will it be like tomorrow? Thus the writer's interests are fixed depending on the moment through which he is living.

19. Perhaps, too, I should take to writing something which would be in the nature of a dream interpreter's infant care handbook.

"Seven pounds at birth — good health and prosperity".

"Evacuation greenish, mucus — restlessness, bad news."

Perhaps, I should also compile a handbook of advice and useful hints on love.

I would do so, but it is my experience that there is no prescription which uncritical extremism will not carry to the point of nonsense.

Old system:

The breast to be administered thirty times a day alternately with a few drops of



castor oil. The infant passed from one to another, rocked and dangled by all the sniffing aunts. They take it to the window or to the mirror, clap, rattle, and sing — a veritable village fair.

New system:

The breast every three hours. The baby watching the preparations to the feast grows impatient and angry, and begins to cry. The mother looks at the clock: four minutes more. The baby is asleep, the mother wakes it up because the clock has struck the hour; she tears it away from the breast because the time is up. It lies still — it must not be moved. It must not get into the habit of being carried! Clean, and dry, having satisfied its hunger, it should sleep. It is not asleep. Tiptoe and screen the windows. A hospital ward, dead silence.

This is not the mind at work, but an immutable prescription.

20. Not: "How often to feed" but: "How many times a day."

Thus posed, the issue gives the mother freedom of action; let her fix the feeding hours herself in a way that is best for her and the baby.

How many times should an infant take nourishment in 24 hours?

Between four and fifteen.

For how long should it be at the breast?

From four minutes to three quarters of an hour and even longer.

We encounter easy and hard yielding breasts, with scarce or ample nourishment, with a good or bad nipple, tough or prone to injury. We encounter babies who suck firmly, or capriciously or lazily. Therefore, there can be no general prescription here.

An undeveloped but resistant nipple; the newborn is eager. Let it suck frequently and for long in order to "work out" the breast.

A breast with ample nourishment, and a feeble infant. It might be better to pump off some milk in order to compel the baby to exertion. Supposing it is not strong enough. First give it the breast and then draw off the residual milk.

The breast is somewhat difficult and the baby is sleepy. It first begins to drink after ten minutes.

One gulp may follow one, two or five sucking actions. The amount of milk per gulp may be more or less.

It licks the breast, or sucks, but will not swallow; it swallows either rarely or frequently.

"It's running down its chin." Might be either an excess of milk in the breast, or it might be — not enough and the infant, being very hungry, draws strongly and chokes but only during the first few gulps.

How can prescriptions be given without seeing the mother and child?

"Five feedings a day, ten minutes each" — this is routine.

21. There can be no breast-feeding technique without an infant scale. Otherwise, whatever we do will be pure guesswork.

There is no way to find out except by weighing whether the infant has sucked three or ten spoonfuls. But precisely upon that depends how often, for how long, whether from both breasts or one, it should suck.

The weighing scale can prove an infallible adviser if it simply states the actual position but it can become a tyrant if we choose to use it to obtain the pattern of the child's "normal" growth. We should beware of not falling from the prejudice about "green evacuation" into one about "perfect curves."

How should the weighing be done?

It is of interest that there are mothers who have spent hundreds of hours on scales and etudes of the piano but who consider the effort of getting acquainted with the working of a weighing scale too much trouble. Weigh before and after feeding? All that trouble! Yet some mothers approach the scale, that cherished family doctor, not merely with care but with affection.

Inexpensive infant scales accompanied by a wide publicity campaign so that they should "find their way under roofs of thatch" in hamlets and villages —that is a social issue. Who is going to take it up?

22. How is it that one generation of children was reared on milk, eggs and meat, and the next gets cereals, vegetables and fruit?

I might say — advances in chemistry, research on metabolism.

But that's not it, the change goes much deeper in its very essence.

The new diet is an expression of the confidence placed by science in the live body of man, and of a tolerance toward its fancies.

When proteins and fats were supplied, the underlying purpose was to compel the system to development by a specially picked diet; today we are more lavish — let

the living body choose independently what it needs, what it can make use of. Let it make demands within the scope of its forces, health assets and potential developmental energy.

The point is not — what we give to the child, but — what he assimilates. For every violence and excess is a ballast, and any imbalance a possible error.

Even if we are very close to the truth, we may commit a unit of error, and by repeating it persistently over many months we either do harm or hinder the working of the system.

When, how and what extra food should be given? In the event a liter of milk sucked is insufficient for the baby, additions should be made gradually, waiting for the reaction of the system, everything being dependent on the particular infant, on its response.

### 23. What about patent baby foods?

It is important to differentiate between the science of health and trading in health.

A hair growth lotion, a dental elixir, a rejuvenating face powder, or patent foods conducive to the cutting of teeth — these are often a disgrace to science but never its pride, desire and goal.

The manufacturer may by his patent foods insure correct bowel movement and spectacular weight, he will supply what gratifies the mother and tastes good to the child. But the patent food will not impart to the tissues the necessary efficiency in assimilating food; it may cause sluggishness of the tissues; it will not give vitality and by fattening the body may even lower it; it will not provide resistance against disease.

That manufacturer will always discredit the breast, though he will do it tactfully, merely infusing doubts, working his way step by step, tempting and gratifying the foibles of the public.

It may be said: world renowned trade marks stand for approval. Scientists are but human: some are less or more astute, some careful and some rash, some honest, some frauds. How many have become doyens of the science not because of their outstanding ability but by stealth or the privilege of money and high birth! Science calls for expensive facilities which can be acquired not only through real value but also by flexibility, conformity and intrigue.

I once attended a scientific session at which I saw insolence steal the effort of conscientious studies spread over twelve years. I know of a discovery that was

concocted for presentation at a distinguished international meeting. A nutritious preparation, the value of which had been confirmed by several scores of medical "stars", proved to be a fake; there was a trial: the public scandal was promptly hushed up.

Who praised the preparation is not important, rather who refused to praise it, in spite of all the exertions of sales agents and the manufacturer. And such gentlemen certainly know their business and can influence the press. Big firms with capital running into millions are influential; they represent a power that not everyone is able to resist.

Several points raised in these chapters echo my divorce from medicine. I have witnessed culpable negligence and bungling. (In addition to the unappreciated Kaminski, it was Brudzinski who first went on record for recognition of pediatrics, and won.) The foreign drug industry began to profit obtrusively on misery and destitution. Today, we have medical care clinics, factory crèches, summer camps, health resorts, school supervision and health insurance. There is still a muddle and there are shortcomings but at least we have lived to see a beginning. One can have confidence today in patent foods and drugs; their job is to assist and not to function in place of child hygiene and social care.

24. The child is feverish. A head cold.

Is he in any danger? When will he be well again?

Our answer is the result of a number of thoughts based on what we know and on what we have been able to notice.

So: a robust child will get over a mild infection within a day or two. If the trouble happens to be more serious or the child weaker, the cold may last for a week. Time will tell.

Another case: a minor complaint but the infant is very young. In infants, the cold often shifts from the mucuous membrane of the nose to the throat, windpipe and bronchia. We shall soon know.

Last, ninety out of a hundred similar cases will terminate in prompt recovery; in seven cases, the complaint lasts for a longer time, and in three, a serious illness develops. It may even be fatal.

A reservation: another ailment may be hidden under the guise of a mild cold? ...

But the mother wants to be sure, no suppositions. One may back up the diagnosis with analyses of the phlegm, of the urine, blood and the cerebrospinal fluid. The

child may be X-rayed, and specialists summoned. The probability of correct diagnosis and prognosis, and even treatment will be definitely increased. But will this advantage be balanced by the harm done by repeated medical examinations, the presence of numerous doctors, each of whom may introduce an even more dangerous contagion in his hair, the folds of his clothes, or in his breath.

Where could he have caught the cold?

It could have been avoided.

But does that minor infection not perhaps make the child resistant to a more potent one that may attack him in a week or a month, doesn't it perfect the defensive mechanism of the system: in the thermal center of the brain, in the glands and blood constituents. Is it possible to keep a child isolated from the air he inhales, containing thousands of bacteria in one cubic centimeter?

Will a new clash between what we have desired and what we must accept, not be one more attempt to equip the mother, not with knowledge, but with common sense, lacking which, she will not be able to bring up her child properly?

25. As long as death took a heavy toll of women in childbed, no one gave much thought to the newborn. It first came to notice when asepsis and medical techniques began to protect the mother's life adequately. As long as death reaped its harvest of infants, the entire attention of science was bound to be focused on the bottle and the diaper. Judging by the present, perhaps we shall be able to see clearly in the not too distant future, not only the physical aspect but also the character, life and mental development of the child during his first year. What has been done so far is not even a beginning.

There is a series of unfinished psychological problems on the boundary between the child's psyche and soma.

As a child Napoleon suffered from tetanus. Bismarck had rickets, and indisputably each of the prophets and villains, heroes and traitors, the lesser and the greater, athletes and weaklings — each was an infant before he grew to be a man. If we are intent on probing the amoebas of thoughts, emotions and strivings before they have developed, differentiated and defined, we must turn to the infant.

Only limitless ignorance and superficiality can overlook the fact the infant represents some strictly defined personality composed of innate temperament, strength, intellect, disposition and experience of life.

26. A hundred infants. I bend over the bed of each one of them.

The lives of some of them may be reckoned barely in weeks or months; they vary in weight and in their graphs; there are sick and convalescent among them, fit and well, and some barely clinging to life.

I come across different expressions of the eyes, from dimmed, veiled, and avcant, through obstinate and painfully fixed, right up to vivid, warm and provocative. And the smile of welcome, it is either immediate and friendly or after a period of intense observation, granted in response to a smile and a tender word-incentive.

What at first seems to me haphazard recurs over a number of days. I take notes and pick out the trusting and the suspicious, the steady and the capricious, the cheerful and the gloomy, the wavering, the frightened and the hostile.

One always cheerful: it smiles before and after the breast, when awakened and when sleepy, it will raise its eyelids, smile and fall asleep again. Another is persistently gloomy: its welcome is anxious, it is on the verge of crying; it has smiled only once for a brief instant over a period of weeks.

I examine the throat. A stormy and passionate protest. Or just a reluctant screwing up of the face, an impatient movement of the head, and immediately a friendly smile again. Or suspicious vigilance at every movement of a strange hand, an outburst of anger even before ...

Mass vaccination against the small pox: fifty children an hour. That is something like a test. And again, reaction immediate and firm in some and gradual and tentative in others; some remain indifferent. One child is simply surprised, a second grows restless and a third is clearly alarmed: one returns quickly to the normal, and another stores it in his memory, is unforgiving.

One may say infancy. True, but only to a certain degree. Rapid reaction and ability to remember past experiences. How familiar to us are infants who have had the painful experience of surgery; we know of some that refuse to drink milk because they were once dosed with a milky emulsion containing camphor.

Is there anything else that goes into the making of an adult mentality?

27. The first infant:

It has but recently seen the light of day but is already reconciled to cold, a rough diaper, noise and the effort of sucking. A diligent, knowing and bold sucking. It soon mumbles and manipulates with the hands. It grows, comes to explore, perfect itself, crawl, walk, make bubbles, talk. Amazing how and when it has all come about?

A cheerful, cloudless; development....

The second:

A week passed before it got the knack of sucking. Several restless nights. A quiet week, then a stormy day. Development somewhat sluggish, difficult teething. Not quite a smooth run but now everything is alright: the baby is cheerful, quiet, charming and amusing.

Perhaps a born phlegmatic, perhaps unwise care, or the breast insufficiently efficacious, a fortunate development....

The third:

Impetuous. Merry, easily excitable, when provoked by any unpleasant sensation — internal or external, fights desperately, spares no energy. Lively movements, violent changes, today different from yesterday. It alternately learns and forgets. Development follows an uneven graph with steep rises and drops. The surprises it springs upon others range from the most touching to the seemingly alarming. Hard to make out as yet; finally:

Erratic, touchy, whimsical, possibly a highly valuable individual....

The fourth:

In a count of the sunny and cloudy days, the former would be few. Discontent as background. No pain, only unpleasant sensations; no screaming, only restlessness. Everything would be alright only ... Always some reservation.

A flawed child, foolishly reared....

The temperature in the room, a hundred grams of milk too much, a hundred grams of water too little — these are not only hygienic but also educational influences. An infant faced with so many things to explore, divine, get familiar with and assimilate, and which has to learn to love and hate, to defend itself, and sensibly ask — such a child must feel fit and well, irrespective of inborn temperament and inborn wit, quickness or dullness.

28. Eyesight. Light and dark, night and day. Sleep — something dim; wide awake — something strong; something good (the breast) or something bad (pain). The newborn looks at a lamp. It looks at no point in particular: the eyeballs diverge and then converge. Some time later, the infant following with its eyes an object slowly moved in front of it, picks it up and loses it alternately.

The outlines of shadows, the first faint image of lines, and everything seen without any sense of perspective. From a distance of three feet the mother is a different shadow from that which bends right over it. The profile of her face is like the sickle of the

moon's first quarter, only the chin and the mouth being visible, but from her lap the baby seems to see the same face, only with eyes added, and this face with the hair when she was bent a little more over it, looks different again. But the senses of hearing and smell tell the child that this is all one and the same.

The breast, a white cloud, the taste and smell of it, warmth and goodness. The infant moves away from the breast, and scrutinizes that peculiar something that invariably appears above the breast, and from which come sounds and a warm breath. The infant does not know yet that the breast and the face and the hands comprise a unit the mother.

Someone else stretches out arms. Lured by the familiar movement and image, it goes willingly. But it soon realizes its mistake. This time the arms remove it from the familiar shadow, bring it closer to something alien, arousing fear. It turns with a start toward the mother, and now feels safe again; it gazes and wonders, or hides in the mother's arms to escape from danger.

At last, the mother's face investigated by the hands, is no longer a shadow. The infant has seized her repeatedly by the nose, touched the eye, a mysterious thing that alternately sparkles and becomes dull under the cover of the eyelid, it has felt her hair. Surely everyone of us has seen how a baby, attentive and serious, with a severe frown, raises the mother's lips, looks at the teeth and peeps inside. The only thing it finds disturbing is the usual idle talk, kisses and friendly teasing — everything we commonly describe as "playing with the child." We are merely playing while the child is studying. He has already his axioms, presumptions, and problems under investigation.

29. Hearing. From the faint hum from the street muted by the closed window, distant sounds, the ticking of the clock, conversations and a variety of knocks, up to whispers and words directly addressed to the child — all those produce a medley of sensations, to be sorted out and comprehended.

Sounds emitted by the infant itself — screaming, babbling and grumbling. It will be long before it will realize that it is itself that bubbles and screams, and not some invisible person. When it lies flat and utters its "abb, aba, ada," it listens attentively and studies the sensations experienced by moving the lips, the tongue and the, windpipe. Not being aware of its own self, it merely ascertains the existence of free choice in producing those sounds.

Whenever I speak to a baby in its own language: "aba, abb, adda" — it looks surprised at me — a mysterious creature emitting sounds so familiar.



If we were to go deeper into infant consciousness, we should find there much more than we expected, but it would be something quite different from anything we have expected. My poor baby, my poor little one is hungry. The baby understands perfectly well, but is waiting for the nourisher to undo her bodice and to fix the bib; it gets restive when the final act is delayed. Mother has actually done all the talking for her own and not for the baby's benefit. It would more readily memorize the sounds by which the farmer's wife calls her poultry: "here, here, chick, chick".

An infant thinks in terms of expectation of pleasant sensations and of fear of the unpleasant; that it thinks not only in terms or images but also of sounds, one can judge by, say, the contagiousness of screaming: a scream portends some misfortune or automatically switches on the apparatus of discontent. Watch a baby carefully when it listens to someone else crying.

30. An infant takes pains to master the outer world: it is ready to fight the evil, inimical powers around it, and to compel the good spirits to serve its welfare. An infant avails itself of two magic spells — the scream and the breast — before it acquires a third marvellous instrument of will: its own hands.

If at first the infant screams because of some pain or discomfort, it soon begins to scream to insure that nothing may discomfort it. Left on its own, it cries, but on hearing its mother's steps, calms down; it wants to suck, so it starts crying but stops on seeing the usual preparations.

It runs its affairs within the scope of available knowledge (there is little of it) and means (they are meager). It blunders, due to generalizing individual phenomena and linking two successive facts into cause and effect (post hoc, ergo propter hoc). Is there not at the back of a baby's preoccupation with and warm attachment to its shoes the fact that it attributes to them the quality by which it is able to move about on its feet? Likewise the little overcoat is the magic carpet from a fairy tale, that conveys it to a miraculous world — going for a walk.

I feel entitled to make such suppositions. If a literary historian has the right to conjecture what Shakespeare had in mind in creating Hamlet, an educationalist has the right to make suppositions, which may be erroneous but in the absence of others, yield practical results.

And so, let us proceed:

It is stuffy in the room. The baby has airy lips, its saliva is thick, viscous and scarce, it becomes restless. Milk is solid food, and it is thirsty and should be given some water. But it "does not want to drink": it turns its head away and lets the spoon fly out of

the hand. In fact, it does want to drink but does not yet know how. Sensing the desired liquid, it makes violent movements with its head, seeking the nipple. I hold its head firmly with my left hand and put the spoon to its upper lip. Now what it does is not drink but suck the water; it has had five spoonfuls and quietly falls asleep. Should the liquid be spooned to it clumsily once or twice, it will start choking, it will experience an unpleasant sensation, and then it is bound to refuse to drink by spoon.

A second example:

The infant is restless and discontented, it calms down when given the breast, when diapered, during the bath, when its position is frequently changed. The infant suffers from an irritating rash. But I am told that there is no sign of it at all. Probably there will be. In fact, it does appear two months later.

The third example:

The infant, if anything bothers it, sucks its hands; in that way it tries to soothe any unpleasant sensation, including restlessness due to impatient expectation for anything it may be in need of, by way of the familiar and beneficial sucking. If hungry or thirsty it sucks its fists, it does so if overfed and has a nasty feeling in its mouth, if in pain or hot, if its skin or gums are irritated. How is it that a doctor can forecast the cutting of teeth and the infant experiences clearly unpleasant sensations in the jaw and gums even weeks before teeth actually show up? Is it not true that a tooth when cutting, irritates the tiny nerve centers situated in the very bone? I may add here that a calf suffers in just the same way before its horns emerge.

The sequence here is: instinct to suck, actual sucking to avoid suffering; sucking as a pleasure or addition.

31. I reiterate: The basic timbre, the quintessence of the infant's psychic life is the striving to prevail over unknown powers, to probe the secret of the world surrounding it, from which comes both good and bad. Anxious to prevail, it desires to know.

I reiterate: An objective study is facilitated if the baby feels well: any unpleasant sensation stemming from within the system, pain above all, cast a shadow over the infant's volatile consciousness. To confirm that, watch it while well and lit, and when ailing.

Feeling a pain, the baby not only screams but hears the scream and feels it in the throat, it sees it as blurred images through the half-closed eyelids. All this is overwhelming, hostile, menacing and inconceivable. The baby is bound to retain those moments in memory, and to fear them. On the other hand, being still unconscious of its own self, it associates them with random images. It is probably here that we find the

source of many of the child's likes and dislikes, fears and extravagances.

Investigations into the intellectual development of an infant are extremely difficult because it keeps on learning and forgetting things: it is a development marked by advances, standstills and regressions. Perhaps the instability of how it feels, plays here an important — maybe the most important — role.

A baby examines its hands, straightens them out, swings them to right and left, then brings one hand close to its face and again moves it away, spreads out the fingers, clenches the hands into fists and chats to them, waiting for an answer; it grasps the right hand with its left and pulls it, gets hold of the rattle and looks at the peculiarly changed image of the hand, keeps it first in one hand and then puts it into the other, examines the rattle with its mouth, and immediately takes it out, and again eyes the situation deliberately, attentively. It throws the rattle away, and starts pulling the button in the quilt; it investigates the reason why resistance is encountered. It is playing, you will say, but damn it, can't you see the child's mental effort and determination! You are facing a scientist in his laboratory, engrossed in a problem of signal importance, which escapes his comprehension.

A young baby enforces its will by screaming. Later on, it will do so by facial expressions, movements of arms and hands, and finally — through speech.

32. Early morning, say, five o'clock.

It has awakened, it smiles and starts bubbling, swings the arms around; it sits up and is soon on its feet. The mother would like to sleep a little longer.

A conflict between two desires, two needs, two clashing selfishnesses; the third stage of a single process: the mother suffers, the child is given life; the mother wants to rest after the delivery, the child demands food; the mother wants to sleep and dream, the child wants to be awake; there are many such clashes. This is no trifle but a big problem; so have the courage of your own feelings, and when handing over the child to a hired nurse, say outright: "I don't want," even though the doctor may tell you that you must not — for this is what he will always say when he comes to an exclusive first floor apartment, never in the slums.

It may also happen that the mother sacrifices her night's rest to the child but demands a reward; so she kisses, hugs and caresses the little warm, pink and silky creature. Be alert: that is a dubious act of exalted sensuality which, though disguised, lurks in the maternal loving flesh, and not in the heart. You should know that the child will gladly cling to you, flushed from a hundred kisses, with joyfully gleaming eyes, and this means that he responds to your sex instinct.

Does that mean that one ought to give up kissing altogether. No, no. I consider a kiss, within sensible limits, a valuable educational factor; a kiss soothes a pain, alleviates harsh words, reprimands, awakens repentance and rewards effort; it is a symbol of love as the cross is a symbol of religion, and as such it acts. I say that it is and not that it should be. Anyhow, if this odd urge for fondling, stroking and sniffing, for engorging the child, does not arouse in you any doubts, do as you please by all means; I neither forbid nor order anything.

33. I watch a child open and shut a box, put a pebble into it and take it out, shake the box and listen attentively. A one-year-old drags a stool along, the unsteady legs bend under the weight of the child's body. A two-year-old when they tell him that the cow says "moo," adds: "adamoo," and "ada" is the name of the pet dog: it makes prelogical linguistic mistakes which should be recorded and published.

I see among the odd belongings of a youngster, nails, a length of string, bits of cloth and pieces of glass because it all "might come in handy" for an infinite number of projects. Contests as to who can jump further are staged, a child does some work, busies himself or organizes a social game. He asks: "When I am thinking of a tree, do I have such a tiny tree in my head?" To placate the gods, a boy offers an old beggar not a penny, but his whole fortune of twenty six cents because the man is so old and poor, and will die soon.

A teenager uses spittle to stick down his hair because his sister's girl friend is coming. A girl writes to me in a letter that the world is wicked, and men are beasts, and keeps silent as to why it is so. A youth haughtily throws off a rebellious, though long trite, bitter thought, a challenge.

Yes indeed, I salute those youngsters with my eyes and thoughts and with the question: what are you, what wonderful mystery is there deep inside you? I salute you with my determination: how can I help you? I salute them in the same way as an astronomer salutes a star that always has been, is and will be. That salutation should hold a place somewhere in between the scientist's ecstasy and a humble prayer. But he who in quest of freedom has lost God along the way, will not feel the spell of it.

34. The child cannot speak yet. When will he start talking? Although speech is certainly an indicator of the child's development, it is neither the sole nor the most important one. To be impatient to hear the first word is a mistake, evidence that the parents are not up to their educational tasks.

If a newborn baby while being bathed makes a sudden move, and, on losing balance, throws up its arms as if to say: "I am afraid," this reflex action of fright in a creature so remote from any understanding of a danger is most significant. You give it the

breast to suck, it says: "I don't want it." It stretches its hands out to reach for a desired object: "Give." With its lips trembling on the verge of crying and with a defensive posture, it says to a stranger: "I don't trust you," and occasionally it turns to the mother: "Tell me, can I trust him?"

What is the intense gaze of an infant if not an inquiry: "What is it?" It reaches out for something or other, and gets hold of it, sighs deeply and then says with relief: "At last." Try to take the thing away from it, it will tell you in a dozen ways: "I won't give it." It raises its head, sits up and gets on its feet: "I'm in action" — what is the smile lingering round its mouth and eyes if not: "How good it is to be alive."

It speaks in the language of facial messages, the language of images and emotional recollections.

The mother dresses the child in his little overcoat, he is happy, she turns his body toward the door, he is impatient and prompts her to hurry up. He thinks in terms of images of the walk and of the memory of the feelings experienced during the walk. An infant is friendly to the doctor but as soon as it sees the teaspoon in his hand, it recognizes the enemy.

It understands the speech of mimicry and voice modulation, not words.

"Show mummy your nose."

Without understanding any of the words, it knows by the voice movement of the lips and expression of the face that it is expected to give a particular answer.

Even while still unable to speak, it can hold a highly involved conversation.

"Don't touch that" — the mother says.

In spite of the warning, it reaches for the forbidden object; with a graceful bend of the head, it smiles and tries to find out whether the mother will repeat the warning more firmly or, disarmed by its sophisticated tricks, will she give in, and let it do as it pleases.

Without being able to say a single word yet, it can tell lies, impudent lies too. If it wants to get rid of a person disliked, it makes the familiar sound, a danger signal, and sitting on the pot, it loops round — triumphantly and truculently.

Just try to tease a baby by pretending that you are going to give it something, and then quickly withdraw your hand; it will invariably get angry — offended, at least.

A child can be despotic without uttering a word, he can be obtrusively insistent and tyrannical.

35. Very often, a mother is asked by the doctor when the child started talking and walking. She is perplexed and her answers are embarrassed and vague:

"Early, late, or about the usual."

She thinks that the date of such an important event ought to be absolutely precise, and that any doubt will lower her esteem in the doctor's eyes. I mention this merely to show how unwilling the general public is to admit the fact that even an accurate scientific observation can map out only with difficulty the approximate line of the child's development; how common is the desire to hide one's own ignorance just as a school pupil does.

How can one tell when the child said for the first time "mamma," and not "am, an" and "ama"; not: "add, da" — but "daddy." How can one say definitely when the word "mamma" is already associated with the mother's image and no other in the child's mind?

A child jumps on someone's knees, stands on his feet when assisted or by himself. Holding on to the edge of the bed, stays on his feet for a short while. He has made a few steps with his feet on the floor and many up in the air, he creeps on his tummy, crawls, pushes a chair in front without losing balance. He is quarter, half- and two-thirds-walking before he walks properly. It may happen that he has walked for a whole week, even yesterday, and suddenly stopped. Somewhat weary, he has lost heart. Perhaps he has fallen down and is frightened — a two-week pause.

The little head falling inert on the mother's arm is not necessarily evidence of a serious indisposition, but may be due to some minor complaint.

A child in every new movement he makes, is like a pianist, for whom a proper frame of mind and absolute self-control are essential to be able to play well a difficult composition; even exceptions to the rule bear a likeness one to another. Occasionally a child "has been already unwell but he would not give in, and kept on moving about, even more than usual, played and talked." At this point comes the mother's self-accusation: "So I thought that I was only imagining things and I took him for a walk"; justification: "It was such nice weather," followed by the question: "Could it have done any harm?"

36. When is the proper time for a child to start walking and talking? Just when he starts walking and talking. When should his teeth start cutting? Just at the time they do. The parietal bone should grow firm precisely when it does so. The baby should sleep for as many hours as it needs to.

Naturally, we know when all these things should take place in general. Any popular

booklet contains those little facts, copied from textbooks, that are valid for children in general but just don't apply to that one particular child of yours.

For there are infants who need either more or less sleep. There are early teeth already decayed as they are scut and late and sound teeth in sound children. The parietal bone grows firm in the ninth and fourteenth month — in sound children. Fools start talking early, and occasionally clever children are backward in speech development.

The registration numbers of cabs, theater seat numbers, or the date when the rent for your apartment is due — whatever man has invented in the interests of orderliness can be duly adhered to, but whoever tries to reach for the ever alive book of nature with a mind reared on police regulations will find that the top-heavy load of anxieties, disappointments and surprises will put his head in a whirl.

I consider it to my credit that I have not answered the above questions by citing a row of figures previously just described as lesser truths. For it is not important whether the bottom or top teeth come out first, whether canine or incisor, since such can be observed by anyone in possession of a calendar and keeping his eyes open; of importance is the nature of a live system and what it wants. That is a great, though still decisively unexplored, truth.

Even honest doctors must use two yardsticks in their procedure: confronted by sensible parents, they act as naturalists would do, they admit to doubts, make suppositions, face difficult problems and ask interesting questions; confronted by foolish parents — they are businesslike instructors: a mark made with the fingernail in the primer — from here to there.

"A teaspoonful every two hours. One egg, half a glass of milk and two biscuits."

37. Stand at attention. Either we come to terms now or we part forever. Every thought trying to escape and hide, every feeling running loose, should be summoned and lined up in militant order through the exertion of willpower.

I call for a Magna Carta of children's rights. I have found three basic ones, though there may be more:

The right of the child to die.

The right of the child to the present day.

The right of the child to be what he is.

One should learn to know the child well so that in granting these rights as few mistakes as possible will be made. Mistakes are unavoidable. We should not let fear stop us:

errors will be rectified by the child himself with an astounding vigilance as long as we do not weaken one of his precious abilities — the mighty defensive power of the system.

We have given the child too much or something unfit to eat: too much milk, or a bad egg — he has vomited. We have presented him with an indigestible piece of information — he has failed to understand; useless advice — it went against his grain, he would not listen to it. It is by no means grandiloquence when I say: it is most fortunate for mankind that we are unable to force children to yield to educational influence and didactic assaults upon their common sense and sound human volition.

It has not yet crystallized within me, nor has it been confirmed by reasoning that child's primary and irrefutable right is the right to voice his thoughts, to active participation in our considerations and verdicts concerning him. When we will have gained his respect and trust, once he confides in us of his own free will and tells us what he has the right to do — there will be less puzzling moments, less mistakes.

38. The mother's love for her child, ardent, sensible and balanced, must give him the right to premature death, to ending his life cycle not in sixty revolutions of the globe around the sun, but to see only one or three springs. This is a cruel demand on those who do not want to bear, the hardships and pay the price of childbirth more than once or twice.

"God gave, God has taken away," so the folk naturalist says, for he knows that not every seed produces an ear of corn, not every chick is born fit to live, not every bush grows to be a tree.

One hears it said from time to time that the higher the mortality among proletarian children, the stronger the generation that survives to adulthood. That is not so: bad conditions not only kill the weak but enfeeble the strong and sound. On the other hand, it does seem to me true that the more overawed is a well-to-do mother by the idea that her child might possibly die, the poorer the conditions the child will find to become an adult adequately developed bodily and independent spiritually. Every time I see the white face of a child dressed in white in a white oil painted room with white enamel painted furniture and white toys, I experience a most unpleasant sensation: In that room which is not a nursery but a surgery, nothing but a bloodless spirit can develop in an anemic body.

"One can get epilepsy in this white room with the electric light bulbs in every corner" — says Claudine. Possibly more thorough investigations will reveal that "overfeeding" the nerves and tissues with light is as harmful as the inadequate light of a gloomy basement.

Two words in use: liberty and freedom. To my mind, liberty means possession: I can dispose of my own person. In freedom we have an element of will, and therefore, also



of action born of striving. Our nurseries with symmetrically arranged furniture or our tidy city parks are no place for liberty to manifest itself nor are they a "workshop" where the child's active mind will find the tools it needs.

The small child's room has emerged out of a maternity ward, and the latter is governed by the rules and regulations of bacteriology. Let us be careful not to transfer the child, while protecting him against diphtherial bacteria, into the stench atmosphere of boredom and inertia. There is today no longer the stench of dried diapers but there is the phantom of disinfectant.

Much has changed. There is not only the white enamel paint on the furniture but also the beach, excursions, sports and the scout movement. There is a little more liberty but the child's life is still dull and constrained.

39. My poor child, what have you done to yourself, does it ache?

The child can hardly find some faint trace of a scratch from a couple of days back; he points to a place where a bruise might have been, had he hit himself harder. He attains a masterly skill in finding little pimples, spots and scars.

And every time, the word "ache" is accompanied by a tone, gesture and facial expression of utter self-abasement and hopeless resignation; conversely, "oh, you're a dirty little boy" is combined with the child's manifestations of disgust and hatred. Watch how a small child holds up his hands smeared with chocolate — his abhorrence and helplessness — until the mother comes and wipes his hands with a flimsy handkerchief, then you will wonder:

"Wouldn't it be better for the child when he has knocked his head against a chair, to hit the chair back; or when being washed and having his eyes filled with soap to spit and strike the nurse ...?"

The door — he may squeeze his finger, the window — he may lean too far out and tumble, a plum pit — he may choke, the chair — may turn over and hurt him, the knife — he may cut his finger, the twig — may poke his eye out, he has picked up a box from the ground — he will catch some disease, a match — a fire.

"You may fracture your arm, you will be run over, the dog is going to bite you. Don't eat plums, don't drink water from the tap, don't run with bare feet, don't exert yourself in the sun, button up your coat, put the scarf round your neck. You see, you wouldn't listen. Just look at that lame man, look at the blind one. My God — blood! — Who gave you the scissors?"

A knock is not seen as a bruise, but the fear of meningitis. Vomiting is not seen as

indigestion but the fear of scarlet fever. Everywhere traps and dangers lying in wait, everything a menace, an evil omen.

Should the child take all that seriously and refrain from eating a pound of plums on the sly or, having lulled the vigilance of adults, from lighting a match in a dark corner; if obediently, passively and trustingly he yields to the entreaties to avoid any experimenting, to renounce any tests and to give up the exercise of willpower in any way, what will he do when one day there comes a feeling of pain, of burning or gnawing deep inside?

Have you any plan for rearing your child from infancy through childhood to pubescence when like a thunderbolt she will experience the surprise of menstrual flow, he the surprise of an erection and night emissions?

Yes, indeed, she is still at her mother's breast, and I am already asking myself how she is going to bear children. For this is a problem to which devoting a score of years is not too much.

40. Fearful that the child may be snatched from us by death, we snatch from him — life; not wanting him to die, we won't let him live. Reared ourselves in an inert and corrupting expectation, we are in a constant rush toward an enchanting future. Being lazy, we refuse to seek the beauty of today so that we may be ready for an appropriate reception of what lies ahead: tomorrow will bring its own inspiration. What prompts the words: "I wish he were already walking and talking" — but a hysterical expectation?

He will walk: plenty of time to bump himself against the hard edges of oak chairs. He will talk: chopping with his tongue the chaff of day-to-day dullness. In what way is the child's today inferior to his tomorrow? As regards effort concerned, it will certainly be tougher. When tomorrow finally comes, we start waiting for the next one. For essentially the view that the child is not yet but will be somebody, knows nothing but will know, is not able but will be able — enforces constant expectation.

One-half of mankind does not exist at all; the life of that half is just a joke, naive strivings, passing emotions, amusing opinions. Children differ from adults, their lives lack something, but at the same time there is something more in them than in ours; that life different from ours is a reality and not a virtual image. What have we done to learn to know the child and to create conditions under which he may thrive and mature?

The fear for the child's life is linked to the fear of his being crippled, the fear of disability hinges on cleanliness essential for soundness of the body, and at this point, the driving belt of prohibitions is fixed on a new wheel: cleanliness and security of the

dress, stocking, necktie, glove or shoe; no longer a hole in the forehead but one on the knee of the trousers. No longer the child's health and well-being — but our ambition and pocket. A new belt of bans and orders drives the wheel of our own convenience.

"Don't run about you will fall under the horses. Don't run, you'll make yourself sweat. Don't run — you'll get your shoes muddy. Don't run — I have a headache." (But as a rule we do allow children to run about: this is the sole activity we allow them in the way of enjoying life.)

That ghastly machinery functions for long years, it crushes the child's will, suppresses his energy and burns tip his strength; all that is left is the smell of burning.

For the sake of tomorrow, everything that makes the child happy, sad, surprised, angry and preoccupied, is disregarded. For the sake of tomorrow — which he neither understands nor needs to understand — he is robbed of several years' life.

"Children should be seen and not heard. All in good time. Wait until you grow up. Oh, you're wearing long pants; well well! you've got a watch. Let's have a look: you're growing whiskers."

The child thinks:

"I'm nobody. Only adults are somebody. I'm a bit older now, and still nobody. How long am I to wait? But once I am grown up..."

He waits and idly marks the time. He waits and feels stifled. He waits and lies low. He waits and swallows in expectation of the good things to come. A fine childhood? — No, just dull; and even if it contains some beautiful moments in it, they have to be fought for bitterly and more often — stolen.

Not a word here about education for all, village schools, garden cities and the scout movement. This was all so unreal, so hopelessly remote at the time. The content of a book depends on the categories of personal feelings and experiences available to the writer, on his surroundings and sphere of activity, on the soil on which he has nourished his mind. That is why we come across naive opinions expressed by authorities, foreign in particular.

41. Does this mean that the child should be given a free hand? Never: that would be to turn a bored slave into a bored tyrant. After all, by our prescriptions we toughen the willpower if only in the direction of self-restraint and self-denial; we develop ingenuity in working within a limited field and ability to slip out from under the control of others, we awaken criticism. That is worth something, too, in the way of a one-sided preparation to life. Giving the child a free hand — beware! In gratifying whims, you may the more thoroughly suppress aspirations. For we either weaken the

willpower or poison it.

Gone is: "Do as you please." Now it is: "I'll do it for you, I'll buy it for you, I'll let you have whatever you want but you should ask only for what is in my power to give, buy you and do for you. I pay so that you may do nothing, so you should be obedient."

"If you eat your soup, I'll buy you a picture book. Don't go for a walk and you will get candy."

The child's "give!" — even though expressed only by an outstretched hand, without a word, should be parried by our "no," and it is on those early "you won't have it, you cannot do it, you mustn't," that a considerable part of upbringing depends.

The mother refuses to see the problem; she prefers — laziness or cowardice — to postpone decisions. She refuses to accept the fact that the tragic collision of a misguided, unattainable and inexperienced striving with an experienced prohibition cannot be eliminated, neither is it possible to avoid even a more tragic clash between two strivings, two rights confronting one another on a common ground. The little one wants to stake a lighted candle into its mouth, I cannot allow it. It clamours for a knife, I'm afraid to pass it. It reaches for the flowerpot which I should be sorry to see broken. It wants to play ball with me, I want to read a book. The limits of my rights and of the child's must be fixed.

A baby reaches out for a glass, the mother kisses its hand but it does not help; she gives it a rattle, no good. She asks somebody to hide the object of temptation. If the infant snatches its hand away, throws the rattle on the floor, and looks around for the hidden object, and scowls angrily at the mother — I ask of you — who is right: the mother-deceiver or the baby who feels contempt for her.

Whoever fails to straighten out the problems of bans and commands will be puzzled, if faced with a few of them, and utterly confused if faced with a great many.

42. A small village boy, Jedrek. He can already walk. Holding on to the door frame in the room, he cautiously makes his way over the threshold into the entryway. Getting ... getting out into the open after negotiating two stone steps he starts crawling on all fours. In front of the house, he has run into a kitten: they face each other for a brief moment and part. He has stumbled over a small clod: he stops and inspects the place. He has found a bit of wood; he sits down and starts poking in the sand. There — a potato peeling, he puts pit in his mouth, feels the sand gritty in his teeth, so he spits it out with evident disgust. He is on his feet again, and runs toward the dc; the brute has pushed him over, he is about to burst` into tears, but then he decides not to cry; he has suddenly remembered something, and now drags a broom along. He sees the mother going to the

well, grasps her skirt and now feeling safe, follows her. A group of older children — they have a small cart, he watches them keenly: they drive him away, he stands some distance away and watches them. Two roosters are having a fight, he watches. They have put him in the cart and drag him around until the cart turns. The mother calls him home. In that way the first half of a sixteen-hour day has passed.

No one keeps telling him that he is a child, he can tell himself what is more than he can do. No one tells him that the kitten can scratch or that he is too small to go down the steps by himself. Nobody establishes rules as to what his attitude to older children should be. «As Jedrek grew older, the way from the cabin to his furrows became longer and longer» (Witkiewicz).

He blunders, often goes astray; he bumps his head, sometimes badly, and gets a scar.

Certainly not: I do not propose that excess of care be exchanged for no care at all. I merely wish to indicate that a year-old village youngster already lives while his counterpart in our circles has not yet even started living. For God's sake — when?

43. Bronek wants to open the door. He is pushing a chair in front of him. He has stopped to rest but does not ask for help. The chair is heavy, he feels a bit tired. He pulls it by one leg then by another, and repeats that. The work proceeds more slowly but is not so hard. The chair is already near the door, so he thinks he will be able to manage now, scrambles up and stands on the chair. I hold him gently by the coat. He loses balance for an instant and is frightened, so he comes down. He moves the chair close up to the door, a little to the side of the knob. Another unsuccessful attempt. Not a trace of impatience. He gets on with the job but now takes longer breaks. He climbs for the third time, one leg up, then a grip with the hand and a point of support with the bent knee, he hangs on the knob for an instant but recovers balance, a fresh effort but the edge of the chair gets in his way and he lands on the floor flat on his tummy; a pause, a forward thrust of the body, he kneels, disentangles his legs and is back on his feet. How miserable it is for Lilliputians to live in the land of Giants. The neck permanently cricked to see anything. The window high above as in a jail. Only an acrobat could get on a chair. All the muscles and the mind must be exerted to finally reach the door knob.

The door is open — a deep sigh. Such a deep sigh of relief can be observed, even in infants, after every exertion of the will or a longer period of tense concentration. When you come to the end of an interesting fairy tale, the child sighs in the same way. Remember that.

That single deep sigh is evidence that just before its respiration has slowed down, it has become shallow and inadequate. A child looks at something, waits and watches holding his

breath to the point of oxygen exhaustion, to the point of tissue poisoning. The body immediately puts the respiratory center on the alert, there follows a deep sigh restoring the balance.

If you can assess the child's rejoicing and its intensity, you will readily notice that the supreme joy is that of a difficulty surmounted, a goal attained and a mystery uncovered, the exaltation of triumph and the happiness of independence, proficiency and power.

"Where is mummy?" — "She's gone, look for her."

He has found her. Why is the child all smiles? "Go on, run, mummy will try to catch you! Oh, you can't catch me!"

What happiness.

Why does he want to crawl and walk or try to break away when led by the hand? Here is a very common scene: a little boy toddles along and gets some distance away from the nurse, then he sees her rushing after him, so he starts running away. Oblivious of danger, he runs blindly ahead in an ecstasy of being free — and either he stumbles and falls flat or is caught — tries to get away, kicks and screams.

You will say: excess of energy; that is the physiological part of it, but what I am after is the psycho-physiological.

Ask yourself: why does a child want to hold a glass when he drinks so that the mother should not even touch it. Why does he not want to eat any more but when allowed to use the spoon all by himself, goes on eating. Why is he so happy to blow out a match, to carry the father's slippers or to bring grandma's footstool? Is it just mimicry? No, it is something much bigger and more precious.

"I can do it myself" — he shouts a thousand times by gesture, eyes, smile, entreaty, anger and tears.

44. "Do you know how to open the door?" — I asked a patient whose mother had warned me that he was afraid of doctors.

"I do, even in the lavatory" — he said eagerly.

I could not help laughing. The boy was embarrassed but I even more so. I had extracted the confession of a secret triumph from him and made a mockery of it. It is easy to guess that at one time when all the doors in the house had already been wide open to him there was just one, the lavatory door, that had resisted his efforts, became the object of his ambition; he was like a young surgeon who has dreamed of performing a difficult operation.

He would not confide in anyone because he realized that what constituted his inner world found no response in those around him.

Perhaps he had been told off now and then or discouraged by suspicious questioning:

"What are you doing there, what are you so busy at? Don't touch it, you'll break it. Go to your room at once!"

So furtively, in secret, he worked until finally he opened it.

Have you noticed how often when the front door bell rings one hears the entreaty:

"I'll open it!"

First of all, the patent lock on the front door is difficult to manipulate; secondly, there is the feeling that a grown-up person stands helpless behind the locked door, waiting for him, a mere tot, to help.

Such are the little triumphs of a child who dreams already of distant voyages and imagines himself a Robinson Crusoe on a desert island but in fact is made happy by being allowed to look out of the window.

"Can you get on the chair by yourself? — Can you jump on one leg? — Can you catch a ball with your left hand?"

And the child forgets that I am a stranger, that I will soon be examining his throat and prescribe medicines. I play upon what transcends the feeling of embarrassment, fear and hostility so he answers happily:

"I can."

Have you ever watched how a child puts on and takes off a sock or a shoe, deliberately, and patiently with face rigid and eyes tense? This is neither a game nor mimicry nor thoughtless idleness, but work.

What will nourish his willpower when he is three, five, ten years old?

45. I!

When a newborn baby scratches the itchy place with its own nail; when an infant sitting up pulls its foot toward its mouth and then goes flat on its back and looks angrily around for the offender; when it pulls its own hair and its face is twisted with pain but it does the same again; when it knocks the top of its own head with a spoon and looks up to see what is going on up there, where it cannot see but feels — all this means it does not know itself.

When it studies the movements of its hands; when sucking its fist, surveys it carefully;

when at the mother's breast it suddenly stops sucking and compares its leg with the breast; when toddling, it stops and looks down in search of that something which carries it in an entirely different way to the mother's arms; when it compares its right socked foot with the left, it wants to find out, to learn.

When it examines water in the bath, finding in many consciousnessless drops its own self, a conscious drop, then it has a presentiment of a great truth contained in the short: I.

Only a futuristic picture could portray for us what a child is like to himself; the fingers, the fist, the legs — though less distinctly — perhaps the belly and maybe even the head though those only in some dim outlines like the map of polar regions. Work is not yet done. The child turns round to see what is hidden behind. He studies himself in front of a mirror, scrutinizes a photograph, the cavity of the navel, and the elevation of its own nipples. Here again he is faced with a new job: to find himself in relation to the surroundings. Mother, father, a man, a woman — some appear frequently, and some rarely, a multitude of mysterious figures — meaning is obscure and deeds, doubtful.

He has barely had time to discover that mummy is something that serves to meet or stand in the way of his demands, daddy brings money home, and auntie — candy, yet he already begins to discover in himself, in his own thoughts, somewhere inside, a new, even more strange invisible world.

Then comes the time to discover the self as part of humanity and the universe.

So the hair turns gray and the work remains unfinished.

46. Mine.

Where is hidden the primordial thought-sensation? Perhaps it merges into one with the notion "I"? Perhaps it is true that when an infant protests against its hands being tied, it fights to free them as it would fight for "mine" and not for "I". If you take away from it the spoon with which it bangs the table you deprive it not of a possession but of a quality, by means of which the hand discharges an energy, expresses itself in a different way — by sound. That hand, not entirely its hand, but rather Aladdin's obedient genie, holds a biscuit, a new and valuable property, and the child defends it.

To what extent is the concept of property linked in the child's mind with the conception of enhanced strength? To a primitive man, the bow was not merely his property but an improved hand which could deal a blow from afar.

A child refuses to relinquish a newspaper he is just engaged in fragmenting, because he is experimenting and practicing, because that is a raw material — just as the hand is a tool, which emits no sound of its own and is tasteless, but becomes eloquent in combination with a bell and if combined with a piece of white bread adds extra flavor to the sucked thumb.



"Let me have it, please, give it back" — a request that flatters the ambition.

"I may — or I may not" — it depends how I feel — for it is "mine."

47. "I want it, I have it. I want to know, I know. I want to be able, I can." Three branches stemming from a single trunk of willpower, its roots being two sensations: satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

An infant tries hard to learn to know itself and the surrounding world, both animated and inanimate, because on that depends its well-being. In asking: "What is it?" — verbally or ocularly, it demands an assessment and not the name of the object.

"What is it?"

"Bad, throw it away, nasty, keep your hands off it." "What is it?"

"A flower" — and a smile, a gentle expression of the face, permission.

Whenever a child asks a question about some neutral thing and is told the name of it without any emotional qualification by way of mimicry, he sometimes looks at the mother surprised, as disappointed, and keeps on repeating the name and drawing it out, uncertain how to deal with the answer. A child must acquire some sophistication before he understands that in addition to a desirable and an undesirable world, there exists also a neutral world.

"What is it?"

"Cotton."

"COOOtton?" — he looks intently into the mother's face, waiting for a hint to assist forming an opinion.

If, traveling in the company of a native through a jungle, I were to notice a plant with unfamiliar fruit, and indicate my ignorance, he, guessing, would answer with a cry, an expressive grimace or a grin — poison, delicious food, or something useless, not worth carrying.

The childish "what is it?" — means "what is it like? — what does it serve for — can I make use of it?"

48. An ordinary though noteworthy scene:

Two children still shaky on their feet have met; one has a ball or a piece of honey cake and the other wants to get hold of it.

A mother feels dissatisfied with her child when he tries to take a thing away from someone by force, or refuses to give it up willingly or share with others, "to lend." If a

child departs from an accepted standard, from an established code, that reflects on the parents.

The scene in question may have three sequences:

One grabs at the desired object, the other looks surprised, then looks questioningly at the mother for clarification of an incomprehensible situation.

Or: one tries to grab the object, but the attacked — tit for tat — hides it behind his back, then pushes the attacker over. The two mothers rush to make peace.

Or: first the two children inspect each other, and then warily come closer, one reaches tentatively for the object, the other defends himself feebly. The conflict comes to a boil after lengthy preliminaries.

Of the essence here is the age of the two opponents and the range of their experience. A child with older brothers and sisters is accustomed to defend his rights or property, and occasionally even to attack. But disregarding all incidentals, we can see here two different orders of things, two profoundly human types: the active and the passive.

"He's good-hearted: he will give anything away." "He's a little fool: he will let anyone take the lot away from him."

No. It is neither good-heartedness nor folly.

49. Gentleness, weaker vitality, undeveloped willpower, meekness in action. Avoidance of sudden movements, vital experiences and difficult undertakings.

Doing less, the child acquires less tangible truths, and therefore, he is compelled to be more trustful, to yield to others for longer.

Is his intellect less valuable? No, it is only different. Being passive, he is less exposed to bruises and annoying mistakes, and consequently he lacks the painful experience which goes with them; and once such a child does get some experience he probably registers it better. An active child receives more bumps and disappointments but probably forgets their lessons sooner. The former does less and more slowly, but probably digests everything more thoroughly in his mind.

The passive ones are easier to live with. Such a child left alone in the carriage, will not fall out, he does not alarm everybody at home over a trifle. When crying, he will be easily pacified, he is not unduly insistent, breaks and destroys things less.

"Give it to me" — no resistance. "Put it in, take it, undo it, oat" — he yields.

Two scenes:

He is no longer hungry, but there is still a spoonful of porridge on the plate, so he must have it to make up the quantity laid down by the doctor. He unwillingly opens his mouth and turns the food round lazily and for a long time, swallowing with evident effort. Another child if not hungry, shuts his mouth tight, throws his head violently, pushes away, spits out, defends himself.

And the upbringing?

To judge a child by setting out from two diametrically opposed types of children would be equivalent to speaking of the quality of water by describing the properties of steam and ice. In a centigrade scale where does our child stand? Surely the mother can tell what is innate and what is acquired with an effort by her child — and she should bear in mind that whatever has been acquired by breaking-in, pressure and force, is unenduring, uncertain and fallible. And when a submissive, "good", child suddenly turns obstinate and disobedient, one should not get angry that he reveals his nature.

50. A farmer with his eyes fixed on the sky and the earth is the fruit and creation of the earth, and knows the limits of man's dominion. A horse is either fast or slow, timid or frisky, a hen does or does not lay eggs, a cow does or does not give milk, soil is fertile or sterile, summer may be wet, a winter snowless — everywhere he comes across things that he can change a bit or considerably improve upon by care, labor and the whip — but there are also things he can do nothing about.

A town dweller has an exaggerated idea of man's power. Potato crops have been poor this year, yet potatoes are on the market — dearer, that's all. Winter — he puts on a fur-lined coat; rain — galoshes; drought — the streets are sprayed with water to settle the dust. Anything can be bought and there is a remedy for any contingency. The child is pale — 'a doctor, he has difficulties at school — a tutor. As for books, by telling what should be done, they create the illusion that everything can be done.

How can one learn to believe that the child is bound by his nature, that, as the French say, a person who suffers from rash can be whitewashed but cannot be cured?

I am anxious to make a thin child put on some weight. I do it slowly and carefully and I succeed: he has put on an extra two pounds. But a minor complaint, a cold or an untimely enema suffices for the patient to lose the meager two pounds gained with so much effort.

Summer vacation camps for poor children. The sun, trees and a river; they imbibe the joy of life, refinement and goodness. Yesterday still a little caveman, today — a good sport. Abashed, fearful and solemn, a week later — bold, lively, bursting

with initiative and song. Sometimes a visible change from hour to hour; sometimes — from week to week, occasionally — no change at all. Nothing miraculous, no lack of the miraculous — just what is and has been, and has waited; and what has not been there — isn't there!

I give instruction to an underdeveloped child: two fingers, two buttons, two match sticks, two coins two. He can already count up to five. But if a question is put in a different way or the tone of the voice and gesture are modified, he is lost.

A child with heart disease: gentle, slow in movement, speech and smile. He gets short of breath, every livelier movement produces coughing, discomfort and pain. It can't be helped — so it must be.

Motherhood ennobles the woman if she is capable of sacrifice and self-denial; is demoralizing if under the guise of caring about the well-being of the child, she makes him a prey of her ambitions, likes and addictions.

My child is my property, my slave, my little pet dog. I tickle it between the ears, stroke it on the back and deck it out with fancy ribbons. He goes for a walk with me, I break him in to be inventive and well-mannered, and if he is naughty and annoys me:

"Go and play by yourself. Go and do your lessons. It's your bedtime!"

The recommended treatment of hysteria runs something like this:

"You say you are a cockerel. Alright, be a cockerel, so long as you don't crow."

"You are quick-tempered" — I tell a boy. "Alright, if you must hit somebody, hit — but not too hard; lose your temper if you must — but only once a day."

You have my word for it — in that single sentence, I have summarized the educational method I employ.

51. Can you see that little brat running and shouting or wallowing in sand? One day he is going to be an outstanding chemist, W 'I make discoveries that will cause him to be respected, will gain for him position and wealth. So it is, having a ball this "devil-may-care" will suddenly become engrossed in thought, will shut himself away in his study to emerge a scientist. Who would have thought it?

See that other boy, with the drowsy eyes, indifferently watching his peers playing a game. He yawns, gets up, perhaps he is going to join the happy crowd? No, he sits down again. He will also be a prominent chemist and make discoveries. Amazing — would you believe it?

No, neither the little dare-devil nor the drowsy little fellow is going to be a

scientist. One will be a gymnastics instructor and the other — a post office clerk.

It is a short-lived vogue, a mistake, a folly to consider as a worthless misfit everybody who is not outstanding. We suffer from an immortality mania. Anybody who has not achieved enough to be commemorated by a monument in the main city square, would like to have at least an alley named after him, a legacy for all time. If no four-column obituary in the daily paper, then at least a mention: "A faithful servant ... his death leaves a gap."

At one time, streets, hospitals and institutions used to be named after saints, and that was sensible. Next sovereigns had their turn — that was the mark of times. Today it is scientists and artists, which makes no sense at all. Nowadays, monuments are erected even to ideas, nameless heroes, and those who have left nothing else by which they will be remembered.

A child is not a lottery ticket, marked to win the main prize — his portrait in the mayor's parlor, or his bust in the theater vestibule. There is in every human being a spark, which may kindle the flame of happiness and truth; it may burst into the conflagration of genius in the tenth generation, make cinders of his own tribe, giving mankind the light of a new sun.

The child is not like soil turned up by heredity for man's life to be sown upon it. All we can do is to assist the growth of that which begins to sprout strong shoots even before man draws his first breath.

New brands of tobacco and new trade marks of wine need publicity, but men need none.

52. So are we really concerned with the inevitability of heredity, a ruthless predestination, bankruptcy of medicine and pedagogy? Thus thunders grandiloquence.

I have already compared the child to a parchment densely filled with writing, and to soil sown with seed, but now comparisons, which tend only to mislead should be put aside.

There are cases in the face of which we are, at the present stage of knowledge, absolutely helpless and though not as frequent as they were yesterday, they still exist.

There are cases in the face of which we are helpless under the present conditions of life. But these are somewhat lesser in number.

Here we have a child that in spite of maximum goodwill and effort will achieve

very little. Over there is another that would achieve a great deal with the same amount of goodwill and effort but adverse conditions stand in the way. One child will get very little out of a stay in the countryside, in the mountains or at the sea, and another would benefit greatly but we are not in a position to offer him such a stay.

When we come across a child that wilts for lack of care, fresh air, and proper clothing, we do not blame the parents. When we see a child being simply crippled by excessive medical treatment, overfed, kept too warm and protected against imaginary dangers, we are inclined to accuse the mother. It seems to us that it would be easy to remedy the evil granted only the desire on her part to understand. But in fact it is not so, it requires a great deal of courage to flout — by deed and not by futile criticism — the rules of a given social class or group. If one mother finds it hard to wash her child and wipe his nose, another finds it hard to let the child run about in worn-out shoes and with a dirty face. If one mother takes her child away from school with tears in her eyes, and sends him as an apprentice to a workshop, another is equally pained when obliged to send him to school.

"The child will be wasted out of school" — says one woman taking a book away from her child.

"The child will be wasted at school" — remarks another, buying a dozen new handbooks.

53. While for the public in general, heredity is a fact that casts its shadow over exceptions, for science — it is a problem under investigation. There is an extensive literature striving to answer just one question: Is a child from tubercular parents afflicted already at birth or only predisposed to the disease, or does he become infected afterward? On the subject of heredity, have you ever considered such simple facts as that in addition to hereditary diseases there is also hereditary soundness, that brothers and sisters are not such in terms of the pluses and minuses with which they are endowed, in terms of resources and deficiencies — 'there are assets and liabilities. The first child is procreated by sound parents. The second — by syphilitic parents if they have become infected. The third — by syphilitic and tubercular parents if they have contracted this malady also. Those three children are strangers to one another: they have a double load to carry; with and without tare. Conversely, a sick father has recovered, and of two children, the first is progeny of a sick person, and the second — of a sound one.

Is 'a nervous child this way because he was born of nervous parents or because he was brought up by them? Where is the boundary line between nervousness and delicate

nervous structure.

Does a father who is a reveller, beget a spendthrift son or does he contaminate him by his own example?

"Tell me who begot you, and I will tell what you are" — not always.

"Tell me who reared you and I will tell you what you are" — also not entirely true.

How is it that sound parents sometimes have feeble offspring? How is it that an extraordinary individual stems from a very ordinary stock?

Parallel to research in the field of heredity, investigations should be conducted into the educational atmosphere. Then, perhaps, more than one puzzle will be solved.

By the educational atmosphere I understand the prevailing family spirit. The members of the child's family cannot adopt an arbitrary attitude toward him. That guiding spirit is compulsive, brooks no resistance.

54. The sphere of dogma.

Tradition, authority, rite and precept as the absolute law; constraint as life's imperative. Discipline, order and honesty. Seriousness and spiritual equilibrium, tranquility stemming from inner strength, sense of stability, endurance, self-assurance and conviction of doing right. Self-restraint and self-conquest. Work as a law, morality as an addiction. Caution to the point of passivity and of unilateral neglect of laws and truths other than those handed down by tradition, sanctified by authority and perpetuated by the mechanically conceived pattern of activity.

Provided that self-assurance is not turned into willfulness and simplicity into vulgarity, the prolific educational realm will either break down a child if he is alien in spirit to this realm or, indeed, will carve a fine individual who will respect his stern guides because they have not toyed with him but led him along a hard road toward a clearly defined goal.

Unfavorable conditions and the pressure of physical wants do not change the spiritual substance of the educational sphere. Diligent work is turned into toil, peace of mind into resignation, self-denial to the point of a firm determination to outlast, occasionally bashfulness and humility, invariably sense of justice and trustfulness. Apathy or vigor are not his weakness but his force, which a sinister alien will try in vain to upset.

A dogma may be the earth, the church, the motherland, virtue and sin. It may be science and civic and political activity, wealth and struggle. It may equally well be God as a hero, an idol or a puppet. It is not what you believe in, but how you

believe.

#### 55. The ideological sphere.

His bravery consists not in spiritual endurance but of energetic pressing forward and striking. One does not work in this sphere but rejoices in being active. One does not tarry but creates. There is no compulsion but only eagerness. There are no dogmas but problems.

There is no pondering but zeal and enthusiasm. The only thing that can stop a man here is abhorrence of filth, moral aestheticism. It happens that he hates for a moment but never despises. His tolerance does not mean half-heartedness in own convictions but respect for human thought, joy that unfettered soars to various heights and in various directions, making evolutions, rising and falling, that it fills the universe. Bold in his own deed, he listens greedily to the sounds of someone else's hammers, he keenly awaits the morrow of fresh admirations and astonishments, cognitions and errors, struggles and doubts, statements and denials.

If the dogmatic sphere suits the upbringing of a passive child, the ideological is compatible with active children. I think that the roots of many painful surprises are to be found precisely here: one child is given the ten commandments carved in stone while he wants to see them branded by his own fire upon his own breast; another is forced to seek truths that should have been offered him. One may fail to see this if one's approach to the child is in: "I'll make a man out of you," rather than in searching question: "What are you going to make of yourself, man?"

#### 56. The sphere of serene enjoyment of life.

I have as much as I need; for an artisan or clerk — not much, for a big landowner — a great deal. I want to be what I am, a foreman, station master, lawyer or novelist. Work is not a service, position and object but a means for achieving comforts, desired conditions.

Serenity, carefreeness, mild emotion, friendliness and goodness, and as much soberness as is necessary, as much self-knowledge as can be gotten without effort.

There is no persistence in perpetuating and enduring nor any persistence in seeking and striving.

The child breathes the air of inner prosperity, idle routine subservient to the past, tolerance toward present-day trends and the quaint simplicity surrounding him. He can be anything he wants to be here: all on his own — he weaves — from books conversations and personal experiences — the fabric of his *Weltanschauung*, chooses his own course.



I should add to the list the reciprocal love of the parents: rarely does the child feel its absence, but he imbibes its presence.

"Daddy was angry with mummy, and now mummy doesn't speak to daddy, she was crying, and daddy banged the door" — this is a cloud which overcasts the blue of the sky, and chills the nursery's merry bustle with icy silence.

I said earlier: "To demand that anyone should provide processed thoughts is like asking a strange woman to give birth to your own child."

"And what about the man? Is it not a strange woman that gives birth to his child?"

No, not a strange woman — the beloved.

57. The sphere of camouflage and career.

Here, persistence appears again, but it springs not from an inner need but from cool reckoning. There is no room here for substance and comprehensiveness; there is only ingenuity, dexterous exploitation of the values of others, superficial dressing covering up vacancy. Formal phrases of the moneymaker, conventions before which one must prostrate oneself. It is not real value that counts but adroit showing off. Life is not conceived as work and leisure but as nosing around and interesting oneself in business. Unsatisfied vanity, predacity, ferment, haughtiness and servility, envy, spite and malevolence.

Here, children are neither loved nor reared — the only concerns are taxes, profit and loss, purchase and sale. The cordial bow, the smile and the handshake all are calculated, and, of course, the same applies to marriage and procreation. The benefits are money, promotion, high distinctions, and connections in "upper circles."

If a positive value does shoot up from this ground, sometimes it is only a pretense, more skillful acting maybe and a better fitting mask. But it also happens that a proverbial "rose on a dungheap" may grow here in spiritual ambivalence and agony against a background of decay and putrefaction. Such instances demonstrate that in addition to the accepted law of educational suggestiveness, there is also a law of antithesis. This is well seen in cases in which a miser rears a spendthrift, a worldling — a saint, a coward — a hero, and this cannot be explained solely by "heredity."

58. The law of antithesis proceeds from a force opposed to suggestions which come from various sources and which avail themselves of various means. This is a defensive mechanism of resistance, counteraction and self-defense, it is so to speak, self-preservation of the spiritual system, vigilant and functioning automatically.

Moralizing perhaps has already been sufficiently discredited; but the suggestiveness

of example, of environment, is considered absolutely trustworthy in education. Why then is it that this so often proves a failure?

I ask — why does a child, having heard a swear word, insist on repeating it against all prohibitions and bear it in mind even if intimidated into silence?

Where lies the source of that seeming ill will, the child displaying stubbornness while he might so easily give in?

"Put on your coat."

No, he wants to go out without it.

"Put on your pink dress."

But she just fancies the blue one.

If you stop persuading, the child will give way, but if you keep on persuading, neither that nor threats will help, he will retire within himself and yield only to duress. Why is it so typical for adolescence that our noncommittal "yes" most frequently comes up against his or her "no." Is it not one of the manifestations of that deeply rooted resistance against temptations coming from within, which may come from without?

«Melancholy irony that bids virtue crave for vice, and bids crime dream immaculate dreams.» (Mirabeau).

Persecuted faith is more ardently accepted. An effort to overlay national feeling awakens it the more effectively. Possibly I have here confused facts from different realms, but as far as I am concerned the law of antithesis explains many paradoxical reactions to educational incentives and restrains from applying too many, too frequent and too strong suggestions even if beamed in the most desirable direction.

Family spirit? True. But where is the spirit of the times: it was halted at the boundary of trampled freedom; we have stealthily hidden the child from it. Brzozowski's Legend of Young Poland has not spared one a parochial outlook.

59. What is a child? What is he, if only physically? It is a growing system. Quite so. But increments in weight and height are but phenomena alongside many. Several phases of this growth are already known to science, it does not proceed evenly, there are periods of sluggish growth and vigorous growth. Furthermore, it is a fact that not only does the child grow but his proportions change.

The general public is ignorant of even that. How often does a mother call the doctor

and complain that the child looks bad, has lost weight, his little body has grown frail, the face and head have become thinner. She is unaware that an infant entering the stage of early childhood loses the folds of fat, that as the chest develops the head looks smaller in between the growing shoulders, that the limbs and organs alike each develop differently, that there are differences as between the growth of the brain, the heart, the stomach, the skull, the eye, the bones of the extremities, and that if this were not so, an adult would be a monster with a huge head resting on a short and bulky carcass, that he would not be able to walk on the two fatty stumps serving for legs — that a change in proportions attends growth.

We avail ourselves of many thousands of different measurements and of several graphs of average growth not entirely conforming one to the other; we know nothing of the magnitude of advanced or retarded development or of any deviations in it. For, knowing the anatomy of growth only vaguely, we remain ignorant of its physiology; for we are accustomed to examine carefully a sick child, and only recently have we begun from a distance to study a sound one. For us a clinic has for the past hundred years been the hospital, while an educational institution has not even started serving this purpose.

60. The child has changed somehow. Something is happening inside. The mother cannot always tell what the change consists of but has a ready answer when asked to what the change should be attributed.

"He changed after he cut his teeth, after vaccination, during weaning, after he fell off the bed."

He already walked and suddenly he has stopped; he used to mutter when he wanted the pot and now he wets the bed again. He eats "absolutely nothing," he is restless in his sleep, he sleeps too much or not enough, he has become capricious, excessively energetic or drowsy — he has gotten thin.

Another stage:

A change after being sent to school, after coming home from a summer holiday in the country, after measles, after baths ordered by the doctor, after a shock due to a fire. A change in sleep and appetite, a change in character: once obedient, now self-willed, once diligent, now absent-minded and slack. He is pale, does not hold himself upright, and has developed some unpleasant habits. Unsuitable friends, perhaps school work, or just unwell.

Two years' work in "The Orphanage", observation of the child rather than studies of

him, have convinced me that all that is known as adolescent maladjustment, is experienced by the child several times in a less flagrant form as minor turning points. These years are equally critical, only less striking, and as a result, still disregarded by science.

In an effort to achieve a unified outlook on the child, some try to represent such maladjustments as the result of a fatigued system. Hence, a greater demand for sleep, low resistance against diseases, vulnerability of the organs of the body, low mental endurance. This is a correct view but, not for all stages of development. As a rule, the child feels alternately strong, vital and cheerful, and then weak, inert and depressed. If he happens to become ill during a critical period, we are prone to believe that the indisposition has already been working its way in the child. In my opinion the disease has developed in a temporarily weakened area — that it is either lying in wait for the most propitious conditions for its attack, or has been incidentally introduced from outside and, having encountered no resistance, established itself.

If at any future date, we should stop dividing the life cycle into artificially created stages: infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age, we will cease taking as the point of departure for classification: growth and external development, but other transformations of the system as a whole, as presented by Charcot in his exposition of the two-generation evolution of arthritis from the cradle to the grave.

61. The family doctor attending the child between the first and second year is frequently changed for another. I used to acquire patients whose mothers had a grievance against my predecessor for his alleged failure to care for the child's health. By contrast, I used to be dropped by mothers who charged me with responsibility for this or that undesirable symptom. In both cases they were right to the extent that the doctor had pronounced the child to be well, while a sudden difficulty previously unnoticed came as a complete surprise. However, it would have sufficed to wait patiently until the critical period had passed and the child, with only a slight hereditary deadweight would soon have regained the temporarily disturbed balance. In the case of a heavier hereditary burden an improvement would also have taken place in its condition and the further development of the young life would have proceeded peacefully again.

If in both the first and the second stages of disturbed functions certain curative measures are adopted, the improvement in the patient's condition is ascribed precisely to these measures. Since it is common knowledge today that an improvement in a case of pneumonia or typhoid fever takes place when the disease has run its natural course, confusion is bound to reign as regards child

development until we have fixed the order of developmental stages and defined distinct development profiles for different types of children.

The child's developmental curve has its ups and downs, periods of hard work, and periods of rest to gather strength for the continuation and completion of the hastily done work and for the accumulation of resources in preparation for further building. A seven-month fetus is already in condition to live though it still ripens for another two months (almost a quarter of the pregnancy period) in the mother's womb.

The infant trebles its initial weight within a year and surely it is entitled to a rest. The extremely rapid course of its mental development also gives it the right to forget some things it has learned, and which were prematurely designated as a permanent acquisition.

62. A child does not want to eat.

First, some simple reckoning:

An infant weighed some eight pounds at birth; after a year, having trebled its weight it weighs 25 pounds. If it were to continue to grow at that rate, its weight by the end of the second year would be  $25 \times 3 \text{ lb} = 75 \text{ lb}$ .

By the end of the third year,  $75 \times 3 = 225 \text{ lb}$ .

By the end of the fourth year,  $225 \times 3 = 675 \text{ lb}$ .

By the end of the fifth year,  $675 \times 3 = 2025 \text{ lb}$ .

That five-year-old monster weighing 2000 lb and devouring  $1/6$  to  $1/7$  its body weight — the usual amount for infants — would need 300 lb of various foodstuffs daily.

A child may eat a little, very little, much or very much, depending on his growth mechanism. The weight curve may show a gradual or a sharp upward trend, and occasionally it does not change at all for months. It is inexorable in being consistent: when indisposed, the child loses weight within a few days and puts on as much in the following days, in conformity with an inner prescription: "So much and no more." If a child, sound but undernourished, living in poverty goes on a normal diet, he will make good the deficiency and reach the proper level within a week. If a child is weighed regularly every week, after some time he begins to sense whether he has lost or gained weight.

"I lost 300 grams last week, probably by today the gain will be 500. — I won't weigh as much this evening because I missed my supper. I have gained 500 again...." The child

wants to please his parents, because he is anxious not to upset the mother, and he knows that benefits flow from compliance with his parents' will. If he does not eat the .cutlet or drink the milk, it is because he simply cannot. Should he be compelled, stomach troubles followed by a strict diet will check the normal weight increment.

A principle: the child should eat as much as he wants, no less and no more. Even in the event of intense feeding of a sick child, he should participate in fixing the menu and should have control over the treatment.

63. Compelling children to go to bed when they are not sleepy is an offense. A chart laying down how many hours of sleep the child needs is pure nonsense. The number of hours of sleep required by a particular child can be easily determined if there is a timepiece at hand: how many hours does he sleep without waking in order to rise rested — repeat rested, not brisk. There are periods when the child needs more sleep, and others, when he just likes to lie in bed without sleeping because he is tired and not sleepy.

Period of weariness: he goes to bed unwillingly at night because he is not sleepy, and leaves the bed reluctantly in the morning because he does not want to get up. In the evening he tries to create the impression of not being tired, because he is not allowed to sit up and make paper cuttings, play with blocks or a doll: the light will be switched off and he will be told to be quiet. In the morning, he feigns sleep because he is told to get out of bed at once and wash in cold water. How glad he is to catch cold and have a temperature since this enables lying in bed without having to go to sleep.

Period of serene balance: he promptly falls asleep but wakes up before sunrise, full of energy, desire for movement and playful initiative. Neither overcast skies nor a cold room will discourage him; with bare feet, in a nightshirt, he will warm himself by jumping on his little table and chairs. What is to be done? Let him go to bed even at eleven at night, though this may seem shocking to you. Let him amuse himself —sitting up in bed. If, talking before going to sleep "puts one off sleep," why should nervous tension due to reluctant disobedience not do so?

The rule — right or wrong — early to bed, early to rise, has been corrupted by parents deliberately, for their own convenience into the more sleep, the better. They add to the slothful boredom of the day, the annoying nightly boredom of waiting for sleep. One can hardly imagine a more despotic order, bordering on torture, than:

"Go to sleep!"

Adults who go to bed late may find their health affected because they spend nights in drinking and debauchery, and lack sleep, since occupational duties require that they rise early.

A neurasthenic person who has gotten up early for once, feels on top of the world, influenced by suggestion.

That a child by going to bed early remains in artificial light for a shorter period is, in the city, not such a blessing after all. He cannot go out into the open fields early in the morning but lies in bed with the blinds still down, already lazy, already sluggish, gloomy and capricious, a bad portent for the dawning day.

I am in no position to go into the matter more deeply within the space of a few dozen lines, and this applies to all the other problems approached in this book. My job is merely to sound the alert.

64. In what way is the child as a spiritual order different from ourselves? What are its characteristics and wants, what are the hidden possibilities unnoticed by us? What is that half of mankind like which lives together with and alongside us yet in tragic disunion? We make that half shoulder the responsibilities of men of tomorrow while giving it none of the rights of men today.

If mankind be divided into adults and children, and life, into childhood and the adult stage, the child will be found to take up a very great deal of room in the world and in life. But as for us, being centered on our own struggles and troubles, we fail to see the child, just as at one time we were unable to see the woman, the peasant, the oppressed social strata and oppressed peoples. We have arranged things for ourselves so that children should be in our way as little as possible and have as little chance as possible to know what we really are and what we really do.

While in Paris I saw in one of the children's homes a flight of stairs with two banisters: a high one for the grownups and a low one for the little ones. That done, the inventor came to the end of his ingenuity, and went on to design a single type of school desk. This is very little, very little, indeed. Just take a look at the miserable little playgrounds and the nearby pumps with an old rough cup on a rusty chain in the parks of the rich European capitals.

Where are those houses, parks, workshops, experimental grounds and instruments of labor and knowledge meant to serve children, the men and women of tomorrow? An extra window, one more passage separating the classroom from the toilet — so much architecture could afford; a toy horse made of oilcloth and a tin sabre — so much the industry could afford; color prints and cuttings on the walls — that is

not much either. A fairy tale, but it is not the product of our fancy.

Before our very eyes, a female human being has emerged out of the concubine. For centuries, she succumbed to a role imposed upon her by force, she was made to a pattern molded by the will and selfishness of the man who did not want to see a woman as a worker among the people, just as today he still fails to see a child as a worker.

The child — a hundred masks, a hundred character roles of a skilled actor. A different one for the mother and a different one for the father, grandmother, or grandfather, for a stern or lenient schoolmaster, still another in the kitchen and again different for other children, in relation to the rich and the poor, for everyday wear and for a festive occasion. Naive and cunning, humble and haughty, gentle and vengeful, well behaved and self-willed, he can disguise himself and so well maintain a role that he succeeds in deceiving and exploiting us.

As regards instincts, he lacks but one — or rather he has that one but scattered in the form of a nebula of erotic premonitions.

In the sphere of emotions, he excels us by power untrained to restraint.

In the intellectual sphere, he is at least equal to us, lacking only experience.

That is why an adult is so frequently like a child and a child like an adult.

All the other differences boil down to the fact that he earns no money and being dependent on us for his keep must yield to our will ,

There are by now children's homes which resemble less military barracks and cloisters — and more hospitals. They are models of hygiene but in them one sees no smile, joy, surprise or play; they are somber if not grave, in some special way. Architecture has not yet taken heed of them; there exists no "child's style." An adult facade to the building, adult proportions and the chill of detail suffices. The French say that Napoleon substituted a drum for the bell of monastery education. True. For my part, today it is the factory siren that weighs upon the spirit of education.

65. Inexperienced.

An example and an effort to explain:

"Mummy, I want to tell you something without anyone hearing."

Embracing the mother, he whispers mysteriously into her ear:

"Mummy, ask the doctor if I can eat a roll (candy, jam)."



Simultaneously, he ogles the doctor, and flashes charming smiles to bribe him and extort his consent.

Older children whisper into the ear while younger ones speak in an ordinary voice....

There comes a moment when the surroundings recognize the child to be sufficiently old for moral inspection:

"There are desires that should not be voiced. These are of two kinds: those that should not arise at all and if they do should be shyly kept to oneself; and those which are mentionable but only within the bounds of the family."

It is not nice to be insistent, neither is it proper, having been treated to one candy, to ask for another. Occasionally, it is altogether improper to ask for candy: wait to be offered one. It is improper to wet your pants but equally improper to say: "I want wee wee," because everybody will laugh. To avoid the laughter — whisper such things into an ear.

Sometimes it is not nice to ask questions for all to hear:

"Why doesn't that gentleman have any hair on his head?"

The gentleman laughs, but everybody else, too. Such a question should be whispered into an ear.

The child does not understand at first that whatever he whispers is meant only for the year of the person confided in, and consequently he puts his mouth to the other person's ear but speaks in a normal voice:

"I want wee wee," or "I want a piece of cake."

If he does speak in a low voice, he does not understand why. Why keep secret something that anyhow everyone will find out from mummy?

Strangers should not be asked questions — why then, is it proper to ask the doctor?

"Why has that little dog such long ears?" — a child is asking in the lowest possible voice.

Laughter again. That can be asked aloud because the dog will not be hurt. Yet it is wrong to ask why a girl has such an ugly dress. The dress won't be offended.

How can the child be made to understand how much evil adult hypocrisy is behind all that?

How is a child to be told later why whispering is entirely antisocial!

66. Inexperienced.

He looks around with keen interest, listens eagerly and believes:

"Apple, auntie, flower, cow" — he believes. "Nice, tasty, good" — he believes.

"That's naughty, don't touch, you can't, you mustn't" — he believes.

"Give a kiss, curtsy, say thank you" —he believes. "My poor baby has knocked its head, here, mummy will kiss the place, now it doesn't hurt any more."

He smiles through tears; mummy has kissed him, it doesn't hurt any more. He has hit himself, so he runs for the medicine, the kiss.

He believes.

"Do you love your mummy?"

"I do...."

"Mummy is asleep, she has a headache and mustn't be disturbed."

So quietly tiptoeing he approaches the bed, drags at her sleeve and asks some question in a low voice. He is not waking mummy up, he only wants to ask and then: "Sleep mummy, you have a headache."

Somewhere up there is *God*. *God* is angry with naughty children but good ones get rolls and cakes. Where is *God*?

"High up there."

And a strange man, all in white, is going down the street.

"Who is he?"

"The baker, he bakes rolls and cakes."

"Does he? So he is *God*, isn't he?"

"Grandpa died and was put deep in the ground." "Put in the ground?" — I appear to be puzzled. —

" And does he get his meals? "

"They dig him up" — the child says — "with a pickaxe."

"The cow gives milk."

"Really?" — I ask doubtfully. — "And where does the cow get the milk from?"

"From the well" — the child answers.

The child believes, since each time he tries to contrive something on his own he

errs — so he must believe others.

#### 67. Inexperienced.

He has dropped a glass on the floor. Something most strange. The glass has disappeared and instead something entirely different appears in its place. He bends down and takes the pieces of glass in his hand; he has cut himself, a stab of pain, blood pouring from a finger. Everything is full of mysteries and surprises.

He is pushing a chair, suddenly something has flashed in his eyes, pulled and banged. Now the chair looks different, and the child finds himself sitting on the floor. Pain and fright again. A world replete with marvels and dangers.

He is pulling the blanket to disentangle himself from underneath. Losing balance, he grasps the mother by her skirt. Trying to climb up, he gets hold of the edge of the bed. Now richer in experience, he grasps the tablecloth and pulls it down off the table. A disaster again.

He looks for help since he cannot help himself. Any independent efforts end up in failure. He feels dependent and grows impatient.

Even if he does not trust at all, or trust halfheartedly because he has been deceived repeatedly, he still follows the advice of adults in much the same way as an inexperienced employer has no alternative but to trust a dishonest but indispensable employee, as a paralytic must accept the assistance of others and put up with the moods of a heartless male nurse.

I wish to emphasize that any helplessness, any surprise arising from ignorance, any error in the application of past experience, any unfortunate attempt at imitation, any dependency — all these are reminiscent of a child regardless of the age of the individual. We shall readily find childish characteristics in a patient, old man, soldier and prisoner. The surprise of the farm boy in the city, and of the townsman in the country is that of a child. The ignorant layman asks childish questions and an upstart shows a childish want of tact.

#### 68. The child imitates adults.

By mimicry alone he learns to speak, to conform to most of human customs; he strives to create the impression of being on familiar terms with the surroundings of adults whom in fact he is not able to understand, who are alien in spirit and outside his imaginative capacity.

Basic errors that we commit in our judgment of the child are due precisely to the fact that his significant thoughts and feelings become lost in words which children have

appropriated without being sure of the meanings, nuances, and in forms they use but to which they impart their own entirely different content.

Future, love, mother country, God, dignity, duty — concepts petrified in words; they live a life of their own, are born, grow, change, grow stronger and weaker. They mean different things at different stages of life. It is a great effort for us not to confuse a heap of sand, which the child calls a mountain, with a snow-covered peak in the Alps. But for one who has probed the soul of words used by men, the difference between a child, an adolescent and an adult, between a simple man and a thinker will be erased, and an intellectual man, ageless, rising above social background, education and cultural polish, will emerge as a reasoning being within the scope of experience great or small. Men having different convictions (I do not defer to political ideas, occasionally insincere and received under duress) are but men having a different "skeleton" of experience.

The child does not understand what future is, does not love his parents, has no sense of motherland, does not comprehend God; he respects no one, and knows no duty. He says: "When I grow up," but he does not actually believe that it will ever happen. He refers to the mother as "mummy darling" but does not feel that his motherland is the park or the backyard. God is either a good uncle or an annoying grumbler. The child feigns respect, bends himself to various duties which are identified with the person who has given the order and supervises its execution. He remembers that ordering need not necessarily mean a threat but may also be a plea and a tender glance. Sometimes the child has premonitions but these are brief moments enchanting manifestations of clairvoyance.

We say the child mimics. But what does a traveler do when invited by a mandarin to attend a local rite or official ceremony? He looks straight ahead, tries to make himself inconspicuous, and not to give rise to any commotion; he has grasped the substance and sequence of the episodes and feels proud of having played his part so well. What does an uncouth fellow do when allowed to join a gentlemen's party? He tries to catch the note. A retainer, a clerk or an official — does he not imitate his superior in speech, gestures, smile, clothing and whiskers?

Yet another form of mimicry: if a small girl stepping over a puddle in the street slightly gathers up her skirts, that is to show she is grownup. If a boy imitates the schoolmaster's way of signing his name, he is in a sense testing out his own qualifications for a responsible job. The same pattern may easily be discerned in adults.

69. Egocentrism in the child's outlook on the world is another facet of inexperience.

The child goes over from personal egocentrism in which his consciousness is the center

of all things and all phenomena, to family egocentrism which prevails for a longer or shorter period of time depending on the conditions in which he is brought up. By exaggerating the meaning of the home and by making him alive to imaginary and real dangers lurking outside the reach of our help and care we tend to impress a false notion of the family upon the child.

"Come and stay with me" — an aunt says.

The child draws close to the mother, tears in his eyes; nothing that would make him go to stay. "He/she is so attached to me."

The child gazes in astonishment and alarm at other mothers who are even not his aunts.

But the time comes when he starts coolly to compare what he sees in other homes with his own possessions. At first, he only wants to have at home the same doll, backyard or is canary as he has seen elsewhere. But as time goes on, he begins to realize that there are other "mummies" and "daddies" — equally good, perhaps better, who knows?

"If she were my mummy..."

The child of the slums and the child of the peasant's hut acquires experience of this kind earlier. He learns to know the sorrows that can be shared with no one, the joys that make happy only his nearest and dearest, and he is well aware that his name day is a day festive only for himself.

"My daddy... at our place..., my mummy..." the frequent elevation of own parents in childish disputes boils down rather to a polemical formula, but sometimes,, it is a tragic defense of what one wants to believe though experiencing doubt.

"You just wait, I'll tell my dad."

"I'm not afraid of your dad."

That is true: it is only I who have to fear.

I should be inclined to describe the child's outlook on the immediate living moment as egocentric because, lacking experience, he lives only in the present. A game put off for a week becomes unreal. In summer — the winter becomes a legend. Being told to leave a piece of cake "for tomorrow," the child regards it as lost. Hard to understand that the wear and tear on things by no means makes them useless all at once; it simply shortens their life, they wear out sooner. For a child to be told tales of mother's girlhood is like a fascinating fairy tale. With astonishment, on the verge of alarm, he regards the stranger who calls daddy by his Christian name.

"I wasn't born then ..."

And adolescent egocentrism: the world begins where we stand?

Partisan, class and national egocentrism. Are there many who have raised their level of consciousness to that of integrated man — a limb of mankind, a unit of the 'universe? How difficult men found it to, reconcile themselves to the idea that the earth revolved around the sun and was no more than a planet? And the profound belief of the masses, contrary to reality, that the horrors of war cannot possibly recur in the twentieth century?

Is our attitude to children not an expression of adult egocentrism?

It took me a long time to grasp the fact that a child can remember things so well and wait so patiently. Many of the errors committed stem from the fact that we are dealing with a child of coercion, slavery and serfdom, corrupted, distressed and rebellious; considerable effort is necessary to comprehend what he is really like, and what he might be.

70. A child's faculty for observation.

A tense moment on the screen in the movies. Suddenly one hears a child cry out:

"Oh, look a little doggie ..."

Nobody else has noticed the dog — but the child did.

Similar outbursts in the theater, in church or during official occasions; they cause almost panic to those with the child and bring smiles to the faces of others.

Unable to grasp the whole, uninstructed in an incomprehensible subject matter, the child is overjoyed to find something familiar and intimate. Remember too how glad we are to catch sight of a familiar face in a crowd of strangers, where we do not feel at ease.

The child, hankering after activity, will insinuate himself into every corner peep into every nook, and on finding anything of interest — ask questions. Of consummate interest for him will be a small moving dot — an ant — a glittering bead, a word or sentence incidentally overheard. How much like children we are ourselves when in a strange town, in some unusual surroundings ...

The child knows well everybody in his immediate surroundings, the humors, habits and weaknesses, and, don't forget, he can skillfully exploit this knowledge. He senses friendliness, sees through hypocrisy and brilliantly picks out any ludicrous characteristics. He reads a man's face in the same way as a farmer reads the sky to

predict the weather. For the child, too, observes and studies for years; in the classroom and in the dormitory; this business of learning to sum us up goes forward with combined forces and by collective effort. But to all that we close our eyes, and until we are shaken out of our complacency, we prefer the self-deceptive belief that the child is naive, knows and understands nothing, and can easily be led to take shadow for substance. To adopt any different attitude would confront us with a dilemma: either to surrender our pose of superiority or to root out of ourselves whatever is degrading, ridiculous, lowering in the eyes of children.

71. The child in his search for ever new sensations and impressions is said to be unable to concentrate on anything for any length of time. He even tires of play; and the friend of an hour ago becomes a foe to be restored into a chum again in a while.

Observations generally true: the child behaves unlike himself in the train. He grows restless when told to sit on the bench in the park. He tends to be troublesome during a social call. A favorite game is soon cast aside. He is fidgety during class. Even in the theater, he will not sit still.

Take into consideration, however, that during a railway journey, he is excited and tired; he sits on the bench in the park under duress, he feels uneasy during the social call, the toy or company have been chosen by others, attendance at classes is a duty, and his eagerness to go to the theater was only in expectation of having a good time there.

How often we ourselves resemble a child that has beribboned the cat, treated the animal to a peer and shown it some pictures, and was then surprised when the ungrateful animal tried tactfully to sneak away or, growing desperate, has scratched.

During a party, the child would like to have a look around, to see how the box standing on the console table opens, or what is glittering in the corner, or whether there are any pictures in that bulky volume. He would like to capture the little golden fish in the bowl and to freely receive sweets. But he will not betray any of those desires because that would not be proper.

"Let's go home," thus an ill-mannered child...

He was told there would be plenty of fun: little flags, fireworks, a performance — he has been looking forward to all these things but in vain.

"Well, are you enjoying yourself?"

"Fine" — he says, yawning or suppressing a yawn so as not to hurt anyone's feelings.

Summer holidays. Sitting in the forest, I was telling the children a fairy tale. Right in the middle of the story, one of the boys got up and moved away, then another, and soon a third. I was puzzled, so the next day I asked them why they had done it. One had left a stick behind in the bushes, and had just remembered it while I was telling the story — he was afraid, someone might take it. The second had injured his finger and it hurt him. The third did not like tales of fantasy. Will not an adult leave a theater if he finds the play uninteresting, or if he is in pain or has left his wallet in his overcoat?

I have ample evidence that a child can occupy himself with a single interest for weeks and months, nor does he crave a change. A single favorite toy never loses its attraction. The child will listen to a story many times with unabated interest. On the other hand, I can provide evidence that it is the mother who grows impatient at the monotony of her child's interests. How often such a mother approaches the doctor with a request to "prescribe a more varied diet because the child is fed up with cereals and stewed fruit."

"It is you who have had enough of these and not the child" I have been obliged to make clear to her.

72. Boredom, a subject for thorough study.

Boredom, loneliness, absence of impressions; boredom — excess of impressions, noise and bustle. Boredom — you're supposed to do that, wait, be careful, you are naughty. Boredom — best clothes, uneasiness, perplexity, orders, bans and duties.

Semiboredom — sitting on the balcony or looking out of the window, or a game played in haphazard, ill-matched company.

Boredom as acute as a fever, protracted, excruciating, with aggravations.

Boredom — feeling downcast; excessively hot or cold weather, hunger, thirst, too much food, drowsiness or too much sleep, pain and weariness.

Boredom-apathy, indifference to stimuli, lack of energy, taciturnity, and a general decline of vitality. The child gets up drowsily in the morning, walks with a stoop and drags his feet, stretches himself, answers questions by mimicry, in monosyllables and mumbling, with a grimace. Asks for nothing, but to any question addressed to him responds with hostility. Isolated sudden outbursts of anger, incomprehensible and slightly motivated.

Boredom — restlessness (increased activity). He will not sit for a moment or give his mind to anything for long; capricious, undisciplined, malicious, aggressive, pestering, offensive; cries and loses his temper. Occasionally, he will stir up trouble for the mere pleasure of the sensation of suffering punishment.



We frequently observe persistent bad will — accompanied by bankruptcy of willpower; an excess of energy — accompanied by aggravation of weariness.

Sometimes boredom assumes the characteristics of mass psychosis. Being unable to organize any game, or being shy or at odds as to age or disposition, or subject to exceptional conditions — they give way to the madness of senseless noise.

They shout, push one another, trip up, knock down, twist around and around until they are dizzy. They provoke one another and force laughter. As a rule, some accident breaks up the "game," and before the reaction: a fight, a torn jacket, a broken chair, a heavier blow than was intended, followed by confusion and mutual accusations. Sometimes the commotion is stopped by someone's: "Cut out this silly nonsense" or: "What's come over you, you ought to be ashamed of yourselves." The situation is taken in hand by some energetic person, and a fairy tale, community singing, and chatting follow.

I am afraid that some teachers tend to regard these rare pathological states of drastic mass boredom as an ordinary game started by children "taking the bit in their teeth."

73. Even the children's play as presented by newspaper columnists has not been considered worthy of thorough clinical study.

We ought to bear in mind that not only children but also adults amuse themselves. Children are not always in the mood for play, and not everything we describe as play is such in fact. Many games played by children represent a striving toward the serious activities of adults, games engaged in the open country are different from those in the town or within the walls of a room, to the child's recreation we must adopt a point of view other than that of its current situation in society.

A ball.

Watch the efforts of a small child as he tries to pick up a ball in order to send it rolling over the floor in the desired direction.

Watch the painstaking concentration of an older one when he tries to catch the ball with the right hand and the left, and make it bounce several times against the floor or wall, to strike it with a bat, to kick it between the goal posts. Who can throw it farthest, highest, straightest, the greatest number of times? Emulation, learning to assess oneself by way of comparison, triumphs and defeats, and self-perfection.

Surprises, frequently comic. It was actually in his hand, and it slipped out; it bounced off against one of the boys and dropped right into another's hands. Trying to catch the ball, two boys have bumped heads. The ball has fallen under the wardrobe and is obediently trickling out on its own.

Excitements. It has fallen on a prized lawn — there is a risk in getting it back. Lost — a search. A near miss to breaking a window. The ball has fallen on top of the wardrobe, how best to get it down? — A consultation. Was it he who struck something with the ball or was it another? Whose fault? The one who threw it or the other one who failed to catch it? A lively dispute.

Individual diversions. He misleads by feigning a throw. He looks at one and throws it to another. He has hidden it dexterously to make the others think he does not have it. He blows behind the ball when he throws it so that it may fly faster. Falls over on purpose when catching it. Tries to catch it in his open mouth. Pretends to be afraid when the ball is passed to him. Pretends to have suffered a sharp blow. He smacks the ball: "Stupid ball, I'll teach you!" There's a rattling inside the ball — the others shake it and listen attentively.

There are children who not knowing the game themselves, like to watch in the same way as adults do when others are playing billiards or chess. Here, too, the observer may watch interesting slips and ingenious behavior.

The intellectual aspect of the game is only one of the many features that make it attractive.

74. A game is not so much the child's medium as the only sphere in which he is allowed to display more or less initiative. When participating in a game, the child feels to some degree independent. Everything else is a transient favor, a temporary concession, whereas to play is the child's right.

Playing at horses, soldiers, cops and robbers, or firemen, he discharges energy in seemingly purposive actions; for a short time, he gives himself up to illusion or deliberately escapes from the dullness of real life. For that reason, children greatly appreciate participation in a game with friends who have vivid imaginations, varied initiative, and a store of ideas derived from books. They submit meekly to the often despotic rule of such peers because they can impart to a hazy fancy a more convincing semblance of reality. Children at play feel constrained by the presence of adults and strangers, they are ashamed of their games, well aware of their emptiness.

How much bitter realization of the shortcomings of real life there is in children's games, and how much pained yearning for that life!

A stick is not a horse for a child, but in the absence of a real horse he must reconcile himself to a wooden one. Sailing across the room in an upturned chair is not the same thing for him as a trip in a boat across a pond.

If the child's daily round includes unlimited bathing, a blueberry patch, nests of birds

high in the trees, a pigeon roost, rabbits, plums in a strange orchard, and flower beds in front of the house — then a game becomes unnecessary or is essentially changed in character.

Which of them would change a real dog for a stuffed one on wheels? Which would give up a pony for a rocking horse?

He turns to playing of necessity, runs off to play to escape from the miserable boredom, shrinks from the awful emptiness, hides from the frozen duty. Indeed, the child prefers play to learning by rote rules of grammar or the ' multiplication table.

A child becomes attached to a doll, a goldfish, a flower in a pot because as yet he owns nothing else; a prisoner or an old man make a pet of a mouse because they no longer own anything else. A child plays with whatever comes to hand to pass the time away, because he does not know what to do with himself, or because there is nothing else to play with.

We strain our ears to hear how a little girl lectures her doll on proper conduct, how she instructs and admonishes, but we are deaf to her complaints about those around her when, lying in bed, she confides to her doll all her worries, disappointments and dreams.

"I'll tell you everything, my little dolly, but don't tell anyone."

"Good doggie, I'm not angry with you, you never did me any harm."

The child's loneliness endows a doll with a soul. This is not a child's paradise. It is a drama.

75. A cowhand will rather play cards than ball.

He runs enough after the cattle all day. A newspaper boy or a raga keep on the run only when they are new. Soon they learn to distribute effort rationally over the whole day. A child obliged to look after a baby never plays with a doll. On the contrary, he tries to get out of the irksome obligation.

Does this mean that work is obnoxious to a child? The work done by a poor child is utilitarian and not educative, it takes no account of the child's capacities or individual characteristics. It would be ridiculous to hold up the life of poor children as an example; there is boredom here, too, the winter boredom of a small room and the summer boredom of the backyard or a ditch by the roadside. Boredom — only in a different form. Neither they nor we can so fill the child's day that one after another following in logical array they unfold the colorful content of life, from yesterday through today into tomorrow.

Many pastimes of children are work.

If four of them are building a shack of sorts: they dig with a piece of metal 'or glass,

or a nail, drive pegs, bind things together. They make a roof of branches, spread moss on the floor, alternately working in silent diligence, and then slowly. At the same time they plan improvements, making further projects and -exchanging observations. This is no longer a game but inept work with imperfect tools and inadequate materials, and therefore not very fruitful, though well organized so that each child invests as much effort as he can afford according to age, strength and capacity.

If the nursery is, contrary to the rules, so often turned into a workshop full of junk — that is, the material needed for the intended construction — is that not the place to which we should direct our research? The linoleum in a small child's room. Would not a large heap of lovely yellow sand, a sizeable bunch of sticks and a barrelful of stone be better? Perhaps a plank, cardboard, a pound of nails, a saw, a hammer and a lathe would be a more welcomed gift than "a game." An instructor in handicrafts would be more to the point than a master in gymnastics and piano playing. But first we should have to exorcise hospital silence from the nursery, hospital cleanliness, and the fear of a scratch on the finger.

Sensible parents are hurt when their order to "play" is met with the answer: "All the time play, nothing but play?" What next, if their resources are exhausted.

Much has changed. Sports and games are not merely tolerated but have been included in school curricula. Louder and louder is the clamor for playing fields. With the hour by hour changes the average father of a family, the average educationalist cannot keep pace.

76. The reverse side of the coin. There are children neither particularly bothered by loneliness nor feeling any special need for active life. Those quiet ones, held up as an example by other mothers, are "not heard" at home. They are never bored, and can always find something to play at. They start and stop when told. These are passive children. Their needs are modest and dispassionate, so they easily give way and an illusion can serve them for reality, the more so since the adults want it that way.

They feel lost in a crowd, and pained by its rough indifference fall behind in the rapid torrent of community life. Instead of trying to understand the child, mothers seek, in this case too, to change him, to force what can be achieved only slowly and cautiously, by patient effort along a road paved with the experience of numerous failures, miscarried assays and painful humiliations. Every inopportune pressure only worsens the situation. "Go on, play with the children" does as much harm as: "That's enough play for today."

How easily such a child can be picked out in a crowd.

An example: playing "ring-around-the-rosie" in the park. A score or so hold each other's

hands, with two in the ring.

"Come, why don't you play with them?"

She does not want to because she knows neither the game nor the children, because once she was told when she tried to join in: "We don't want too many" or: "You're awkward." Perhaps tomorrow or in a week, she will try again. But the mother does not want to wait, makes room for her and forces the girl to join in. Being bashful, she grasps the hands of her neighbors reluctantly, she would like to remain unnoticed, to stand watching. Maybe later, slowly, her interest would be caught. Maybe she would take the first step toward reconciling herself with the new life of a collectivity. But the mother makes another false move — she tries to encourage her by the prospect of playing a more important part in the game.

"Children — why always the same ones in the ring? This one, she hasn't been in yet; take her!"

One of the leaders refuses, two others agree though unwillingly.

The poor newcomer finds herself in an unfriendly group.

The scene ends in tears, the mother's anger, and confusion among the other participants.

77. That game in the park is an object lesson for teachers. So many interesting points to be observed. General observations (difficult with the number of children taking part in the game), individual (of one child picked out at will).

The initiative, the conception, the blossoming and the break-up of the game. Whose word starts it off? Who is the organizer, who is the leader, and whose withdrawal breaks up the group? Which of the children choose their neighbors and which grasp whatever hand is near? Which of them willingly let go of their neighbors to make room for a newcomer, and which protest? Who changes places frequently and who stays out throughout? Which of them wait patiently during a break in the game and which grow impatient — "Hurry up! Let's get going!" Which stand still and which are restless, swing their arms and laugh noisily? Which are bored but do not give up the game, and which do — finding it uninteresting or because they are offended. Which children make a fuss until given a key part in the game? A mother wants to attach her child; one says: "No, he is too small," another: "What do you care? let him come!"

If the game was in the hands of an adult, he would make the children take turns, introduce an apparently equitable division of roles, and considering himself helpful, would actually impose compulsion. Two children — the same two most of the time — are running about (cat and mouse), playing (whirligig) and kicking (the basket); as for the rest, they are probably bored. One looks on, a second listens, a third hums inaudibly, sings in a low voice, then loudly,

and a fourth would like to join in but cannot get up the courage and his heart beats madly. Meanwhile, the ten-year-old leader-psychologist, spontaneously evaluates, encompasses and controls the situation.

In every collective activity — including play — in doing the same thing, they differ in at least one particular.

Thus we learn to know the child's situation in life, among men, in action, his values — not the hidden, but the marketable ones. What he absorbs, what is the most he can give of himself, how the crowd react to it, how independent and how resistant to mass suggestion he is. From an intimate conversation with the child, we find out his ambitions, and from observing him in a community, we note his capabilities. Here we see his attitude toward men. There, the motives behind that attitude. If we 'meet the child alone, we learn to know only one aspect of it.

If he 'gets obedience, how has he achieved it and how does he use his power. Failing to attain it, does he ache for power, suffer, is he angry or sulky, does he envy passively, strive, or give up? Does he voice opposition, frequently or rarely? Is he right? Is he guided by ambition or whim? Does he enforce his will upon others tactfully or brutally? Does he resist the leaders or follow?

"Listen, this way! Wait — better that way! I wouldn't play. Alright, have it your way!"

78. The tranquil amusements of children are nothing but a conversation, an exchange of thoughts and the spinning of dreams on a selected theme, a dramatized dream of power. Though merely amusing themselves, they express meaningful views in the same way as a writer unfolds his main idea in a novel or a play. That is why you will frequently notice here a spontaneous satire upon grownups — children playing at school, paying mock visits and receiving visitors, feeding their dolls, buying and selling, engaging and dismissing servants. They play school. The passive ones treat it seriously, anxious to earn praise. The active ones pick the parts of mischief makers whose sallies frequently evoke collective protests. Is it not that they thus unwittingly betray their real attitude toward school?

Being unable to go to the park, the child the more willingly takes to voyaging across oceans and to desert islands. Having no dog of his own to obey him, he takes command of a regiment. Being nobody he wants to be somebody. But does this apply only to a child? Is it not true that political parties when they achieve power, change their ideological castles in the air for empirical accomplishments?

Certain amusements, searching questions and endeavors are regarded critically by us. A

little boy crawls on all fours and barks in order to find out how animals can manage, he feigns lameness or pretends to be an old man, he squints, stammers, reels about like a drunken man, imitates a lunatic seen in the street, walks with his eyes closed (blind), plugs his ears (deaf), lies down motionless and stops breathing (dead), looks through spectacles, gets hold of a cigarette, winds the clock in secret, pulls off a fly's wings — how is it going to fly now? — takes a magnet to attract a steel ruler, inspects his ears (what are those drums like?) and the throat (what are tonsils like?), suggests to a girl to play doctor in the hope of seeing how she is made, runs with a magnifying glass into the sun, listens to the noise in a shell, rubs one piece of flint against another.

Anything that can be proven he wants to see, check and experience. Even so, there remains a great deal he must take on hearsay.

They say that there is only one moon, yet it can be seen everywhere.

"Look, I'll go behind toe fence and you stay in the garden."

They have shut the gate.

"Well, is the moon in the garden?"

"It is."

"And here too."

They have changed places and checked again: now they are absolutely sure that there are two moons.

79. A special place occupy amusements designed to test one's powers, to learn one's worth. This can be accomplished only by comparison with others.

So, who can make longer strides, how many steps with his eyes shut; who can stand longer on one leg, longer without blinking, who can hold his breath the longest? Who can shout the loudest, spit the farthest, urinate or throw a stone the highest? Who can jump down from the greatest number of steps, jump farthest or highest? Who can stand the pain of a squashed finger? Who will win the race? Who can best lift another into the air, drag or drop to the ground?

"I can do it. I know, I've done it."

"I can do it better. I know more. Mine is better." And then:

"My mother and father can do it, have done it."

Thus one wins respect, gains a position in one's environment. Keep in mind that the child's well-being depends not only on how he is appreciated by adults but to an equal — perhaps even a greater — extent on the opinion of his peers who have different,

though no less stringent, criteria in appraising the value of members of their community and in according them rights.

A five-year-old may be admitted to the company of eight-year olds, and these may be tolerated by ten-year olds who are already allowed in the streets on their own, have a pen case with a key to lock it and a pocket notebook. For a share of the cookies, or even for nothing, an older fellow, two grades higher will clear up a lot of doubts, will educate. He will explain that a magnet attracts iron because it is magnetized. That the best horses are Arabian because they have slender legs. The blood of kings is not red but blue. Probably the lion and eagle have blue blood, but this still needs checking. If a corpse gets hold of somebody by the hand, he wouldn't let go. There are women living in forests who have snakes instead of hair; he has seen one himself in a picture and even in a forest, too — though from a distance because if a man comes near to look he will be turned into stone (probably that's just a tale). He saw a drowned man and knows how children are born, and can also make a purse out of paper.

What's more, not only can he make it, but actually has made it. Mother can't do it.

80. Were it not for our disdain for the child, his feelings and aspirations — including his games — we might understand that he has is good reason for gladly being friendly with one person and avoiding another. Meeting him only if forced to, and playing with him unwillingly. Good friends may fight but will soon come to terms, while association with someone disliked, goes against the grain even in the absence of a quarrel.

He won't let others play because he bursts into tears over trifles, quickly takes offence, complains, shouts, makes a fool of himself, boasts, fights others, wants to be the leader, tattles and cheats — deceitful, clumsy, too small, stupid, dirty and ugly.

Such a child, a squeaker, a pest, can by himself spoil the whole game. Watch closely the children's efforts to render him harmless! The older ones willingly let him into the game. The younger also admit him because the newcomer may prove of some 'use, as long as he be satisfied to play a secondary role and does not make a nuisance of himself.

"Let him have it, give way: he's little!"

Not on your life: adults do not give way to children either.

Why doesn't he like being taken on a visit there? He likes to play with the children there. Yes — but at his own place or in the park. Over there is a man who shouts, he is kissed against his will, the maid was rude to him, the older sister teases him, there is a dog he's scared of. Pride will not let him tell such real reasons and the mother thinks that all this is just his whim.



He objects to going to the park. Why? Because an older boy threatened to beat him up; because some girl's governess said she would complain; because the gardener threatened him with a cane when he went on the lawn to get the ball; because he promised a kid to bring a postage stamp but couldn't find it.

There are capricious children. As a doctor, I have seen dozens of them. Those children know exactly what they want but won't get: they are short of breath, they suffocate under the weight of solicitous care. If the attitude of adults to children is as a rule cold, the pathologically capricious children despise and hate those around them. Children can be tortured by senseless love. Such children should be protected by law.

81. We have clothed children in a uniform of childhood and we believe that they love, respect and trust us, that they are innocent, credulous and sweet. We play the part of objective altruistic guardians. We are deeply moved by the very thought of our sacrifices, and in a sense we get along with them for a time. At first, children believe us, then begin to doubt, and try to cast out the insinuating suspicions. Sometimes they try to fight these feelings, and seeing the futility of the struggle, begin to deceive, corrupt and exploit us.

They trick us with pleading, a smile, a kiss, a joke, obedience, bargain over the concessions they make. Rarely and tactfully they hint that they, too, have some rights. Sometimes they get their own way by making a nuisance of themselves. At other times — will ask outright: "What do I get in exchange?"

A hundred varieties of submissive and mutinous slaves.

It's bad, unhealthy and sinful. The teacher said so at school. "Oh, if mother knew about it."

"You needn't come along, if you don't want to. That school teacher of yours is almost as smart as you. Let mother find out: what can she do to me?"

We dislike it when a child who is being admonished mutters something indistinctly because anger shapes on his lips candid words which we do not want to hear.

The child has a conscience but the inner voice is suppressed during minor, everyday skirmishes. Instead, there festers a latent dislike of the despotic — consequently unjust — rule of the stronger, and thereby irresponsible persons.

If a child likes a jolly uncle, that is because he owes him a glimpse of freedom, because he brings life in, because he has brought a gift.

And the gift is the more precious because it has gratified a long cherished dream. A

child appreciates gifts much less than we think. He accepts only reluctantly a gift from a disliked person: "He thinks he is doing me a great favor." He seethes inside, feeling humiliated.

82. Grownups aren't that clever; they don't know how to take advantage of their freedom. They are smug. They can buy anything they want, are allowed to do everything, and yet are always irritated at something or other, and fly into a rage over nothing at all.

Grownups don't know everything. Often they answer just for the sake of saying, or with a joke, or so that you can't understand. One says one thing and one another. How am I to know what the truth is? How many stars are there? How do you say copybook in Chinese? How does one go to sleep? Is water alive, and how does it know that it is zero temperature and it should turn into ice? Where is hell? How did the man do the trick with scrambled eggs made out of watches in his hat, and both the watches and the hat remained unspoiled; was that a miracle?

They are not good to us. Parents give their children food but they have to, otherwise we would die. They won't allow children to do anything. When one says something they laugh instead of explaining, tease on purpose, and poke fun. They are unjust and if you pull their legs they believe it. They like to be flattered. If they are in a good mood, they'll let you do anything, but if they're cross, nothing is right.

Grownups tell fibs. It's a lie that one gets worms from eating candy, and that if one doesn't eat one dreams about Gypsies, and if one plays with matches one will wet the bed, and if you swing your legs you swing the devil. They don't keep their word: they promise and then forget or wriggle out. Or they pretend to forbid something as punishment but, of course, they wouldn't have allowed it, anyway.

They tell you to speak the truth and if you do, they're offended. They're hypocrites: they say one thing to your face, and another behind your back. If they don't like someone, they put up a show that they do. From all you hear — "please, thank you, I'm sorry, it's my duty to you" — you might think they really mean it.

Take careful note of the expression on a child's face when he is merrily running about, says or does something wrong in the excitement and all of a sudden is sharply reprimanded.

The father is writing: the child runs up to him with a piece of news and pulls him by the sleeve. He hasn't the faintest idea that he is going to be guilty of an inkblot on an important paper. Thundered at, he is taken aback — what's happened?

The experience of a few inappropriate questions, misplaced jokes, betrayed secrets, inadvertent confessions — all this teaches the child to regard adults as one would tamed wild animals — one can never be sure of them.

83. In addition to disrespect and hostility, one may perceive in the children's attitude to adults a certain amount of aversion. A prickly beard, a rough face and the smell of a cigar are objectionable to a child. Until he is told not to, he thoroughly wipes his face after each kiss. Most children do not like to be put on one's knees. If you take them by the hand, they will gently, slowly, withdraw it. Tolstoy observed this in country children — it applies to all who are uncorrupted and not stunned into submissiveness.

A child speaks with abhorrence about body odors and the smell of perfumes. "It stinks," he says until told that that is an impolite word, and that perfumes smell nice, only he is still too ignorant.

Those men and women who suffer from dyspepsia, gout, obstruction, have s<sup>o</sup>ur mouths, are afraid of drafts and damp or to eat late at night, who suffocate with coughing, get tired going upstairs; are red in the face, fat, puffy — there's something disgusting in all that.

Those tender phrases, stroking, hugging, patting, that touch of familiarity, senseless questions, and laughter for no apparent reason.

Whom does she resemble? Oh, he is a big boy. Just look how he's grown.

Embarrassed, the child just waits — when will it all end?

They don't mind saying in public: "Watch out, you'll lose your pants" or "you'll wet the bed tonight." They're indecent. child feels he is the cleaner, better behaved, more deserving of respect.

"He is afraid to eat, he is afraid of wet weather. Cowards: I'm not afraid at all. If they're afraid, let them sit by the fireplace, why should we be forbidden?"

Rain. He will run out and stand in the pouring rain for a while, and then run away laughing, patting his hair. Frost. He will press his elbows close, hunch himself up, raise his shoulders, hold his breath; his fingers get stiff, his lips blue; he watches a funeral procession, a street fight, he runs to get warm: "Brrr, I'm frozen stiff, wonderful."

How miserable old people are, they worry about everything.

I wonder if the only warm feeling that the child ever has for us adults is not pity.

Obviously, something worries them, since they aren't happy.

Poor daddy works, mummy is weak, they will die soon, poor things, they shouldn't have to worry.

84. A reservation.

In addition to such feelings, undoubtedly experienced by the child, in addition to his own reflection, he has a sense of duty. He does not entirely reject points of view impressed upon him, and emotional suggestions. The active experience more vigorously and sooner the conflicts of ambivalence, the passive — later and more vaguely. The active one spins his own web. The eyes of the passive, are opened by a comrade in misery, or slavery. Neither systematizes as I have just done. The child's soul is as complex as ours, full of contradictions, struggling tragically with the eternal: I desire to but can't; I know that I ought but I wouldn't be able to manage.

An educator who does not enforce but sets free, does not drag but uplifts, does not crush but shapes, does not dictate but instructs, does not demand but requests, will experience inspired moments with the child. More than once will he watch with moist eyes the struggle of an angel with Satan, a struggle from which the white angel will emerge triumphant.

He lied. Unseen, he took a cherry out of the wedding cake. He lifted a girl's skirt. He threw stones at a frog. Laughed at a hunchback. Broke a statuette and put the pieces together so that it should not be found out. He was smoking a cigarette. Annoyed, he swore silently at his father.

He has done some mischief, and feels it won't be the last time, that something will tempt him again and again, that he will be egged on by someone.

It happens that a child suddenly becomes quiet, obedient and tender. Adults are familiar with that: "Must have something on his conscience." Frequently, this particular metamorphosis is preceded by an emotional storm, tears soaking the pillow, decisions, a solemn oath. Sometimes we are ready to forgive provided we are given an assurance — oh, no, not a

guarantee, just an illusion — that there will be no repetition.

"I can't be any different. I can't promise." Not obstinacy — honesty dictates such words.

"I understand what you are saying but I don't feel it" a boy of twelve told me.

Such praiseworthy honesty we find also in children with a leaning to do wrong:

"I know, one should not steal, that it is a shame and a sin to steal. I don't want to do it. I don't know that I won't do it again. I'm not guilty!"

It is a painful moment for the educator to see in the child's perplexity his own helplessness.

85. We succumb to the illusion that the child can for long be satisfied with an angelic world outlook where everything is simple, benignly sensible, that we shall be able to hide from him our ignorance, weakness, contradictions, defeats, and downfalls — and the lack of a formula for happiness. Booklets for self-made educators are naive to offer the precept that the child's upbringing should be consistent, that the father should not criticize the mother's actions, that adults should not discuss things in front of children, that the maid should not lie — "there's no one at home" — when an unwanted visitor rings at the front door.

And why is it wrong to torment animals while flies perish by hundreds in agonizing pain on sticky paper? Why can mother buy a pretty dress and it is rude to say that a dress is pretty? Must all cats be gray at night? A thunderclap — nannie crosses herself and says: "O, my God" but the teacher at school says it's "electricity." Why should grownups be respected — thieves included? Uncle said: "I felt it in my guts," and it is rude to speak like that. Why is "damn it" swearing? The cook believes in dreams, and mummy doesn't. Why does one say: "Sound as a bell," yet some bells are cracked. Is every dog lucky? Why is it improper to ask how much a present has cost?

How to hide, how to explain, in order not to aggravate ignorance?

Oh, those answers of ours....

I witnessed twice, incidentally, how a child was being enlightened in front of a bookstore as to what a terrestrial globe is.

"What sort of a ball is it?" — the child asked. "Oh, just a ball," the nurse said.

Another time:

"Mother, what is this sphere?"

"It is not a sphere but Earth. Little houses, horses and mummy are there."

"Mummy, hm, hm?" — the child glanced at the mother with pity and fear — and said no more.

86. We take notice of children when they are wildly excited, and whenever they appear different to us, but we pass over their serene moods, pensive silences, deep emotions, painful surprises, agonizing suspicions, in which they so much resemble us. The child

is "real" not only when he hops on one leg but also when he is probing the mysteries of the marvelous fable of life. It is only necessary to exclude "artificial" children who mechanically repeat phrases learned or appropriated from adults. The child is unable to think "like an adult" but he can consider in childish fashion the serious problems of adults. Lacking adequate knowledge and experience he is bound to think differently.

I am telling a fairy tale: wizards, dragons, fairies, enchanted princesses; all of a sudden, a seemingly naive question crops up:

"Is it true?"

And I hear one of them explain, in a voice of superiority: "Didn't you hear teacher say it was a fairy tale?"

Neither the characters nor the story are improbable: it could have happened. It lacks reality only because we have pronounced fairy tales not to be true.

Speech, supposed to unravel the apprehensions and perplexities of the encompassing world has in fact only intensified and extended ignorance. Formerly, the petty day-to-day life of personal wants called for a certain number of definite answers. The new broad life has plunged the child into a maelstrom of problems — those of yesterday and tomorrow, remote and the remotest. Neither is there time to consider or even to view them all. Theoretical knowledge becomes divorced from everyday life and soars above the possibility of verification.

Here temperaments — active and passive — are transformed into intellectual types: realistic and reflective.

The realistic believes or does not believe, depending on the will of an authority. To believe is the line of least resistance. It has advantages. The reflective inquires, infers, denies, rebels in thought and action. The unconscious falsehood of the former we compare favorably with the determination of the latter bent on knowing. This is an error which hinders diagnosis and makes educational therapy ineffective.

In psychiatric clinics, a stenographer takes down the patients' monologues and conversations; the same will be done in pediatric clinics of the future. Today, we operate only with the material of childish questions.

87. Life-fable. A fable about the animal kingdom. In the sea there are fishes which swallow men. Is such a fish bigger than a ship? If it swallows a man, will he suffocate; and if it swallows a saint? What do they eat if no ship sinks? How can ordinary fishes live in the sea? Why don't all fish get caught? Are there many of them, a million? Can a boat be made of such a fish? Are there any fishes from before the Flood?

The bees have a queen, why not a king — is he dead? If birds know which way to fly to Africa, then they are cleverer than men because they've never studied. Why is it called centipede — if it hasn't a hundred legs, how many does it really have? Are all foxes sly, can they change, why are they this way? If someone torments and beats his dog, does it remain faithful? And why mustn't one look when a dog jumps on another? Were stuffed animals ever alive — can a man be stuffed? Is a snail very uncomfortable? When taken out of its shell, will it die? Why is it so clammy, is it a fish, does it understand when you say: "Snail, show your horns?" Why do fish have cold blood? Why doesn't it hurt a snake when it changes its skin? What do ants say to one another?

If a spider's web is destroyed, will it die, where will it get the thread to make a new web? How can a hen come out of an egg, do you have to put the egg in the ground? The ostrich eats stones and iron, what does it make its "number two" with? How does a camel know for how many days it must store water? Doesn't a parrot understand even a little bit of what it says? Is it cleverer than a dog? Why can't a dog have its tongue cut shorter a little to be able to speak? Was Robinson the first to teach a parrot to speak, is it difficult to learn how to do it?

A colorful fable about plants.

A tree lives, respire and dies. An oak grows out of a small acorn. A little flower is transformed into a pear, can you see this? Do shirts grow on trees? The teacher said so at school (he swore to that in the name of God), is it true? Father said: "Don't talk nonsense," mother said not on trees, but flax grows in the field, and at school, the teacher said that it wasn't a subject for an arithmetic lesson, and she would explain it some other time. So it is not a lie; oh, to see one tree like that!

What is a dragon compared to such wonders? There are no dragons, but there could be. How could Krakus<sup>5</sup> kill a dragon if none such exist? If there are no mermaids why are they shown in pictures?

#### 88. Myth-peoples

The Negro is black no matter how much he may wash. His tongue is not black, nor his teeth. He is not a devil: has no horns or tail. The children are black, too. They are savage: they eat people. They don't believe in God, only in frogs. Once they believed in a tree, they were silly; the Greeks also believed in silly things; but they were clever, so why did they believe? The Negroes go about without clothes

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<sup>5</sup> Krakus or Krak, a legendary founder of Cracow (Krakow in Polish).

and don't feel shy at all. They put shells into their noses and think it is pretty; why aren't they told not to do it? They are happy: they eat figs, dates, and bananas, have monkeys, don't have to do lessons, a little boy starts straightaway hunting.

The Chinese have pigtails, they are very funny, Frenchmen are the cleverest but eat frogs and say "bonzhur." They seem so clever, and they talk so funny: "bon-pon-fon-nooz'alon." And again the Germans, "derdidas, sauerkraut." The Jews are afraid of everything and shout "ay-vay," and they cheat. A Jew must cheat no matter what; because they killed Jesus Christ. There are Poles in America, too; what are they doing there — they have their legs broken and they are told to beg or are sent to a circus. It must be fine to be in a circus show. When you've contorted your arms once can you do the tricks always? Are there really gnomes — why not? And if not, how do people know what they look like? A very little man walked down the street and everybody looked round: will Liliputians never grow, are they this small as a punishment? Were the Phoenicians magicians: how could they make glass out of sand? Is it difficult? Do highlanders cross mountains that spit fire? Are seamen a people; can they live in water; is it more difficult to be a diver or a seaman, who is more important?

Occasionally a question is disquieting: "If I smeared ink all over myself would the Negroes know me?"

It is hard for a child to accept a piece of information that is of no practical use. He would like to follow suit, try it out, and at least have a close look at it.

89. Fable-man.

Are there people who have glass eyes, can they take out their eyes, can they see with such eyes? What are wigs for and why do people laugh when somebody is bald? Are there people who speak through their bellies, do they speak through the belly-button, what is the belly-button for? Are there real drums in the ears? Why are tears salty, and why is the sea salty? Why does a girl have long hair, and also different — there? Do mushrooms grow on a heart, why are pictures of mushrooms on hearts sent on All Fools Day? Must one die? Where was I before I came into the world? The maid says that some can make you ill by looking at you #tit if you spit three times, you will not be ill. What happens inside the nose when you sneeze? Is a lunatic ill? And a drunken man? What is worse: to be a drunk or a madman? Why can't I know now how children are born? Is it true that the wind blows when somebody has hanged himself? Is it better to be blind or deaf? Why do children die and grownups go on living? Should one cry more when grandma dies or when a little brother dies? Why doesn't the canary go to heaven?



Must a stepmother beat children? Is milk from the breast cow's milk too? If you dream of something, is it really so or does it just seem to be? What makes hair auburn? Why can't one have a baby without a husband? Is it better to eat a poisonous mushroom or to be bitten by a venomous snake? Is it true that if you stand out in the rain, you will grow faster? What is an echo, why do I hear it in the woods? Why is it that when you make your hand into a tube and look through it, you can see the whole house: how does it manage to get in? What is a shadow, why can't you get away from it? Is it true that if a girl is kissed by a man with moustache, she will grow a moustache? Is it true that there are worms on teeth, but they can't be seen?

90. Fable-authority.

The child has a number of gods, semigods, and heroes. Authorities are divided into visible and invisible, animate and inanimate, the hierarchy is extremely involved. Mother, father, grandma, grandpa, aunts, uncles, house servants, policeman, soldier, king, doctor, grownups in general, priest, teacher, more experienced classmates.

Authorities — visible, inanimate: the cross, the

Torah scroll, the catechism, pictures of saints, portraits of ancestors, monuments to great men, photographs of unknown persons.

Authorities — invisible: God, health, soul, conscience, the dead, wizards, devils, angels, ghosts, wolves, distant relatives frequently remembered.

Authorities demand obedience — this is understood, painfully understood by the child. They also demand love, and that is a much tougher proposition.

"I love daddy and mummy more."

The little ones toy with an incomprehensible answer to an uncomprehended question.

An older child cannot bear that question: it is humiliating and embarrassing.

Sometimes he loves very much, sometimes less, and again — so so, enough to get by; sometimes he hates, yes, that's terrible, it can't be helped.

Respect is so complex a feeling that the child abandons personal decision and falls back on his elders' experience.

Mother bosses the maid, the maid is afraid of mother. Mother was angry with the governess. Mother must ask the doctor if he will allow it. A policeman can punish mother. A classmate need not listen to mother. The boss told daddy off, so daddy is gloomy.

The soldier is afraid of the officer, the officer, of the general, and the general,

of the king. All this is understandable. Perhaps that is why boys are so interested in military ranks and children dole out their respect for school classes so headily. This also is easily understandable.

Worthy of great respect are the intermediaries between the visible and the invisible authorities. The priest has talked to God, the doctor has some secret dealings with health, the soldier is on some sort of terms with the king, the maid knows a lot about magic spells, terrors and ghosts.

Yet, there are times when he who is accorded respect is a shepherd whittling a figure with a penknife: neither mother nor the general nor the doctor can do that.

91. Why does eating unripe fruit give me a stomach ache? Is health in the stomach or in the head. Is health the soul? Why can a dog live without a soul, while a man dies when he no longer has one? Does the doctor get sick, does he die — why? Why did all great people die? Is it true that there are men alive who write books? All kings die — they must be a sick bunch? Does a queen have wings? Was Mickiewicz<sup>6</sup> a saint? Has the parson ever seen God? Can an eagle fly right up to heaven? Does God pray? What do the angels do - do they sleep and eat, do they play ball, who makes their nightshirts for them? Do devils suffer very much pain? Was it the devils that put the poison in poisonous mushrooms? If God is displeased with bad men, why are we told to pray for them? Was Moses very much frightened when God appeared to him?

Why doesn't daddy pray — did God tell him he need not? Is a thunderbolt a miracle? Is air the same as God? Why can't we see air? Does air get inside an empty bottle all at once or bit by bit — how does it know that the bottle is empty of water? Why do poor people swear? If rain is not a miracle, why can no one make rain? What are clouds made of? That aunt who lives so far away does she live in a coffin?

How doomed to disappointment are parents (don't call them progressive) who, having told their children: "There is no God," think that will help them understand the surrounding world. If there is no God how did everything get made, what will happen when I die, where did the first man come from? Is it true that not to pray, is to live like the beasts of the field? Daddy says, there are no angels but I have seen one with my very eyes. If it isn't a sin against God, why is it wrong to kill? Even a chicken feels pain?

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<sup>6</sup> Adam Mickiewicz (1799-1855), Polish national poet

The very same doubts and anxious questions.

92. Sinister fable, mysterious poverty.

Why hungry, why poor, why freezing, why can't he buy, why no money, why don't they tell him "yes?" You say:

"Poor children are dirty, use foul language, and have lice in their hair. Poor children are diseased, and you may catch something from them. They fight, throw stones, poke eyes out. Don't go into the courtyard or to the kitchen: nothing interesting there."

But life says otherwise:

"They are not diseased at all, they run about merrily all day, drink water from the well and buy delicious dyed candies. A boy pushes a broom to and fro energetically: he sweeps the courtyard, clears the snow it's very pleasant. They don't have lice, it's not true, they don't throw stones, do have eyes and don't fight but wrestle. Rude words are funny, and it's a hundred times nicer in the kitchen than in the living room."

You tell the child:

"The poor should be cherished and respected, they are good and work hard. We ought to be grateful to the cook for preparing our meals, and to the caretaker for keeping the house in order. Play with the caretaker's children."

And life says:

"The cook killed the chicken, we shall have it for tomorrow, mother will eat it too, because when it's cooked it doesn't feel pain any more; and the cook killed it when it was alive;; though mother couldn't even watch it. The caretaker drowned some puppies, so pretty. The cook has rough hands, she splashes in dirty water. The peasant stinks, the Jew stinks. Not `lady' but `peddler woman,' not: `gentleman,' just `caretaker.' Poor children are dirty and you show them anything, they immediately say: `Gimme' and if you don't they pull your cap off, laugh at you, even spit in your face...."

Even before a child has ever heard of sorcerers he experiences fear when approaching an old beggar to give him a penny.

The child knows that here too, he is not being told everything, that in the background is something ugly, which they don't want or cannot explain.

93. Peculiarities of social life and good manners.

It is not nice to put your finger in your mouth, to pick in your nose, to sniff. It is not

nice to ask for anything, or to say: "I don't want it," to withdraw when somebody wants to kiss you, to say: "It's a lie." It is not nice to yawn, or to say: "I'm bored stiff." It is not proper to lean, to offer your hand to your elders. It is wrong to swing your legs, keep hands in pockets, look round in the street. It is rude to make loud remarks and to point.

Why?

Those bans and rules have various origins, children cannot grasp their real meaning and connection.

It is naughty to run about in one's nightshirt and to spit on the floor.

Why is it rude to remain seated when answering questions asked by adults? In the street, should the hat be raised to father, too? How should one deal with somebody who says what is not true. For example, uncle says: "You are a girl" and he is a boy; or: "You are my sweetheart," or: "I've bought you from your mother," although it is not true.

"Why do we have to be gentle with girls?" — I was asked by a schoolboy.

"That is a matter of tradition" — I replied.

"Why did you write recurrence with one `r' I asked him a few minutes later.

"That is a matter of tradition" he said with an mischievous smile.

To the same question, a mother replied:

"You see, a girl will bear children, she is delicate, and so forth."

Some time later, he had a quarrel with his sister.

"Mummy, what do I care if she is going to bear children. All I care about is that she should not be a crybaby."

The least appropriate justification seems to me the one most frequently offered:

"They will laugh at you."

It is convenient and effective, the child is afraid of the ridicule.

But they will laugh at him anyway, because he listens to his mother, confides in her, does not look forward to playing cards, to drinking and frequenting brothels in the future.

Parents, too, fearing ridicule, make senseless mistakes. The most harmful mistake is to hide the child's faults and the shortcomings in its upbringing; the child may be

bribed to pretend for a while to be well behaved in front of guests and then suddenly it gets even.

94. The mother tongue is not a set of rules and moral precepts picked and chosen for the child, but the air which its soul, together with the collective soul of the entire nation inhales. Truth and doubt, faith and custom, lover's quarrels, frivolity and seriousness, integrity and falsity, riches and poverty — all are the creation of the poet's inspiration, dribbled out by a drunken killer, centuries of degrading toil and dark years of slavery.

*I n s e r t:* In items 94 and 95 Korczak considers the meaning of Polish words and phrases. The content is not translatable.

96. A child who has not learned to despise the poor entirely likes the kitchen, not because he will find prunes and currants there but because something is happening there all the time while nothing happens in the drawing room. He likes it because a story will be more exciting there, and apart from, a tale he will hear a real life story. Further if he tells something he will be listened to attentively because in the kitchen the child is a human being and not a lap dog on a silk cushion.

"So it is to be a fairy tale? Well, alright. What was I going to say? Oh, yes, it was like this. Just a moment, let me see."

Before the story begins, the child has plenty of time to make himself comfortable, straighten his clothes, clear his throat and prepare for prolonged listening.

"So she is going through the forest. It is very dark, nothing can be seen: neither trees nor animals, not a stone. Dark as pitch all the time. And she is so afraid. Well, she crosses herself once, and that takes the fear away a little; she makes the sign of cross once more, and goes on."

I have tried to tell stories this way, it is far from easy. We have no patience, we are in a hurry, we respect neither the tale nor the listener. The child can't keep up with the narrative.

Perhaps if we could make ourselves talk in this way about linen being made from flax, the child would stop thinking that shirts grow on trees and soil is sown with ashes ...

A true story:

"I wake up in the morning, and see everything double. I look at one thing and see two. I look at the fireplace - two fireplaces; look at the table — two tables. I know, it should be one and I see two; I rub my eyes, it doesn't help. And

something knocking and knocking in my head." The child is waiting for the riddle to be solved and when finally a strange term comes — "typhoid fever" — he is ready to receive it. "The doctor says: typhoid fever ..." A pause. Speaker and listener relax.

Then comes a tale:

A simple story — how there was a farmer in a village who was not afraid of dogs and he made a bet, and he took a dog in his arms, as wild as a wolf it was, and he carried it like a newborn calf — it turned into an epic poem. And another, how a man came to a wedding dressed up in woman's clothes and nobody knew him. And then a story about a farmer seeking a stolen horse.

A little common sense and perhaps we should put a village storyteller on the platform, to teach us how to speak to children so that they would listen to us. We need sensitivity, but prefer to prohibit.

97. Is it true?

It is essential to understand the meaning of this question which we dislike because we consider it uncalled for.

Since mother, or the schoolmistress said so, it must be the truth.

Alas — the child' has found out that each of us possesses only a part of knowledge, that the coachman knows more about horses than Even father. Besides, not everyone, though he may know, is willing to speak. Sometimes they are just too lazy. Sometimes they bring the truth down to the child's level. Frequently they keep it secret or deliberately falsify.

Not only knowledge, but also faith. One believes and another does not: grandma believes that dreams mean things, mother does not. Who is right? Lastly, a lie may be a joke or just a boast.

"Is it true that Earth is a sphere?"

Everyone says it is. But if just one says it is not true, a shadow of doubt will remain.

"You have been in Italy, is it true that Italy has the shape of a boot?"

The child wants to know whether you have seen it yourself or if you got it from others. How do you know? He wants answers to be short and definite, comprehensible, unequivocal, serious and honest.

How does a thermometer measure temperature?

One says: it's the mercury; another — it's the quicksilver (why quick?) A third says that bodies expand. (Is the thermometer a body?) A fourth says that the child will find out everything in good time.

The old stork story offends and annoys children, as does any nonserious answer to a serious question — whether it be as to where children come from or why a dog barks at a cat.

"Don't make things easier for me if you don't want to, but why make them more difficult, why make fun of me just because I want to know."

The child, getting even with a friend, says:

"I know something but since that's how you feel, I wouldn't tell you."

Yes, as a form of punishment, he is not going to tell. What is it that the child has done to be punished by adults?

I am jotting down a few more children's questions:

"Doesn't anyone in the world know? Is it not allowed to know? Who said that? Did everyone say it or just one person? Is it always like that? Must it be?"

98. Is it allowed?

They say "no" because it is a sin, because it is unhealthy, because it is rude, because you are too small, "because I say 'no,' and that's that."

Here, too, are doubtful and complex issues. At one time, when mother is in a bad mood something is unhealthy; at another, even a tot will be allowed to do it when dad is in a good mood, or there are visitors.

"Why do they forbid it, what difference would it make to them?"

Fortunately, the consistency recommended by theory is unrealizable in practice. What sort of preparation for life is it to convince the child that everything is right, equitable, sensibly motivated and unchangeable? We forget to insert in the theory of education that the child should be taught not only to appreciate the truth but also to spot a lie, not only to love but to hate, not only to respect but to spurn, not only to condone but to be indignant, not only to submit but to rebel.

We often come across adults who become indignant where correction would suffice, who despise where they should commiserate. In the sphere of negative emotions we have to teach ourselves, for in teaching us the alphabet of life they teach only a few letters — the rest is kept hidden. Is it to be wondered at that our perception is erroneous?

The child feels the pinch of slavery, suffers from the fetters, longs for freedom which he won't find because, while the form may change the substance of the ban and coercion is sustained. We cannot change our adult life so long as we are reared in slavery, we cannot liberate the child as long as we remain in chains ourselves.

If I were to strip the upbringing of my child of everything that prematurely burdens it, I should call down upon him a severe judgment of his peers and adults alike. Would not the obligation to pave a new road, the effort of going against the stream involve a still more burdensome yoke?

I wrote this book in a field hospital, amid the deafening cacophony of gunfire, during the war, a program of understanding alone could not suffice.

99. Why does a girl at a neutral age already differ so much from a boy? Because in addition to the drawbacks of childhood, she is subjected to extra limitations as a woman. The boy, deprived of rights on the ground of being a child, firmly grasps with both hands the privilege of his sex and will not loosen his grip to share it with a female peer.

"I'm allowed to, I can, I'm a boy."

A girl is an intruder in their midst. One out of ten is sure to ask:

"What is she doing here with us?"

Should there be any argument among boys, they settle it among themselves without any injured pride, without a threat of banishment, but if a girl is involved, they have only the rough:

"If you don't like it, go to your own lot."

A girl who prefers to associate with boys becomes suspect in her own lot.

"If you don't like it, go back to the boys." Unpopularity responds to contempt with contempt: an involuntary act of self-defense on the part of pride assailed.

One here and there will not be put off; she scoffs at the opinion of others, she is above the crowd.

How is the general hostility of children expressed to a girl who consistently plays with boys? Perhaps I should not be far out if I were to say that it has its origins in an immutable and cruel law:

"A girl is shamed if a boy has seen her panties." This law in the form it has assumed among children, is not the invention of adults.

A girl must not run about freely, since if she falls down, she will hear a spiteful



shout before she has had time to straighten her dress.

"I saw her panties!"

"You didn't" or "well, so what?" — she says flushed, confused, humiliated.

Let her try to get into a fight, and immediately a raised voice will check her, mesmerize her.

Girls are not as deft, and therefore less worthy of respect, they don't fight but instead get offended, quarrel, complain and weep. And with all that, elders still insist on respect for girls. How happy a child sounds when he can say of a grownup:

"I don't have to listen to him."

And to a girl, he must give way, why?

Until we set girls free "it's not proper" — the root of it is their manner of dressing — all efforts to make them company for boys will be in vain. We have settled the question in a different way: we have adorned the boy with long hair and bound him with an equal number of rules of propriety, so that now they may play together — instead of rearing courageous daughters, we have merely doubled the number of effeminate sons.

Short skirts; bathing suits and sports dresses; new dances — a bold attempt at solving the problem upon new principles. How much deliberation lies behind fashion creations? I trust there is no thoughtlessness.

Away with peevishness and criticalness; in discussing the so-called touchy subjects, we hold on to cautious prejudices.

Never again will I attempt to discuss all the stages of development of all children in a short pamphlet.

100. The child which at first skims happily over the surface of life, unconscious of its sinister depths, treacherous eddies, hidden monsters, lurking hostile powers; confident, looking forward with a smile to rosy surprises, suddenly awakens from a misty half-dream and staring and holding his breath, whispers fearfully with quivering lips:

"What is it, why, what for?"

A drunkard reels along the street, a blind man feels his way with a cane, an epileptic drops unconscious on the sidewalk, a thief is led away by police, a horse is dying, a rooster is being butchered.

Father speaks in an angry voice, mother cries and cries. Uncle kissed the maid, she

shook her finger at him, they laughed and looked into each other's eyes. Someone is a blackguard and should be worked over; they speak of him with evident concern.

"What's this all about, why?"

The child does not dare ask. He feels so small, lonely and helpless in the face of these mysterious powers at loggerheads. The child, having for a time held sway, his every wish a law, equipped with the weapons of tears and smiles, rich in the possession of mummy, daddy and nanny, grows aware that he exists for their pleasure, that he is for them, and not they for him. Vigilant like a clever dog, like the slave prince, he looks around and looks into himself.

They know something, they are hiding it. They are not what they have made themselves out to be, and require him to be something different from what he really is. They pay lip-service to the truth, and lie themselves and make others lie. They speak to children in one way and in quite a different way to one another. They laugh at children. They have lives of their own and get angry if the child tries to muscle in. They want, him to believe. They are happy to hear him betray his ignorance through a naive question.

Death, animal, money, truth, God, woman, reason—there is some deception in everything, some ugly puzzle, a sinister mystery. Why won't they say what things are really like.

And the child regrets the years of childhood.

101. The second maladjustment period, of which I can say with certainty only that it exists, is the school period. It is an evasive term, an ignorant term, a concessive term, one of a great many labels put into circulation by the learned to create a semblance, to deceive laymen into believing that they know when in fact they are barely beginning to guess.

The maladjustment of the school period is neither a crossing of the dividing line between infancy and early childhood, nor yet is it the adolescent stage.

Physically: a change for the worse in outer appearance, in sleep and appetite; lowered resistance to disease, appearance of latent heredity faults, feeling low in general.

Mentally: loneliness, spiritual bewilderment, hostility to surroundings, easy submission to moral decay, mutiny of innate inclinations against enforced educational influences.

"What has happened to the boy? I simply wouldn't know him" — such is a characteristic outburst of a mother.

Sometimes:

"I thought they were just whims, I was cross, I admonished, but evidently he must have been unwell for a long time."

The close connection between the physical and mental changes observed comes as a surprise to the mother.

"I attributed it to the bad influence of friends."

Yes, but why, from among so many did he pick the bad ones, why did they find him easy game, why did he submit to their influence?

The child, while becoming painfully estranged from his nearest and dearest, while being still weakly linked with the community of children, feels the more resentful that they refuse to help, that he has no one to turn to for advice, no one to draw close to.

When one encounters those small changes at a boarding school among a considerable number of youngsters; when out of a hundred, one "goes bad" today, and another tomorrow; when all of a sudden he becomes lazy, clumsy, drowsy, whimsical, touchy, undisciplined, mendacious, only in a year to find his bearings again and "mend" himself, one can hardly doubt that the changes are related to the growth process, and one seeks knowledge of the laws governing this process by way of objective, impartial instruments: the weighing scale and the yardstick.

I feel that the time will come when the scale and the yardstick and perhaps other instruments developed by man's ingenuity, will serve as a seismograph to record the hidden powers of the system; they will enable not only diagnosis but prognosis.

102. It is not true that the child longs for a pane of glass from the window, and a star from the sky, that he can be bribed by leniency and gratification, that he is a born anarchist. No, the child has a sense of liberal duty, he likes planning and order, he does not repudiate rules and obligations. All he demands is that the burden may be not too heavy, not rub sores on his back, that he should meet with indulgence when he is hesitant, when he slips up. When weary he wants time to draw a breath.

Try, we shall see whether you can carry the load, how many steps you can make under it, whether you can manage so much day by day — that is the supreme tenet of orthophrenics.

The child wants to be treated seriously, he demands confidence, instruction and advice. But instead we treat him as a joke, we constantly suspect him, repel by want of understanding, refuse to help.

Coming to a physician for advice, a mother is unwilling to be specific, she prefers the general: "Nervous, doesn't know her own mind, disobedient." "Facts, my good lady,

symptoms."

"She bit a friend. I feel dreadful about it. She's fond of the girl, always plays with her."

A five-minute chat with the child: she hates the "friend," who laughed at her clothes, and called mummy an old hag.

Another example: the child is afraid to go to bed alone. Is driven to despair by the very thought of bedtime.

"Why didn't you tell me?"

"But I did."

The mother ignored it: shame on such a big boy — to be afraid.

The third example: he spat at his governess, pulled her hair, and could hardly be dragged away.

The governess used to take him into bed at night and tell him to embrace her. She threatened to put him in a trunk and throw it in the river.

How terribly lonely a child can be in his suffering.

103. The realistic period of cheerfulness and calm. Even nervous children become tranquil again. Liveliness, childish vigor and harmony of vital functions are recovered. Respect for elders, obedience, decent conduct, no disquieting questions, whims, outbursts. The parents are happy again. The child adjusts himself externally to the world outlook of the family and to the milieu. Benefiting by relative freedom, he does not demand more than he is granted. He is cautious in voicing opinions, well knowing in advance which ones will cause trouble.

The school with its strong tradition, active and colorful life, planning, obligations, worry, defeats and triumphs, the companionship of books make up the substance of life. Facts leave no time for barren investigations.

The child knows now. He knows that not everything in this world is as it should be, that there is good and bad, knowledge and ignorance, justice and injustice, liberty and dependence. He does not understand, he does not care much anyway. He conforms, he swims with the stream.

God? Say your prayers, and if in doubt, add alms to the prayer, like others do. A sin. Repent and God will forgive.

Death? Well, shed a few tears, wear mourning, recollect with a sigh — the same as the others.

They require exemplary conduct, good humor, naiveté, gratitude to the parents — and why not? It's O.K. by me.

"Please, thank you, I'm sorry, mother sends her regards, I wish you the best with all my heart (why not a half?)" it is so simple and easy, earns you a boost, pays off by yielding peace and quiet.

He knows just when to ask, to whom and how and what for, how to slither out of a ticklish situation, how, and with what, to please others; and all the time calculates "will it pay off."

A good frame of mind, physical well-being, make him indulgent and willing to make concessions: parents are basically O.K. The world is, generally speaking, not so bad, and life is tops, apart from a few trifles.

This stage, which can be utilized by parents to prepare themselves and the youngster for the new responsibilities ahead, is a time of naive tranquility, and of carefree relaxation.

"Arsenic and iron, a good schoolmistress, the skating ring, summer holidays in the country, the confessional and mother's preaching have done a world of good."

The parents and the child alike kid themselves that they have come to an understanding, that their difficulties are over. Yet soon the function of procreation, not less important than growth, and the least mastered by contemporary man, will begin to complicate the function of individual development still in progress, cloud the spirit and assail the body.

104. Again — only an tempt to evade the truth, to facilitate comprehension, and the danger of falling into error by thinking that we are fully aware when in fact we have apprehended only its faint outlines.

Neither the period of disturbances nor that of tranquility constitutes an explanation of the phenomenon but is merely a heading. Mastered mysteries we formulate as objective mathematical formulas. Others, with which we cannot cope, appall and irritate us. Fire, flood, hail are disasters, but only in terms of the extent of the damage incurred; so we organize fire brigades, build dams, insure and protect. We have acclimated ourselves to springs and falls. As regards man, we wage a futile struggle because, not knowing him, we are unable to bring him into harmony with life.

A hundred days to spring. Not yet a single blade of grass, not a single bud — but in the soil, in the very roots the order has already gone forth from spring which, though hidden, is there, quivering, masking itself, lurking, swelling under the snow, in the bare branches, in the biting wind ready to burst on us suddenly. Even a superficial

observation will reveal a want of order in the fickle weather of a March day, for deep down lies that which consequently, from hour to hour, ripens, accumulates and builds up. Only we do not differentiate between the iron law of the astronomic year and its random and fleeting intersections by a law less known or altogether unknown.

There are no frontier posts between the ages of man; we 'erect them, just as we have painted the map of the world in different colors, having set up artificial national boundaries only to change them every few years.

"He will grow out of it, this is an intermediate age, he will change" — and the teacher waits with an indulgent smile for a lucky chance to come and help out. Every researcher loves his work for the pain of delving and for the absorption in the struggle, but a conscientious researcher also abominates it — for the attendant fear of error, for the illusions, it involves.

Every child passes through periods of aged weariness and periods of exhilarating vitality, but this does not in any way mean that we should give in to him and shield him nor that we should resist and toughen him. The child's heart does not keep pace with his growth, so he ought to be allowed to rest, or on the other hand, perhaps he should be stirred to more lively activity to give him strength and develop him better? The issue can be resolved only for a given case and for a given time but it is essential to win the child's confidence, and to place confidence in the child.

But, essential of essentials, knowledge needs to know.

105. It is essential to make a thorough revision of everything which today is ascribed to the period of adolescence, a stage which we approach seriously and justifiably so. Perhaps, though, we approach it too seriously and one-sidedly, and above all, neglect to divide it into its constituent parts. Would not the study of the earlier stages of development enable a more objective insight into this new period which is one of a number of such stages marked by characteristics similar to those of the former periods? Would that not strip adolescence of its morbid, mysterious uniqueness? Have we not clothed youth, somewhat artificially growing mature, in the uniform of maladjustment and restlessness as we dressed up children in cheerful and carefree garb? Perhaps this is to a young boy a suggestive influence? Does not our helplessness contribute to the intensity of the process?

Is there not too much about awakening life, the rising sun, spring blossom and lofty deeds, and not enough of factual scientific material?

What predominates: general exuberant growth or merely the development of specific organs? What is it that depends on changes in the blood system, the heart and the

blood vessels, the less efficient or qualitatively modified oxydation and nutrition of the brain tissues, and what depends on gland development?

If there are phenomena which produce panic among young people, deal them painful blows, reap a heavy crop of victims, break up their ranks and play havoc, this does not mean that such is inevitable but that it is so under present social conditions. It means only that everything favors such a course of this segment of life's orbit.

A weary soldier readily gives way to panic; the more readily so if he distrusts those who lead him suspecting their treachery or seeing his superiors waver; still more if he is harassed by anxiety, ignorance as to where he is, what is in front of him, what on the flanks and what to the rear; and the most readily, in the event of an unexpected attack. Loneliness is conducive to panic. The closed ranks of a column, shoulder to shoulder, stimulate cool courage.

Youth fatigued by growth and lonely, lacking wise guidance, lost in the labyrinth of life problems, suddenly comes up against the enemy, and overestimating his power to crush, unaware of his origins, does not know where to turn and how to defend itself.

One more question.

Have we not confused the pathology with the physiology of adolescence? Has our outlook not been shaped by physicians who can see only *maturitas difficilis*, difficult maturation, abnormality? Do we not echo the error of a hundred years back when all undesirable symptoms in a child up to three years of age were attributed to the cutting of teeth? The same fate which today has overtaken the myth of "the teeth" will in a hundred years, perhaps, catch up with the myth of "sexual maturity.

106. Freud's investigations into childhood eroticism have besmirched childhood, but have they; not thereby cleansed youth? Dispelling the cherished illusion about the immaculacy of the child has dispelled another irritating illusion — that suddenly "the beast will be aroused in him and he will start wallowing in filth." I have deliberately used this current phrase, to emphasize the fatalistic nature of our outlook on the evolution of the sex urge, which is as intimately bound up with life as is growth.

The nebula of dispersed sensations, to which only a deliberate or inadvertent depravation can prematurely give a definite shape, is no blemish. No blemish either is that faint "something" which gradually over a number of years colors ever more distinctly the emotions of both sexes until the time comes when, with the sex urge mature the sex organs fully developed, the inception of a new life, the successor to a number of generations, will take place.

Sexual maturity: the system is ready to produce a sound offspring without

detriment to itself.

The maturity of the sexurge: a well crystallized desire for normal intercourse with an individual of the opposite sex.

Sometimes erotic life in male youth begins even before the sex urge has come to maturity. 'In girls, the situation varies according to whether manage or violence is involved.

That is a difficult problem, but just on that account both complacency when the child is ignorant, and annoyance when he is concerned reflect a want of sensibility.

Is it not a fact that we brutally turn the young away whenever they ask a question which treads forbidden ground because once confounded he will be deterred from coming again at the time when they will not merely be sensing but definitely feeling?

107. Love. Art has taken a half hitch on it, pinned wings onto it and then fixed a strait jacket over the wings. It has alternately knelt to it and slapped it in the face, enthroned it and condemned it to stand at the street corner, a warning to passers-by. Art has pinned on love a hundred absurdities of adoration and defilement. As for egghead science, having adjusted its spectacles, it has found love of interest only from the point of view of examining its wounds. The physiology of love is one-sided: "It serves the preservation of the species." That is just too little, too poor. Astronomy knows more about the sun than that it merely shines and warms.

And so it has come about that love is as a rule dirty and stupid, and invariably suspect and ludicrous. The only respectable attribute is the attachment that follows the joint giving of life to a legitimate child.

So we laugh when a boy of six offers half of his cake to a little girl. We laugh when a schoolgirl blushes on being hailed by a boy. We laugh when a schoolboy is caught unaware looking at the snapshot of a girl. We laugh when she rushes to open the front door to let in her brother's tutor.

We frown, however, when he and she left alone play somewhat too quietly or when fooling around fall together on the ground, panting. And we fly into a rage if the object of love in our son or daughter runs counter to our plans.- We laugh because it is remote, we frown because it approaches and we become indignant when it upsets our plans. We hurt children with derision and suspicions, we show disrespect for a feeling which yields no results.

So they hide and love.

He loves her because she is not such a silly goose as other girls, because she



is gay, not quarrelsome, keeps her hair long, because she has lost her father, because she is so sweet.

She loves him because he is not like the other boys, he is not a hoodlum, because he is funny, and his eyes shine so brightly, because he has a nice name and is so kind.

They hide and love.

He loves her because she is like the angel in a picture at the side altar, because she is pure, and he has especially gone to have a look at a woman of the streets. She loves him because he would be willing to marry her on one condition: that they should both undress in the same room — never, never. He kisses her hand twice a year, and once really kisses her.

They experience all the feelings of love, except the one that echoes brutal suspicion and is expressed in the rough:

"Instead of philandering, you would do better ... Instead of being cracked about love, it would be better if ... "

Why did they spy and why do they now bully?

Is it wrong to be in love? It isn't even love but just great fondness. More love than for their parents? Perhaps precisely this is the sin? Supposing somebody were to die? God forbid, as for me, I pray that everybody may be fit and well!

Love between adolescents is nothing new. Some are in love even as children, others scoff at love even as children.

"She is your sweetheart; has she shown it to you?"

And the boy, anxious to prove that she is not his sweetheart, makes her trip over his foot or pulls her hair hard.

Perhaps by knocking premature love out of the heads of the young, we knock in premature profligacy?

108. We say adolescence as if all the previous periods did not also involve gradual growing to maturity, now slower, now more vigorous. If we look at the weight curve, we shall understand the reason behind the fatigue, clumsiness, laziness, dreamlike pensiveness, ethereal half-tones, paleness, drowsiness, want of willpower, capriciousness and irresolution of that age which, to distinguish it from the previous stages, we may call high "maladjustment."

Growth is work, hard work for the system, while conditions of life are such that they will not give up a single school hour, a single factory day. And how often, if

premature, too sudden, or differing from the standard, growth proceeds as a condition bordering on morbidity.

The first menstruation is a tragedy for a girl because she has been brought up in awe of blood. The development of her breasts depresses her because she has been taught to be ashamed of her sex, and the breasts show her up, everybody around will see now that she is a girl.

The boy who has parallel physiological experiences, reacts mentally in a different way. He looks forward to the appearance of the fluff under his nose as a harbinger, and if he is shy of his cracking voice and windmill arms — that is because he knows that he is not ready yet, that he must still wait.

Have you noticed the envy and resentment the ill-favored girl feels in relation to the privileged boy?

Yes, formerly when she was punished, there had always been at least a shadow of guilt, but where is the guilt in not being a boy?

Girls begin to change sooner, and they zestfully manifest that single privilege.

"I'm almost grown up and you are still a kid. I can get married in three years time, and you'll still be studying."

A one-time favorite companion in childish play now gets a superior smile.

"You get married? Who will have you? I can get what I want without having to get married."

She is sooner mature to love, he to a love affair, she to marriage, he to a night club, she to maternity, he to coupling, "like flies" — as Kuprin<sup>7</sup> says — "glued together for a second on the window pane and then touched heads in foolish surprise, and parted forever."

The earlier sex antagonism now takes on a new tinge, soon to change again when she will be fleeing and he will be in pursuit of her. The end will be hostility to a wife who is a burden to him, deprives him of his privileges, and appropriates them to herself.

109. A most unfortunate tinge is imparted by the earlier latent dislike of the adult surroundings.

A frequent occurrence: the child has done something wrong, has broken a pane of

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<sup>7</sup> A. I. Kuprin (1870-1938) —well-known Russian writer

glass. He ought to experience guilt. When justly reproached, repentance is less often encountered than rebellion, an angry frown, a drooping head, defiant glances. The child looks for kindness in the teacher precisely at those moments when he feels guilty or irritated or when some misfortune has befallen him. A smashed windowpane, spilled ink, a torn suit — something has gone wrong, perhaps that against which he has been warned. And adults? Having sustained a loss in an ill calculated venture, how would they like to encounter displeasure, anger and censure?

This dislike of severe and ruthless overlords turns up whenever a child sees adults as his superiors. Then suddenly, he finds out what makes them tick.

"So that's it, this is that secret of yours; so you've kept it to yourself and my word! you had some-thing to be ashamed of."

The child has caught whispers of it before but would not believe it, had doubts but did not care much.

Now he wants the whole story, and there is somebody who can tell it; he needs the information to fight him; finally feels himself caught up in the whole business.

It used to be: "That I don't know, but this I know for sure," now everything is clear.

"So one may want to have children and yet have none, so that is why an unmarried woman can have a child, so if one doesn't want to one needn't bear children, so you can have it for money, so there, are diseases, so it's everybody?"

And they just carry on as usual, no change, they don't feel shy with one another.

Those smiles of theirs, glances, prohibitions, fears, perplexity, eloquent hints, everything once unclear now becomes lucid and shockingly real.

"Alright, now for some calculations."

The language teacher flashes glances at the math teacher.

"Come here, I'll tell you something, come closer."

And a smile of malicious triumph, peeping through the keyhole, a flaming heart sketched on blotting paper or on the blackboard.

The old girl is all dressed up. The old man is ogling. Uncle pinches the child's chin and says: "You urchin."

No, no longer an urchin — "I know a thing or two now."

They still pretend, still try to lie, so let's pursue and show up their frauds, get

back our own for the years of slavery, for the stolen confidence, for the unwanted caresses, for the confidences extracted by stealth, the demanded respect.

Respect? No, despise, scoff, bear in mind. To fight the hateful dependence.

"I'm not a child. What I think is my business. I didn't ask to be born. You envy me, mother, don't you? Grownups are no saints either."

Or to pretend not to know, to take advantage of the situation that they dare not speak openly, and let them know with a smile of a side-glance: "I know a thing or two" while the lips say: "I don't know, what's wrong with it, I don't know what you mean."

110. It should be borne in mind that a child is disobedient and spiteful, not because "he knows a thing or two" but because he is suffering. Cheerfulness is indulgent, oversensitive weariness — aggressive and petty.

It would be a mistake to believe that to understand is tantamount to being able to avoid difficulties. How often the teacher must, while sympathizing, suppress the feeling and curb an extravagant outburst in order to induce self-restraint in the child's actions, though there is none in his thoughts. Here scientific training, wide experience and self-mastery are put to a severe test.

"I do understand and forgive — but men, the world, will not."

"You must behave properly in the street and restrain extravagant indications of joy. You must not give vent to fits of rage, refrain from presumptuous remarks and opinions, be respectful to your elders."

It gets very tough at times, despite goodwill and intellectual effort; and does the child find proper conditions at home for objective consideration?

His or her sixteen years are matched to the parents' forty odd, an age of painful reflections, sometimes the last chance of protest, a point at which the ledger of the past shows a definite negative balance.

"What do I get out of life?" — the child says. "And what did I get?"

We have a foreboding that he, too, will not draw a winning ticket in the lottery of life. Even so, while we have already lost, he has something to look forward to, and it is this illusory hope that keeps him moving toward the future, and he takes no heed, is unconcerned that the grave yawns for us.

Do you remember that particular moment when his chattering woke us up early in the morning? We consoled ourselves with an embrace. Yes, in exchange for a gingerbread, we received the gem of a grateful smile. The little boots, the cape, the bib — all so

inexpensive, sweet, new and pleasing. And now, everything costs so much, gets worn out so soon, and for all that, nothing, not a single word in exchange. How many soles such a fellow will wear out in pursuit of an ideal, how quickly he grows out of his clothes, resenting having to wear anything oversize.

"Here, spend this...."

He must have some fun, he has his own little wants. He accepts the money with and reluctance, like alms offered by an enemy.

The child's pain aggravates the parents' pain and the parents' suffering strikes inadvertently at the child's pain. If the clash is so violent, how much more so it would be if the child, against our will, of his own in a lone effort, did not prepare himself gradually to the idea that we are not omnipotent, omniscient and perfect.

111. If we look closely not at the collective soul of children of this century but at its constituent parts, not at a community but at individuals, we shall see again two diametrically different organizations.

We find the child who used to whimper faintly in the cradle, was slow in pulling himself up, would surrender a biscuit without protest, watch others playing "ring-around-a-rosie" from a distance, and now drowns rebellion and pain in nocturnal tears seen by no one.

We find the child who used to become livid with screaming, and could not be left alone for an instant for fear that he would wrench a ball out of another child's hands, and used to be bossy: "Well, who is going to play; hurry up, get hold of one another's hands!" and now thrusts his program of rebellion and active restlessness upon his peers, upon the entire community.

I have laboriously sought an answer to the painful riddle as to why in community life, among youngsters and adults alike, an honest thought must lie low or be timidly persuasive while effrontery pushes itself noisily in. Why is good-heartedness a synonym for stupidity or impotence. How often a sensible civic leader and a conscientious politician who withdraws himself, not knowing why, would find the answer in the words of Jellenta<sup>8</sup>:

"I haven't the big mouth necessary to reply to all their big ideas and malicious sallies and I cannot talk and reason with those who have an abusive answer from the gutter ready for everything."

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<sup>8</sup> Cezary Jellenta (1861-1935) — nom de plume of Napoleon Hirszband, writer and literary critic.

What can we do to insure that the active and passive may take their place as equally vital forces in a collective organism, that the elements from every fertile soil may be allowed freely to circulate in it.

"I'll not stand for it. I know what I'm going to do. I have had enough of this" — thus active rebellion.

"You'd better pass it up. What's the use? Perhaps it's all your imagination."

These simple phrases, word of honest hesitation or frank surrender have a soothing effect, a greater power than the artful phrases of tyranny which we, adults, cultivate in the effort to subjugate children. It is no shame to listen to the advice of someone of the same age, but to let oneself be convinced by a grownup, even more, to be moved by him — that is to allow oneself to be caught unawares and deceived, to admit one's own poverty. Unfortunately, they are right in their distrust. But I repeat, how should reflectiveness be shielded against greedy ambition, quiet deliberation against noisy argumentation? How can we teach to distinguish an ideal from "pretence and career?" How can we protect a dogma from scorn, and a youthful ideal from experienced and treacherous demagoguery?

The child .steps into all of life, not into just sexual life, matures, not just sexually.

If you have realized that you could not solve any of the problems without their participation, if you declare everything that has been said here, and at the end you hear:

"Well, you passive ones, let's go home! — Don't be so active or you'll get it in the neck. — Hi you, dogmatic sphere, you've snatched my cap ..." — then don't think that they are being sarcastic, don't say: it's not worthwhile....

112. Daydreams. Playing at Robinson Crusoe has changed into a daydream of voyages, playing cops and robbers — into a dream of adventure.

Again, life is inadequate, so a dream becomes an escape from it. In the absence of material for thought, it appears in poetic form. Feelings that find no outlet become daydreams. The daydream is the life program. If we knew how to decode dreams, we should be able to see that they do come true.

If a country boy dreams of being a doctor, and becomes a male nurse, he has fulfilled his life program. If he dreams of riches, and dies on a divan bed, that is only an apparent frustration of his dreams: he did not dream of the toil for gain but of the delights of lavish spending; he dreamt of champagne and drank whisky, he dreamt of salons and made merry in a pub; he wanted to distribute gold and distributed coppers. He dreamt of being a clergyman and is a teacher; no, only a caretaker; but remains a

clergyman though a teacher, and a clergyman though a caretaker.

She dreamt of being an all-powerful queen; having married a clerk does she not tyrannize husband and children? She dreamt of being a queen loved by her people; does she not queen it now in a village school? She dreamt of being a famous queen; has she not won fame as a gifted, exceptionally skillful needlewoman or bookkeeper?

What is it that attracts young people to the arty Bohemians? Some — profligacy; others — the bizarre; still others — intensity of living, ambition and career. Yet, only that one loves art, and that one of them all is a real artist. That one will not pawn his art. He died a pauper and unsung but he dreamt of achievement, not of honors and gold. Read Zola's *L'Oeuvre*. Life is more logical than we think.

She dreamt of the cloister and came to a bawdy house, yet remained a sister of charity. Outside work hours, she tends her sick companions, soothes them in sorrow and suffering. Another wanted to enjoy herself, and she does enjoy herself perfectly in a cancer home when a dying man smiles at her chatter, and follows her blithe silhouette with eyes misting over.

Poverty.

A scientist thinks of it when studying, planning and creating theories and hypotheses; a youth dreams that he builds hospitals, is a philanthropist.

is in children's dreams, not yet for a while Venus. The one-sided formula which makes love the egoism of the gender is harmful. Children love others of the same sex, old people, men never seen and even nonexistent. Even if they already experience the sensations of desire, they still go on loving the ideal, not the body.

The need for struggle, silence, bustle, work, sacrifice; the desire for possession, enjoyment, exploration; ambition, passive imitation — all these are reflected in a daydream whatever its form.

Life makes dreams come true, it takes a hundred youthful dreams, and molds them into a single reality.

The first stage of adolescence: I know but I don't feel yet, I feel but I don't believe yet, I sternly judge what nature does to others; I suffer because I am in danger, I'm not sure at all that I'll be spared. But I am blameless, in despising others, it is only for myself I fear.

The second stage: in a dream, semidream and daydream, in the excitement of a game, despite resistance, despite aversion, despite orders, there creeps in more and more frequently and clearly a feeling that adds to the painful conflict with the outside

world, the conflict with the self. A thought driven away obtrudes alarmingly like a portent of disease, like the first shiver of approaching fever. There is an incubation period for erotic emotions which puzzle and frighten, and later on evoke alarm and exasperation.

The epidemic of whispered, giggling secrets dies down. The child enters the stage of confidences. Friendship grows deeper. The wonderful friendship of two orphans lost in the thicket of life, who swear to comfort, never to abandon each other, never to part in need.

The child, being himself unhappy no longer approaches misery, suffering and shortcomings with a formula learned by rote and a gloomy and fearful surprise, but with a warm pity. Preoccupied with himself and troubled, he cannot afford to sympathize with others for too long but he will always find a brief moment and a tear, for a girl seduced, a child beaten up, and a convict in chains.

Every new watchword, idea and forceful slogan finds in the child an eager listener and an ardent supporter. He does not read a book but swallows it like an addict and prays for a miracle! The childish God-fable, becomes the God-malefactor, the origin of all misfortune and evil. The One who can and will not, returns as God-mighty-mystery, God-forgiveness, God-reasonabove-human-thought, God-haven-in-the-storm.

Formerly: "If grownups make one pray, then evidently prayer is a lie. If they indict a friend, evidently he will be a guide to me, for what trust can one have?" That has changed now: hostility has given place to sympathy. The designation "dirty trick" is inadequate, something infinitely more complex is hidden here. But what? A book quiets doubts only superficially, for an instant. That is the time when the child can be won back, he is waiting and willing to listen.

What shall we tell him? Anything except how flowers are inseminated and how hippopotami propagate, and the evils of masturbation. The child feels that something far more important than the clean hands and sheets is involved, that this spiritual conception, his entire sense of responsibility for his own life, is being weighed in the balance.

Oh, to be once more an innocent child who believes, trusts, does not think!

Oh, to be a grownup at long last, to get away from that "intermediate age," to be like everybody else!

A monastery, silence, pious meditation!

No — glory, brave deeds.



Voyages, changing scenes and emotions. Dancing, entertainment, the seacoast, the mountains.

Death above all; nothing to live for, why all the struggle?

The educator, depending on how he has prepared himself over many years for this particular moment, watching the child keenly, can offer him a plan of how to learn to know and how to prevail over himself. How much effort is to be applied. How to seek one's own way of life.

114. Flamboyant pranks, empty laughter, the gain of youth.

Yes, the joy of being in a crowd, the sense triumph in a longed for victory, an immature on of faith at being able to shake unrealistically the foundations of the world.

"So many of us, so many young faces, clenched fists, so many sharp teeth, we shall not be driven the wall." A wine glass or a tankard completes the dispelling of doubts.

Down with the old world, up with the new life!

They ignore the one who, with a mocking twinkle in the eyes, says "you fools." They do not see that other who with sad eyes mutters: "poor saps." They do not see a third one who wants to seize the propitious moment, to launch something, to take some oath, so that the noble exaltation may not be dissipated in an orgy, and become diluted in meaningless slogans....

Frequently, we regard collective exultation as a sign of excessive energy, while in fact it is merely a manifestation of restless weariness which, briefly unfettered, is stirred by an illusion. Recall the high spirits of a child on a train. Shutting his eyes to the length of the journey and to his destination, seemingly enjoying the impressions, made capricious by excess of impressions and by expectation he laughs merrily and ends up in bitter tears.

Explain why the presence of adults "spoils the game," introduce uneasiness and constraint.

A gathering. A pompous, solemn atmosphere. The adults so skillfully in harmony with the moment. And those two look into each other's eyes, and choke with suppressed laughter bringing tears into their eyes. They cannot resist the spiteful temptation to nudge each other, to make a sarcastic remark, increasing the danger of a scandal.

"Remember, don't laugh. Only don't try to look at me. Don't do anything to make

me laugh."

And after the event:

"Did you see how red her nose was. His tie was all twisted. They almost melted. Show us; you do it so well."

Another thing:

"They think I'm enjoying myself. Let them think. It only shows how little they know us...."

The zealous toils of youth. Preparations, great effort, activity toward a definite end which needs quick hands and ingenuity. Here, young people are in their element, here you will see real laughter and cheerful excitement.

To be planning, making up one's mind, getting dead tired, seeing the job through, laughing at failure and at surmounted difficulties.

115. Youth is noble.

If you call it courage when a child leans over the window sill on the fourth floor without fear. If you call it kindness when he gives a lame old beggar a gold watch which mother left on the table. If you call it a crime when he throws a knife at a brother and pokes his eye out. I agree. Youth is noble for it has no experience in the sphere — great as half of man's life — of earning a living, in the intricacies of the social ladder and in the rules of community life.

Inexperienced, they think that kindness or dislike, respect or contempt can be manifested according to what one actually feels.

Inexperienced, they think that one can enter into relations and sever them at will, conform to the accepted forms or slight them, comply with conventions or flout them.

"Damn it, I don't care, let them say what they like, I say no and that's that, what's it got to do with me anyway?"

They have barely managed to catch a breath of air, partially extricated themselves from parents' rule, and here again — new fetters, not so fast!

Just because someone is rich or high up, because somebody somewhere may think something out and say it?

Does anybody instruct young people as to which compromises are essential in life and which can be avoided and at what cost. Which cause pain without besmirching, and which deprave? Is there anyone to demonstrate the limits within which hypocrisy is

propriety of the don't-spit-on-the-floor or don't-wipeyour-nose-on-the-tablecloth type and not — an offense?

We used to tell the child: They will laugh at you.

Now we should add: and starve you to death, too.

You say: the idealism of youth. The illusion that others can be convinced and the world made better.

May I ask — what use do you make of this nobleness? You kill it in your own children, yet you clamor for idealism, cheerfulness and freedom for nameless "youth" as formerly you did for innocence, graciousness and love in your own children. And you make it look as though ideals are just as much a disease as measles or smallpox, that they are some kind of innocent obligation like visiting an art gallery on a honeymoon.

"I was Farys<sup>9</sup> too. I saw a Rubens."

Nobleness cannot be like a morning haze, nor yet like a sunbeam. If we do not yet feel equal to the task, let us content ourselves for the time being with rearing honest men and women.

116. Happy the author who comes to the end of his work conscious that he has filled it with what he knows and which he has read, with assessments in accordance with his conception. Giving it to the printer he experiences a serene satisfaction that he is giving life to a mature infant; ' fit for independent existence.

But not always. The author may be out of harmony with his reader, who demands standard learning with a ready prescription on how to administer it.

Here the creative process becomes an intense listening to one's own indeterminate, unproved, spontaneous thoughts. The end of the work, a calm evaluation, a rude awakening from a dream. Every chapter reproaches us, deserted before it had come into being. The final thought of the book does not round off a whole, and it leaves the writer puzzled that this is the end. This and no more?

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Supplement? That would mean beginning all over again, jettisoning what I know, running into new problems, which I can barely feel. It would mean writing a different book — unfinished just the same.

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<sup>9</sup> The Arabian horseman. Title of Mickiewicz's poem.

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The child brings into the mother's life an exquisite song of silence. Its content, program, power and creativeness depend on the number of hours she spends with him when, though alive, he demands nothing. It hangs upon the thoughts she spins laboriously around him in silent contemplation. In her child the mother matures to the inspirations required for his upbringing.

Not from a book but from oneself. Then every book will become a small addition. As for mine — it will have served its purpose if it has convinced of this.

In wise solitude, watch....

### ***The Boarding School<sup>10</sup>***

1. I want to write a book about the city boarding school where a hundred orphans, boys and girls of school age, are brought up under the care of a small staff, in its own building, with a limited attendant personnel.

The boarding school cannot boast of a rich literature by any means. All we find are either works dealing exclusively with hygiene or containing a passionate criticism of the actual principle of children's upbringing in a group.

I became familiar with the quaint and the murky secrets of the boarding school as the teacher in charge of the dormitory, the washroom, the recreation hall, the dining room and the lavatories. I do not know children as they are in their classroom gala dress, I know them in their everyday clothes.

The book may prove of interest not only to a teacher confined in a military type of barrack, such as the boarding school is, but also in the cell-type prison which is what the family happens to be for the child of today.

In the boarding school and in the family alike, children are tormented, the more energetic try to get the better of those in charge, to break from under their watchful control. Stubbornly and desperately they fight for their rights.

I fear that the reader may be willing to believe me. Then the book will harm him. So I give warning: the road that I have chosen toward my goal is neither the shortest nor the most convenient but it is the best for me — because it is mine — my own. I found it not without effort, not without pain, and only when I had come to understand that all the books read and the experience and opinions of others — were misleading.

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<sup>10</sup> The term Korczak uses is "Internat," residential institution for children.

Publishers sometimes print the golden thoughts of great men. How much more useful it would be to make a collection of sophisms uttered by the classics of truth and knowledge. Rousseau commences *Emil* with a sentence that stands in contradiction to the entire contemporary knowledge of heredity.

2. My book is designed to be as short as possible because it is addressed primarily to a young colleague suddenly thrown into the whirlpool of the most difficult educational problems, the most involved conditions of life, and now stunned and resentful, he has sent out a cry for help.

The poor fellow has no time for study. He was twice dragged out of bed in a single night. One of the youngsters had a toothache, began to cry — he had to encourage and treat him: He had barely dropped off to sleep again when another roused him. The child had a terrible dream: corpses, robbers — they wanted to kill him and threw him in the river. So he soothed the child and persuaded him to go to sleep again.

A fatigued man cannot study thick volumes on education at night. He cannot keep his eyes open, and if he does not get enough sleep, he will be irritated, impatient — incapable of implementing the precious principles he has learned. I shall make it brief so that his night's rest may not be spoiled.

3. The teacher has no time for study in the daytime. He has barely managed to settle down to read when the first child comes to complain of a neighbor who pushed him while he was writing, so that he made an inkblot — and now he does not know whether to begin all over again or leave things as they are, or tear the page out. The second child is limping, he has a nail in his shoe and cannot walk. The third comes to ask whether he may take the dominoes. A fourth asks for the key to the cupboard. Five offers a handkerchief, he has found: "I found it and I don't know whose it is." The sixth hands over for safekeeping four coins, received from an aunt. Seven comes along to get back his hanky: "It's mine, I left it on the window sill for a moment and he took it right away."

Over there in the corner, a clumsy little fellow is playing with a pair of scissors. He will litter the place with bits of paper and cut himself — where did he get the scissors? An animated argument in the middle of the room, liable at any moment to become a fight. That must he prevented. The one who had a toothache at night is now running wildly about, and will bump into someone who is writing or upset the inkpot on the floor. The tooth may start aching again when night comes.

A teacher must be very devoted to manage reading through even a short book.

4. Anyhow he is none too eager because he does not believe.

A writer by introducing numbers of quotations will demonstrate his learning. He will say over and over again the clichés of common knowledge. The same pious wishes, lukewarm cutes, impractical suggestions. The teacher ought to ... ought to ...ought to. In the

final analysis, the teacher must decide in all matters, greater and lesser, for himself, to the best of his knowledge and ability, and, most important of all — conclude for the possible.

"All very fine in theory," he consoles himself painfully.

And the teacher resents the writer for being seated at a comfortable desk in the quiet of his study, laying down rules without having to come face to face with the nimble, noisy, disturbing and unruly crowd which enslaves everyone who does not want to be a tyrant. Every day, this one or that among the crowd poisons the teacher's life so thoroughly that the rest can hardly dispel his gloom.

Why do they tantalize him with the mirage of great learning, important responsibilities, lofty ideals while he is and must remain a simple worker.

5. He feels he is losing the genuine enthusiasm that has borne him along in his work, regardless of this or that preaching. Formerly he used to enjoy the idea of arranging amusements, preparing a surprise for the children. He wanted to bring into the dull and monotonous life of the boarding school a gust of fresh, joyful air. Now he is thankful if he can record the hopeless: "no change." If none of the children has vomited, broken a windowpane, if he has heard no sharp reprimand — that is a good day.

He is losing vitality. He shuts his eyes to minor offenses, tries to see less and know less — only what is absolutely necessary.

He is losing initiative. Formerly when he received candy or a toy, he already had a plan on how to use it best. Now he quickly distributes the treats, to get it over with, the quicker the better, it will save squabbles, complaints, protests. Any new equipment or object — and again he must watch out, because they may break or spoil it. A flowerpot in the window, a picture on the wall — so much to be done, but he does not know what or how, has no desire, or perhaps simply cannot. Anyway, he no longer bothers.

He is losing faith in himself. Formerly, not a single day went by without his noticing something new in the children or in himself. The children used to be fond of him, now they keep their distance. Is he still fond of them? He is rough, brutal at times.

Perhaps soon he will recognize his likeness to those of whom he once wanted to make

an example, whom he disliked for their coldness, passivity and unscrupulousness.

6. He is resentful of himself, the surroundings and the children.

A week ago, he received news that his sister was ill. The children found out, respected his concern and went quietly to bed. He was grateful to them.

Yet when the day before yesterday a new boy arrived, they stole from him the candy he brought from home, and a pen case, and a picture, then, warned him that if he squealed, they would beat him up. Involved in this rotten business had also been those whom he had believed to be decent.

A child puts his arms around his neck, says "I love you" -- and asks for a new suit.

That same child — at one time brimming with tenderness so that he wonders where a child can acquire so much subtle tactfulness and genuine emotion; and at another, he is repelled by that child's fierce perversity.

I want, I must, I ought to — it's hopeless, is it all worthwhile?

Theoretical notions become so interwoven with personal everyday experience that he loses the thread — the more he thinks, the less he understands.

7. He does not understand what is happening around him.

He strives to limit his instructions and prohibitions to the absolute minimum. He gives the children freedom; not satisfied, they demand more.

He tries to penetrate their worries. He approaches a boy who, unlike his usual self, is keeping out of the way, is quiet and indifferent. "What is troubling you? Why are you so sad?" "Nothing's the matter, I'm not sad," the boy answers reluctantly. He wants to stroke his hair, the boy shrinks away.

There a group of children are holding a lively conversation. He approaches — they fall silent. "What were you talking about?" "Oh, nothing much."

It seems they are fond of him. But he does know that they laugh at him. They trust — yet always keep something back. Apparently, they believe what he tells them and yet they lend an eager ear to vicious gossip.

He does not understand, does not know, he feels as though among strangers and enemies — and he is sick at heart.

Teacher, take heart! You are already well on the way to abandoning the prejudiced, sentimental view of the child. You already know that you do not know. Things are not what you have thought, so they must be different. Without realizing it, you are already searching for the right track. Feeling lost? Remember, it is no

shame to be lost in the great jungle of life. Though you may stray, keep on looking around keenly and you will see a mosaic of beautiful images. You are suffering? In pain, truth is born.

8. Be true to yourself, seek your own road. Learn to know yourself before you attempt to learn to know the children. You should realize what you are capable of before you begin to bring home to the children the scope of their rights and duties. Of them all, you yourself are the child whom you must learn to know, rear, and above all, enlighten.

One of the worst blunders is to think that pedagogy is the science of the child; no! It is the science of man.

A quick-tempered child hit someone in anger, an adult killed in anger. A good-natured child was cheated out of a toy, and adult was tricked into signing a promissory note. An irresolute child bought candy with the dime given him for a copybook, a grownup gambled away a fortune at cards.

There are no 'children, just people, but with a different conceptual scale, different range of experience, different urges, different emotional reactions. Remember that we 'do not know them.

Immature!

Ask an old man, he will consider that at forty you are still immature. Even whole classes of society are by their weakness made immature. Nations need foreign aid; immature, too, they have no arms.

Be yourself and watch children carefully whenever they can be what they really are. Look, and make no demands. For you will not force a lively, impulsive child to become cool, calm and collected. The distrustful and taciturn, will not turn frank and talkative. The ambitious and obstinate, will not be gentle and submissive.

And what about yourself?

If you cannot strike an impressive attitude and exercise powerful lungs, in vain will you try to silence a noisy crowd with a loud voice. You have a kind smile and a patient look, just say nothing. Perhaps they will quiet down anyway? They are seeking their own way. Do not demand of yourself that you become right away an earnest, fully-fledged educator with psychological bookkeeping in your heart and an educational code in your head. You have a wonderful ally, a magician -- youth; yet you rely on a grumbler, a blunderer - experience.

9. Not — what ought to be, but — what is possible.



You want to be loved by the children, yet your conscientious, responsible and regulation-bound work compels you to press them into the narrow, suffocating molds of present-day life, present-day hypocrisy and violence. They resist, defend themselves, and feel only resentment toward you.

You want them to be frank and well behaved, whereas wordly forms are dishonest and frankness is impertinence. That boy who yesterday was sad and you asked him "why?" Do you know what he thought? "Leave me alone." He is already insincere, he would not say what he thought. All he did was to withdraw resentfully, and you felt hurt.

Complaining is wrong, informing is detestable, then how can one penetrate their problems, suffering and errors?

Not to punish and not to reward. But there must be a set of regulations as well as an agreed signal, to which they must listen. The bell must call them all to dinner, but suppose they are late, stay away, or refuse to come?

You must be an example but how will you deal with your faults, deficiencies, and absurdities? You will try to hide them. You will succeed alright. The harder you try to hide your faults, the more will the children pretend not to notice, not to understand. And they will only poke fun at you silently behind your back.

Tough — very tough — I agree! Everyone of us runs into difficulties but they can be resolved in various ways. The solution will be only approximately right. For, life is not a collection of arithmetic problems with always one answer, and at most two procedures.

10. Children should be assured the freedom necessary for harmonious development of all their mental powers, allowed fully to expand their latent powers, be brought up with respect for virtue, goodness, beauty and freedom.... Be naive — go on and try! Society has given you a little caveman to roughhew, to chip and to make acceptable. That little caveman is waiting. Also waiting are the state, the church and the future employer. They demand, wait and watch. The state demands patriotism, the church — faith, the employer — honesty, and all demand mediocrity and submission. One found to be too tough will be broken; a docile one — ill-treated; a wicked one occasionally bribed; a poor one will always find an obstacle across the road. It is placed there by whom? By no one, by life.

You set no great value upon a child, an orphan, a fledgling that has dropped out of the nest. If it dies, no one will bother. Its grave will soon be covered with weeds. Try, you'll find out for yourself, and your eyes will fill with tears. Read the history of the Prevost home for destitute children in free

republican France. The child has the right to desire, to claim, to ask. He has the right to grow and ripen, and having matured, to bear fruit. And the purpose of education: that the child may learn not to make noise, not to wear out shoes, to listen and do as he is told, not to criticize but to trust that everything is done solely for his own good.

Harmony, good nature, liberty — that is the command: love thy neighbor. Take a look at the world and laugh.

11. A new child enters.

You have given him a haircut, a bath, cut his nails, changed his clothes, and he is already indistinguishable from the others.

He can already bow properly, does not say: "I want" but "please"; if a visitor comes, he knows he should greet him. Soon he will recite a piece of poetry on the school platform, wipe his shoes, stop spitting on the floor and start using a handkerchief.

Do not deceive yourself that you have wiped his mind clean of the gloomy memories, bad influences, painful experiences. Those clean and nicely dressed children will remain all twisted up inside, aching and faded. There are still putrid wounds that need months of patient tending, and even then scars will remain, always liable to reopen and fester.

A boarding school for orphans is a clinic where you come across every possible sickness of the body and soul when the system has a low resistance, and where morbid heritage delays and hinders recovery. And should the boarding school fail to become a health resort of the spirit, it is in danger of becoming a source of infection.

You have firmly locked and bolted the boarding-school door, but you will not be able to prevent the evil whisper of the street from seeping through, to shut out the unfiltered and cruel voices which no rosary of moral teaching will silence. The teacher may close his eyes and pretend not to see, but the children will be the more wickedly wise for that.

12. You say: I agree to compromises; I accept such child material as life happens to offer me; I bow to the necessary conditions of work, hard though they are. But I demand freedom of action in small things, assistance and facilities in the technical part of the work.

Naive! You can demand nothing!

Your superior will blame you for the paper littering the floor, for the little brat who

has bumped his head, for the aprons which are not as clean as they should be and for the beds which are not sufficiently neatly made.

You want to expel a child thinking it necessary for the good of the rest. You are asked not to do it. Perhaps he will mend his ways?

It is cold in the rooms, and most of the anemic children have frostbitten fingers. Coal, warmth are expensive and the cold depresses the children physically and mentally. No, they say, children should be toughened.

You express surprise that two eggs give barely a spoonful when scrambled. You get a sharp reminder to mind your own business.

A fellow teacher surely knew where the key to the cupboard was, maybe he hid it deliberately, just to make you look for it. When he goes out in the evening, he leaves the dormitory unattended because he will not let anybody interfere with his room, and his children.

Despotic whims. and ignorance on the part of the authorities, dishonesty in the administration, ill will and want of faith on the part of a fellow teacher.

Add to all this: the vulgarity of the servants, an argument with the laundrywoman over a sheet you are said to have mislaid, with the cook over burned milk and with the caretaker over an untidy staircase.

If the teacher happens to find more satisfactory working conditions, all the better. If he experiences such as are described precisely above, he should not be surprised, or become indignant, but only sensibly assess his strength and energy — for a longer haul than just the first few months.

13. A bird's-eye view of the boarding school. Bustle, youth, gaiety.

What a happy community of naive little folk. So many children and yet how clean it all is. The harmony of the school uniforms, the rhythm of choral singing.

The bell — quiet. Prayers — they sit down at the desks. No fights or arguments.

Here a pretty little face, there smiling eyes flash. That lean one there — poor kid.

The teacher is so kind and self-possessed. A child with a question — he answers. He warns another kindly with upraised finger. The gesture is understood and obeyed. A bunch of the most curious will press around you.

"Are you happy here?"

"Oh, yes."

"Are you fond of your teacher?"

They smile disarmingly.

It is rude not to answer when one is asked. Are you fond of him?

"Yes, of course."

Pleasant work, a grateful task. Small worries, small wants, the little world of children.

"Here are some honey cakes."

They say their "thank-yous" politely. None of them grabbed.

14. Casual visitor — you should look rather at the children who stand aside. There in the shadows stands a gloomy one with a bandaged finger. Two older ones are whispering, grinning sarcastically, keenly following you with their eyes. Several are so preoccupied that the presence of a stranger fails to get their attention. Another pretends to be reading to escape being approached with some conventional question. Still another, taking advantage of the teacher's involvement, quietly sneaks out to do some mischief undisturbed.

There is also one impatiently waiting for you to leave, because he is anxious to ask the teacher about something or other. Another is pushing forward because he wants to be seen. Yet another hangs back wanting to be the last to come up and be on his own with you. He knows that the teacher will say: "He is our songbird — she is our little housekeeper — he has had a bad time." A hundred different hearts beat beneath exactly the same uniform, and in each case a different difficulty, different work, different cares and concerns.

A hundred children — a hundred individuals who are people — not people to be, not people of the future, not people of tomorrow, but people now ... right now ... today. Not a miniature world but a real world of values, virtues, shortcomings, aspirations and desires not trifling, but significant, not innocent but human.

Instead of asking yourself whether they love, ask rather how it is that they listen, that there is method, program and order.

"There is no punishment ..."

"Don't believe it."

15. What are your duties? To be watchful.

If you choose to be a supervisor, you need do anything. If you are a teacher, you have a sixteen-hour workday without intermission, without holidays, a day made up of work that can be neither defined, nor perceived, nor controlled, comprised of words, thoughts, feelings whose name is legion. On the surface, order, seemingly proper conduct, a display of conformity. All that is needed is a firm hand and numerous prohibitions. Children are always martyrs to concern for their alleged well-being. The greatest wrongs stem from precisely this concern.

A teacher knows just as well as a supervisor that a child struck in the eye may go blind, that it is always in danger of fracturing an arm or spraining an ankle, but he also remembers the many cases in which a child nearly lost an eye but not quite; nearly fell out of the window but not quite; bruised himself badly and might have broken a leg but did not. He knows that in fact serious accidents are relatively rare and, what is more, nothing one can do will prevent them.

The more miserable the psychological level, the more colorless the moral make-up, the greater the concern for the teacher's own peace and comfort, the greater the number of orders and prohibitions dictated by apparent concern for the well-being of the children.

A teacher anxious to avoid unpleasant surprises fearful of being blamed for anything wrong that may happen, is a tyrant of children.

16. A teacher excessively concerned for child morality will become a tyrant.

Morbid suspicion may go so far that not merely a pair, not only two who go somewhere out of the way will arouse it, but we shall see the child's own hands as an enemy.

Someone unknown, someone somewhere, sometime forbade children to hold hands under the blankets.

"But I am cold, I am afraid, I can't sleep."

If the room is warm, he will leave not only his hands but his whole body uncovered. If he is sleepy, he will fall asleep in five minutes. How many similarly stupid suspicions arise from want of knowledge of the child....

I once watched several older boys whispering mysteriously and leading smaller boys to the toilet. The youngsters returned to the room some time later looking confused. It cost me a good deal of effort to remain at my desk and go on writing. The game proved to be quite innocent. One of the boys who works at a photographer's had covered an empty cigar box with an apron. Those who wanted their picture taken were being placed under the tap in the toilet wall and while

keeping still with an appropriate expression on their faces, waiting for the snap to be made, on the word "three" cold water would be turned on their heads.

A perfect object lesson in sensible caution for youngsters. Having once received such a cold shower, they will not be so eager to go to the toilet the next time they receive a whispered invitation.

Teacher, if you are watching fanatically over the morality of your children you may yourself be not completely in order.

17. A theoretician classifies children into categories by temperaments, intellectual types, idiosyncrasies. A practical man knows above all trouble-free and troublesome children — average children, who can be left to their own devices, and extraordinary, who take up a great deal of time.

Troublesome: the youngest — below average age; the oldest — critical and obstinate; awkward, sloppy and sickly; violent and harassing.

A child who has tired and outgrown the severity of the boarding school, feels humiliated by the general rules of the dormitory, dining room, prayer, games and walks.

A child with an aching ear from which there is a discharge, one with a boil developing on his head, a hangnail, a headache, a fever, a cough.

A child who is slow to dress, wash, comb his hair and eat. His bed is the last to be made, he is the last to hang up his towel, keeps others waiting for his plate and cup: he delays the tidying up of the dormitory, clearing the table, and sending the dishes to the kitchen.

A child who incessantly pesters with questions, complains, has a grudge, and cries, who does not like children's company and obviously clings to you. There is always something or other such a child doesn't know. He always asks for or needs something. He always has something important to tell.

A child who answers back rudely, has offended a member of the staff, falls out with or hits somebody, throws a stone, intentionally breaks or tears this or that, and always says he doesn't want to.

Sensitive, capricious, hurt by a mild reproach, sad eyes, but indifferent to penalties.

A likeable mischief-maker, who will push pebbles down the washbasin, swing on the door, leave the tap running, shut the damper of the kitchen stove, disconnect the bell, mark the wall with a blue pencil, scratch the window sills with a nail, cut his initials in the table. Murderously inventive and incalculable.

Such are the thieves of your time, the testers of your patience, the goaders of your conscience. You struggle with them, though you know they are not at fault.

18. The children get up at six in the morning: "Children, get up!" You say, and it is done.

In fact, if you tell a hundred children to get up, the eighty "normals" will do so, dress, wash, ready for the new morning's breakfast bell. But eight will have to be told twice, and five, three times. At three you will have to shout. Two need to be shaken awake. One has a headache, is unwell, perhaps is faking.

Ninety children will get dressed by themselves, but two have to be helped, in order to be on time. One has mislaid his suspenders, another has a frostbitten toe and cannot put on his shoe. One has a knot in his shoelace. One gets in the way of another making the bed. One does not want to pass the soap, another pushes in, or splashes water around while washing, has inadvertently taken the wrong towel, spills water all over the floor. He has put his right shoe on the left foot or cannot button up his fly for lack of one button; someone has taken his shirt, it was there a second ago. Someone is crying bitterly: it is his bowl, he always washes in it, but someone else got there first this morning.

It has taken you five minutes to feed eighty of the children. Ten gulped their food down in a minute, and with two you were occupied for nearly half an hour.

The same will happen again tomorrow, only a different one will mislay something, a different one will be ailing and still another one will make his bed improperly.

The same will happen in a month, in a year, in five years.

19. You were supposed only to have to say: "Children get up!" And yet you would not have managed it....

If not for one of the trouble-free children who found the mislaid suspenders or shirt, and another who produced an odd slipper for the frostbitten foot, and a third who undid the knot.

For the suspenders were out of sight under the bed and the finder had to crawl under to get it. The slipper had to be brought from a room a long way off. And your helper, before he could undo the knot, had to work long, first with his fingernails, then with his teeth, and finally with a nail he found yesterday, and even with a knitting needle especially borrowed for that purpose.

You cannot fail to notice that one child loses things more often and another finds things more often. One is a maker of knots, another an undoer. One is frequently ailing,

another is always well and fit. One needs your help, another helps you. Assuming that you feel no resentment of the former, you do not feel grateful to the latter.

The one who gossiped late in the dormitory last night finds it very difficult to get up this morning. A younger one has made his bed better than an older one. That one with a sore throat, drank water from the tap though you warned him that tap water was cold, and he was sweating. Think carefully what you are going to say in such cases, though you may understand, condone and forgive.

For the more of the troublesome ones, the more of the sixteen-hour working day will be taken up by running, bustling and grumbling, and the less of it will be left for that which is lofty and ambitious, namely, that under the heading: "A teacher should."

Less time, less energy.

20. The assistance given by children to the teacher may be entirely disinterested. One helps because he wants to, he helps because he feels like it today, and tomorrow he may feel differently.

But such an assistant, capricious, ambitious and honest, will not undertake every task. He easily becomes discouraged when running into unforeseen difficulties or gets offended if the teacher shows displeasure or doubt and so the child asks questions, requires supervision and advice. He will never push his help if unwanted. He needs to be called upon, given confidence, encouraged. When asked, he will gladly do the work, when ordered he will refuse. One must not rely on him, for he may fail when most needed.

Without any difficulty the supervisor can find another kind of assistant from among the children. Cunning, energetic, impudent, hypocritical and materialistic, he will obtrusively volunteer to help, and if driven away will come back. When most needed, this helper will turn up from nowhere. A look suffices for him to know what is wanted. He will perform any task, and is always willing to do what is necessary.

Should he bungle something, he will extricate himself somehow, tell a lie, and when reprov'd will feign meekness. He will always report: "Everything is under control."

If an unconscientious, incapable or weary teacher, unwilling to go deeper into the petty problems and troubles of children, turns over his powers to such a child-duty officer, he will take his place effortlessly. From a child willing to run an errand, to tidy up, to see to or remind of, a child who knows this or that, who has overheard and reports — he will soon become a real deputy.

He is not a harmless school flatterer, but a dangerous corporal of the boarding-school barracks.



21. A child entrusted with responsibilities finds it much easier to handle the group than a grownup. If the supervisor hits anyone, he will not do it viciously. If he threatens punishment, he will do so with restraint. If he punishes, there will be a good reason. A child-supervisor will not strike the back but the head or the stomach — to hurt the more. He will threaten not with comprehensible punishment but with something seemingly naive: "Just wait till you're asleep tonight, I'll cut your throat for you." In cold blood, he will accuse one who is innocent and force him to confess to an offense he never committed: "Own-up — you ate it, you took it ... you broke it," — and the kid shivering with fear, says: "I took it ... I stole it."

Most of the children fear him more than the teacher, because he knows everything, being with them all along. The more resistant ones hate him, but they rarely get even, more often they bribe.

Now the little tyrant already has his henchmen, deputies. He does nothing himself, he simply issues orders, reports the unmanagable — and is responsible to authority for everything.

Differentiate here carefully. This child is not a favorite, a teacher's pet, but an actual assistant, an informer, a general helper. He interests himself in his teacher's comforts. The teacher puts up with him while knowing full well that he lies, cheats, and exploits. He cannot do without him and anyhow he has hopes for a better job.

22. Underhand, secret threats take the place of overt and noisy fights.

"You wait, I'll tell the teacher. Just you wait, you'll get it at night." These are magic words by which a cunning and perverse boy will enforce silence, submission and meekness upon the younger, weaker, less clever, and more honest children.

The toilet and the bedroom: two "free territories" where secrets are exchanged, where the clandestine life of the boarding school is centered. And it is a mistake on the part of teachers to think that the bedroom and the toilet need to be watched in one respect only.

I know of a case in which a boy crept into his enemy's bed at night and started pinching him, pulling his ears and hair, threatening all the time:

"Keep quiet, if you scream the teacher will wake up and you'll be expelled."

I know of a case in which water was spilled in a boy's bed so that the supervisor should put an embarrassing rubber sheet in his bed.

I know of a case in which the monitor used to cut the fingernails of unpopular

schoolmates so close as to make them bleed. Another deliberately prepared a cold bath for a boy with whom he was angry.

The terror of evil forces may sink deep roots in a boarding school, poisoning the atmosphere, spreading moral epidemics, crippling and wreaking havoc. It is in the atmosphere of lies, extortion, concealment, oppression, violence, clandestine "settlements," false informing, fear and silence, an atmosphere pervaded with the miasmas of moral decay, that epidemics of self-abuse and criminal acts make their appearance.

And the teacher who has fallen into this cesspool does everything to get away, and if he cannot leave then he covers up.

Soon the children, will notice that the supervisor keeps things from the authorities, that those who have won praise, win his favors and those about whom he bears complaints become subjects of his dislike.

An unspoken agreement is arrived at between the supervisor and the children: "Together we will pretend that everything is in perfect order, and should anything happen, we will keep it quiet."

Very little will reach the ears of the director in his secluded office, and absolutely nothing will leak through the walls of the institution. The children have been guilty of forbidden and outrageous behavior, he tolerates it all, through laziness or deliberate negligence.

Perhaps that is why boarding-school children are so retiring and silent, why they reply willingly only to banal questions: "Are you happy, are you a good boy," and maintain a discreet silence whenever they "may give themselves away." Perhaps that is why a boarding school has the quality of some evil mystery, and a chat with a child who every now and then exchanges meaningful glances with his teacher is constraining and unpleasant?

In the third part of this book, I will describe how we made use of the children's assistance in the organization of the Children's Home without the fear of adverse results, how we reduced the secretiveness of its life.

24. The daily round and common task have their trouble-free and troublesome children, so has the public visiting day, the solemn celebration day.

For the voice teacher, the trouble-free child is the one with the best voice. For the gym teacher it is the most dexterous. The first has his mind on the choir, the second thinks of the public tournament.

Capable, well-mannered and bold children play hosts during the important visits, they make a good impression of the institution, speak well for the teacher, and the pretty one will hand a bouquet to a VIP.

How can a teacher not feel grateful to them? What if the child sang, played the violin, or acted with gusto in the little piece on the stage? It is no credit to the teacher. And a scrupulous, honest teacher tries hard to hide what he feels.

Is he right? Can the simulated indifference deceive, and if it does, will it not do the child an injustice? This is an important day for the child, solemn and memorable. A little stunned, and even more, overawed among strangers and dignitaries he runs up to the one close to his heart, for he cherishes his praise above all, waits for it, is entitled.

Don't let them push you around, but you must differentiate....

And what happens then to the rule of absolute equality of all children? Why, that rule is a lie.

25. Every practical teacher has some children who give him pleasant feelings, reward his efforts, who are the Sunday children of his soul whom he loves entirely apart from their worth and usefulness.

Endearing because pretty; endearing because cheerful, graceful, smiling; endearing because silent, serious, collected and taciturn; endearing because small, helpless and absent-minded; endearing because critical, bold and rebellious.

Depending on different teachers' differing psychological make-up and ideals, different children are close and dear.

One impresses with his energy, a second warms by his goodness, a third evokes reminiscences of one's own childhood, a fourth is dear through an affectionate concern for his future, a fifth inspires awe for his soaring ambition, a sixth charms by his humble meekness. Among the many dear to you, there is just one whom you love as one does a person closest to one's heart, to whom you wish only the best, whose tears hurt you most, and whose affection you try hardest to win, who — you wish — may never forget you.

How did this come about? When? You do not know. It came all of a sudden, unmotivated, unexpectedly, like love.

Don't hide it. A smile, the tone of your voice, a glance will betray you anyhow.

And the other children? Don't worry about them, they will not resent it, they have their favorites, too.

26. Young and emotional teachers are liable to love the quietest ones, those who are timid in the crowd, with sad eyes and an aching soul. They turn their affection precisely to those overlooked, out of the limelight. They strive to win their confidence, wait for confidences: what does he feel, what does he think that angel with the weary wings?

The other children are puzzled. What is there about him to be loved? He is such a fool. The favorite, once merely tolerated like a zero, sometimes given a casual shove when he happened to get in the way, is now consciously and deliberately persecuted. They are envious because the choice had been so misplaced.

The teacher embarks upon an uneven struggle for his pet — and loses. Having realized his blunder, he tries gently and indemonstrably to keep him at a distance. The child has understood and moved away now he gazes sadly, as if reproachfully, with his moist eyes. The teacher suffers, he is annoyed with himself and the children.

Poet, had you known that this poetic child holds a single secret in his big eyes with the long lashes — the secret of his tubercular heritage — probably you would wait not for confidences but for the cough, give not kisses but cod liver oil with guaiacol.<sup>11</sup> You would spare him, and yourself, and the children a great many trying moments.

27. It may happen that you have become very fond of a child but without reciprocity. He wants to play with a ball, stage races, play at war, you want to pat him, draw him close to your bosom and caress him. He becomes cross, impatient, humiliated, and either withdraws at the inopportune display of feeling or throws his arms around your neck and asks for a new suit. This is your fault and not his.

It happens that several among the staff strive to win the child's affection. Then the little favorite plays the game skillfully so as not to hurt anybody. For you have allowed him to go to bed later, the housekeeper will change his worn-out socks for new ones, and the cook will treat him to an apple and raisins.

It happens that a sensuous or depraved child will find pleasure in a caress. He strokes your hand because it is so soft or he will say that your hair smells nice, or he will kiss you on the ear or neck, on each beloved finger. Keep your eyes wide open, these are erotic caresses.

The child is alive to erotic feelings. Nature has prescribed that life be growth and procreation. This law is valid for man, beast and plant. The sexual appetite does not come all of a sudden and from nowhere. In the child it is dormant, but you can

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<sup>11</sup> A wood tar product used for medicinal purposes

already hear its faint breathing. And there are gestures, and embraces, and kisses, and children's pastimes, latently or overtly sensuous..

However, the teacher need not raise his eyes to heaven, or wring his hands in astonishment, or indignantly disavow.

Give the child's life an impetus so that he may not be bored, let him run and make noise, sleep as much he likes; then the sexual appetite will germinate peacefully neither soiling nor harming.

28. The keen eye of science has spotted the sexual factor in parental emotions. A mother feeding a baby surrenders to him equally with a father who lifts the cold hands of his dead child to his lips.

Innocent stroking of the child's face or hair, covering him with the little blanket, even a prayer for his well-being at the foot of the cradle — these are normal manifestations of a sound erotic emotion, while leaving the child to the care of servants, and deriving more pleasure out of idle talk in a cafe is a betrayal of emotion.

The above emotions are insufficient for the degenerate. For their blunted senses these emotions are too insipid and imperceptible. Such a mother feels the urge to cover with kisses the little legs, the back and the tummy, to derive precisely the pleasure that a light touch should give to a healthy mother. The honestly sensuous is insufficient. She craves the voluptuous.

You are surprised, perhaps you refuse to believe? Perhaps I have said something you have been sensing, suspecting but angrily thrusting aside?

For you fail to realize that the generative instinct in its differentiated tremors fluctuates between the most sublime, creative inspiration and the most despicable crime.

You ought to be aware of your feelings toward children, and you should carefully watch them, since you, being not only one who educates children but also one who is educated by them, can find yourself depraved by the very same children.

Dark secrets lurk within the four walls of the family home, the school, the dormitory. At times, a criminal scandal will illuminate them for an instant. And then all is dark again.

Behind the legitimized rapes perpetrated on children's souls by the contemporary upbringing in slavery, mystery, and authority from which there is no appeal, licence and crime are bound to lurk.

29. The teacher-apostle. The future of the nation. The happiness of generations to come.

But where in all this is my own life, my own future, my own happiness?

I hand out ideas, advice, warnings, feelings and I hand them out generously. Every minute a different child comes up with some new demand, plea or question, drawing upon your time, your thought. At times you experience the painful feeling that being the sun of this community, you are cooling down, that while shining you keep losing one ray after another.

Everything for the children, and what for me?

They acquire knowledge, experience, moral teaching. They accumulate resources that I go on spending. How can one husband the resources of one's own spiritual powers so as not to become bankrupt?

Supposing a teacher has no children of his own clamoring for their rights, no family to tie him down, no material worries to cause anxiety, no bodily ailments to harass him. The whole man devoted to the holy cause of child rearing must have feelings.

How to save them from destruction?

And when he returns to the institution, to what is supposed to be his home, being unable to greet everyone warmly is he not entitled to smile at just one of the pupils? When he leaves the dormitory, where there are too many for each one to receive a tender good night, is he not entitled, at least now and then, to single out this one or that one, with an individual: "Go to sleep my son ... sleep you young rascal." When reprimanding for some minor offense, has he not the right to absolve more clearly with his eyes, while his lips utter bitter reproaches?

Even if he has blundered, if he has not chosen the most valuable one, so what? The gratifying feeling derived from the child will compensate for a number of very different feelings. The smile bestowed by the one loved he will be able to pass on to many.

Probably there are teachers for whom all the children are equally indifferent or hateful, but there are no teachers for whom all are equally close and dear.

30. Supposing there is absolute equality. No trouble-free and troublesome ones, none liked or disliked. The same slices of bread and the same bowls of soup for all, the same numbers of hours of sleep and waking, the same sternness and leniency, absolutely uniform clothes, helpings, rules and feelings. Though that is obvious nonsense, supposing we say that that is how it should be. No privileges, no

exceptions, no distinction because such are harmful.

Even so the teacher has the right to make mistakes, taking the consequences of his errors.

Pestalozzi's letters on his stay at Stanz represent the finest work a practical teacher could ever write.

"...one of my favorite pupils had abused my affection and permitted himself an unjust threat to another. This has shocked me, I have informed him of my displeasure quite sharply."

Amazing. The great Pestalozzi had his favorites, and could fly off the handle.

erred either through an excess of confidence or through unduly lavish praise, and he punished above all himself for self-deception.

Sometimes one is amazed at how promptly and at what cost a teacher must pay for his blunders. Let him take care in rectifying them.

Unfortunately, sometimes in the most important issues, he is unable to rectify.

31. Keep quiet!

Children discharge only part of the energy which they have in their throats, lungs and hearts. Only part of the scream accumulated in their muscles. The obedient ones stifle it within possible limits.

Silence — is the watchword of the class.

Noise during lunch time is not allowed.

No noise in the bedroom.

Children try to express their noise quietly to the point that one is moved by their effort. They run around carefully, to the point of tears from suppressed action, so as not to move the table. They try to miss one another, they give in, so as not to create an argument, or a disturbance or they will again hear the hateful: "Only without noise."

Shouting in the courtyard is also forbidden, since that disturbs the neighbors. And their only fault is that every inch of land in the city is so expensive.

"You are not in the wilderness" — a cynical remark, a brutal act of cruelty to a child who cannot be where he ought to be.

Allow them to romp over a meadow, and there will be no yelling, only the lovable chirping of human birds.

If not all, a considerable majority of children like movement and noise, it is on the freedom to move and to yell that their physical and moral health depends. And you, knowing this well, are duty-bound to urge:

"Keep still."

Invariably and consistently you commit the mistake of combating the child's justified obstinacy. "I don't want to!"...

...To go to bed, for though the clock has struck the hour, the night is fascinating and smiling with a strip of the sky strewn with stars. ... To go to school because the first snow has fallen overnight and everything is so exciting. ... To get up because it's cold and dreary. — "I'd rather have no dinner if I can finish my ball game." — "I shall not apologize to the teacher because she punished me unfairly." — "I don't want to work on that silly old arithmetic problem because I'm reading Robinson Crusoe." — "I'll not wear short pants because they'll laugh at me."

You must.

There are orders which you issue angrily and without conviction because you, too, are obeying orders, and you cannot disobey.

"Now, my child, you have to be obedient not only to me who never give an ill-considered order, but also to the nameless many who lay down regulations which are cruel and unfair."

Study, respect and trust!

"I don't want to!" This is the cry of the child's soul, and you must fight it, for man lives today not in a jungle but in a community.

You must do so, for the alternative is chaos.

The gentler you can be in overcoming the obstinacy, the better, sooner and more thoroughly, the less painful, will you ensure the discipline essential to the community, the minimum of order required. But woe unto you if being gentle you fail.

Without organization, in disarray, only few, exceptional, children can develop successfully, dozens will be wasted.

33. There are mistakes that you will always make since you are a man, not a machine.

Fed up, weary, suffering and embittered, you notice a trait in the child that in adults becomes evil and ruinous. You see deception, deliberate meanness, ugly pride, petty trickery, rapacious greed. Will you not act too rashly?

I cannot balance the accounts. Every now and then, some child comes in, though entry



to the office is really forbidden to the children. The last to come is a small boy with a little bunch of flowers for me. I throw the flowers out of the window, take the intruder by the ear and lead him out of the room.

No need to multiply examples of senseless and brutal acts.

the child will forgive. He will be offended, angry, he will think and very frequently is apt to ascribe the fault to himself. A few of the more sensitive will avoid you when they see you are annoyed or busy. They will forgive if they recognize kindness.

There is nothing of supernatural intuition in the child's awareness of who loves him. It is mere vigilance on the part of a dependent human being who must know exactly where he stands since his welfare is in your hands. In the same way, an office clerk-slave watches his boss and keeps pondering what he is like until he gets to know all his habits, idiosyncrasies, humors, every move of his lips, gesture, glint in the eyes. And he knows when to ask a raise or a holiday, and sometimes has to wait patiently for weeks for an opportune moment. To give them independence means that they will lose that keen perception.

The child will forgive tactlessness, injustice, but he will never become attached to a teacher who is a pedant or an arid despot. And anything that does not ring true, he will rebuff and ridicule.

34. Unavoidable mistakes will arise from addiction to cliches, from treading the beaten track, from a standard approach to children as to beings of a lower order, who are irresponsible and amusing in their naive inexperience.

Light-heartedly, jestingly, condescendingly, you will apprehend their worries, wishes, questions. Invariably you will hurt someone badly.

The child has every right to demand respect for his grief, though it be but for the loss of a pebble, for his wish, though it be but a fancy to go for a walk without an overcoat in cold weather, for an apparently senseless question. You do not associate yourself with his loss, when you say curtly "can't be done," and turn down the request. With the simple "you -dope" you brush aside his doubts.

Do you know why one of the boys wanted to put on an overcoat when going out on a hot day? Because he has an ugly patch on the knee of his pants and a girl he is in love with will be in the park...

You haven't the time to be, you cannot be on the lookout unceasingly, to think, to seek out the hidden motives of an apparently absurd wish, to probe the unexplored regions of childish logic, imagination and search after truth to plumb its strivings and tastes.

You will go on blundering, for only he who does nothing avoids error.

35. I am quick-tempered. Neither Olympian detachment nor philosophic self-composure are my lot. That is reprehensible. But so it is.

When I am rebuked like a steward by the lord of life, I feel annoyed that the slave-child does not understand how much effort it costs me to make his chains lighter to carry by adding one extra link, by taking an ounce off the weight of those chains. I find resistance in the child exactly where I am not allowed to concede. As an official I say "you must," and as a man of nature I utter "it cannot be done." At one moment a farmhand raving over the cattle getting in the corn, and at another, a man rejoicing that the children are alive. I am alternately a prison guard watching over regulation discipline, and an equal among equals, a slave among fellow slaves rebelling against the despotic law.

When I come up against a tough problem, in the face of which I am utterly helpless, when I hear some menacing announcement which leaves me impotent, all fear and anticipation, then looking at their unconcern and trustfulness, I feel either a disturbing, burning ache or warm affection.

When I perceive in a child the immortal spark of the fire stolen from the gods, a flash of unruly thought, the dignity of anger, a gust of enthusiasm, autumnal melancholy, self-effacing sweetness, alarming dignity, the courageous, joyous, confident, forceful search for causes and objectives, tedious endeavors, alarming qualms of conscience — then I bow humbly for I am falling short. I am a weakling, a coward.

What am I to you if not a deadweight upon your free flight, a cobweb binding your colorful wings, the shears whose murderous purpose is to cut exuberant shoots?

I stand in your way or move about bewildered, grumbling, annoying, concealing or insincerely persuasive, colorless and ludicrous.

36. Good teachers are distinguished from bad ones only by the number of errors made, and injustices done.

There are blunders which a teacher will make once, and after critical assessment will not repeat them ever again. They are long remembered. If he acts in error or is tactless when fatigued, he will direct all his efforts toward making a routine out of his petty, irritating duties because he realizes that problems arise from his lack of time. But a bad teacher blames the children for his own mistakes.

A good teacher knows that behind a minor episode may lurk a problem to which one should pay attention and one must not underrate it.

A good teacher knows exactly what he has to do at the behest of triumphant authority, the ruling church with the power of tradition, the approved custom, and under pressure of the iron command of conditions. He is aware that the order has the welfare of children as a goal only as it teaches them to bend, to give in, to calculate. It helps them only as it prepares them for the compromises of future adult life.

A bad teacher thinks that children should be quiet, keep their clothes clean, and diligently learn by heart the rules of grammar.

A sensible teacher does not sulk at being unable to understand a child but thinks, searches and questions other children. They will instruct him not to hurt them too seriously as long as he is willing to learn.

37. "Punishment is not my way" — a teacher says, and sometimes he himself does not even suspect that not only is t his way, but a very severe one, too.

There is no dark place of detention, but there is isolation, and deprivation of freedom. He will only tell a child to stand in the corner, or to sit alone at a desk, or he will not allow visits to the family. He will take away a magnet, a picture, an empty perfume bottle — so there is confiscation of property. He will forbid a later bedtime with the older children, or will not allow a new suit to be worn on a holiday — deprivation of special rights and privileges. Lastly, is it not punishment when he shows coldness, dislike and displeasure?

You do resort to punishment though you have softened it, modified its form. Children are afraid no matter whether punishment be big or small or just a symbol. You understand? Children are afraid, that is discipline.

A child's self-love, its feelings can be whipped as in days gone by its body used to be whipped.

38. No punishment, I only explain to him that he has done wrong. How do you propose to explain?

You will say that if he does not mend his ways, you will have to expel him. Naive — you are threatening capital punishment. You will not expel him. That one who was expelled a year ago, was sick, abnormal. This one is sound, a lovable rascal who will grow into a fine man and all you want is to frighten him. Neither will a nanny give a child to an old beggar or take him to the woods to be devoured by wolves — she is only threatening, too.

You will summon the child's guardians to have a talk with them — a still more refined threat.

You threaten to make him sleep in the corridor, have his meals on the staircase, to

tie a bib on him — always punishment one degree above the norm.

Sometimes the threats are not concrete, indefinite:

"This is the last time I will tell you! You'll see, you'll come to a bad end. You will push me too far at last. I'll not say another word, you can do as you please. - I will take a serious view from now on." The very number of the phrases is proof of how extensively they are used and, I should add, abused.

Sometimes the child believes totally, and always believes somewhat:

"What will happen to me now?"

He has not punished me, and if he does — when — how? A fear of the unknown, the unforeseeable.

If you had punished him, the next day he would already have the painful experience behind him, he would be that much nearer to reconciliation, to forgetting. Waking up on the morning after a declared threat, he may have drawn closer to the unpleasant hour of reckoning.

A high degree of discipline can be maintained among children by means of threats. Where there is little self-assessment a teacher may think this a moderate course, while in fact an unfulfilled threat is in itself a severe punishment.

39. There is an erroneous belief, based on superficial observation, that a child very soon forgets his sorrows, grievances and decisions. Soon after weeping, he is already smiling. A minute ago they were quarreling, and already are playing together again. Only an hour back he promised to be good, and has already gotten into mischief.

The premise is false. Children long remember grievances. A child may remind you of an injustice done a year ago. He does not keep a promise given under duress because he is unable to.

He runs about, plays, lets himself be carried away amid the general fun, but he will revert to his gloomy thoughts — in silence, sitting with a book, or at night before falling asleep.

You notice that sometimes the child avoids you. He will not come up with a question, he will not smile when passing by, he will not come to your room.

"I thought, you were still angry, sir," he will say when questioned.

You can hardly remember that a week back, because of some minor offense, you rebuked him with moderate harshness, in a moderately raised voice. And an ambitious or sensitive child has known many hours of suffering, in silence, unrecognized.

A child remembers.

A widow in deep mourning will forget her grief in an amusing conversation and will burst out laughing. Soon she will sigh: "Here, I sit laughing, and my poor husband is dead." She knows that this is precisely what she is expected to say. You can very quickly teach children to use this artifice. You need only admonish sternly for being mirthful when gloom and penitence are called for and you will get obedience. I have seen more than once how a child taking a lively part in a game, suddenly assumes a worried expression on meeting my unsmiling look. "Of course, it wouldn't do to play when they are angry with you."

Remember, there are children who feign indifference: don't let him think I'm scared, that I'm worried, that I remember. If the punishment is meant to humiliate, the child's honor demands that he acts as if nothing has happened. Probably those are the most sensitive children with the long memories.

40. No punishment, only admonition, cautioning, words. But if the words conceal an intent to shame?

"Look at your copybook? What do you think you're up to? A fine sort of writing! See what he has done!"

And the others are expected to grin sarcastically, express astonishment, contempt. Not all in line. The more honest the children the more reticent they are in voicing a derogatory opinion.

There is yet another type of punishment - constant slighting, and humiliating withdrawal.

"You haven't finished eating yet? Last again? Forgotten again?"

A reproachful glance, a gesture of resignation, a sigh of exasperation.

The victim, feeling guilty, droops his head, sometimes full of rebellion and resentment, looks angrily around at the harassing pack of hounds, thinking all the time of getting even when he gets the chance.

"Give it to me," one of the boys used to say more often than the rest.

I reprimanded him for this ugly habit in fairly strong terms. A year later when we were making a record of the children's nicknames, I heard the echo of my tactless sermon. The most painful nickname of all had stuck to that particular boy — "gi'me beggar."

Derision is a severe and painful punishment.

41. You appeal to feeling.

"So that's the way you show your affection for me? You gave me your promise, and that's how you keep it?"

Gentle pleading, kindly reproach, a kiss as advance payment for the desired improvement and the extortion of a fresh promise.

And so you leave the child with a heavy burden on his heart. Conscious of an obligation through your kindness, generous forgiveness, of a sense of helplessness, frequently uncertain of the possibility of improving, he renews his promise, makes up his mind to launch once more a decisive attack on his own quick temper, laziness, absent-mindedness — on his own self.

"What will happen if I forget again, am late, hit somebody hard, give an insolent answer, lose something?"

Occasionally, a kiss falls heavier than a cane.

Have you not noticed that if a child repeats an error once after making a promise that is the time to beware. The first offense will be followed by a second, and a third.

There is mental suffering stemming from a failure, and resentment of the teacher for having forced the fight upon him by a treacherously extorted promise. Should you renew the smarting appeal to his conscience, to his feelings, he will turn away from you, nursing his anger.

To his anger you will respond with rage and shouting. The child pays no attention to the words but feels that you are casting him out of your heart, withdrawing your affection. A stranger, left alone in a void. And you, having lost your temper, resort to a variety of punishments - threats, and reproaches, and scorn, and real repression.

See how his friends look on him with compassion, how gently they try to console:

"It's only the teacher's talk. Don't worry, it's nothing. Don't worry, he'll forget."

And all with circumspection, so as not to incur the teacher's disfavor and not to get a kick from the rebellious victim.

Each time I made a "big row," I experienced, apart from a nasty taste in my mouth, another, very distinct feeling: I have done an injustice to one but have taught many a great virtue — solidarity in misfortune. The little slaves well know what suffering is.

42. Occasionally when scolding a child, you can read a hundred rebellious thoughts in his eyes.

"Perhaps you think, I have forgotten. I remember it all perfectly."

The child, with a poor pretense of repentance tells you by his resentful looks.

"It's not my fault you have such a good memory." Korczak: "I have been patient. I waited, hoping you might mend your ways."

Child: "A great pity. You shouldn't have waited." K: "I thought you would get some sense into your head at long last. I was wrong."

Child: "If you're so clever, you shouldn't make mistakes."

K: "Because I keep on forgiving you, do you think you can do anything you like?"

Child: "I don't think so at all. Will this business ever end?"

K: "You're absolutely impossible, nobody would put up with you."

Child: "Tell me another, you're just sour today, so you pick on me...."

At times, the child exhibits an astounding self-control during the storm.

"How many times have I told you not jump on the beds!" — I thunder. "Beds are not made to play on. For that you have a ball, puzzles. ..."

"And what are puzzles?" he asks curiously. In reply, I smacked him....

On another occasion, after a stormy encounter, I was asked:

"Sir, why is it that when somebody gets mad, his face gets all red?"

While I was straining my vocal cords and brain to set him back on the road to virtue, he was keenly watching the play of colors on my face, the result of agitation. I kissed him. He was delightful.

43. Children are justified in their hatred of collective admonitions.

"Nothing can be achieved by kindness with any of you ... there you go again ... if the lot of you don't mend your ways..."

Why should all be held responsible for the offense of one or of several?

If it was a little cynic who provoked the storm, he would be very glad. Instead of having to bear the full brunt of retribution, he will get only a fraction. An honest one will be too severely punished, seeing so many innocent victims of his offense.

Sometimes the blame falls on a certain group of children: the boys are no good. Or

vice versa: the girls are bad. Mostly: "The older ones instead of setting a good example ... look at the little ones, how well behaved they are."

Here, in addition to the justified indignation of the innocent, we awaken a feeling of embarrassment among those who though praised are well aware of their errors, and are thinking how they themselves will be ostracized. Lastly, we give the little scoffers opportunity for an evil triumph: "There you are, you see, b-a-a-a."

On one occasion, I decided on an unusual reaction to an unexplained theft. I entered the boys' dormitory just before they went to sleep, and beating rhythmically on a bedrail, I said in a loud voice:

"Thieving again! This must end once and for all. I'm not going to waste energy on the education of crooks...."

This same, rather lengthy, sermon I delivered to the girls.

The next morning, the boys and girls held the following conversation:

"Did he shout at you, too?"

"Sure he did."

"Did he say, he would expel the lot?"

"He did."

"And did he bang with his fist on the bedrail?" "As hard as he could."

"And whose bed was it — in our dorm it was Mary's."

Each time I made collective charges, I upset the kindest ones and irritated all, and I made a laughing stock, of myself in the eyes of the critical: "Don't mind him, let him blow off steam a bit, it does him good."

44. Can the teacher fail to understand that much of the punishment meted out is unfair?

A fight.

"He hit me first."

"He teased me.... He took it and wouldn't give back."

"I was only pulling his leg. ... He got in the way and smeared it."

"No, it wasn't me, he pushed."

And you punish either both (why?), or the older because he should give in to a younger (why?), or the one whose blow caused more pain or did more damage. You



inflicted punishment because fighting is not allowed. And telling tales, is that allowed?

He spilled it, upset it, broke it.

"I didn't do it on purpose."

He throws your own words at you: to overlook it if anyone has unintentionally done him some harm.

"I didn't know ... I didn't think there was anything wrong in it."

He is late, because ... he knows his lesson but ... You reject valid reasons, taking them for excuses.

This is a double injustice because you do not believe him even though he is telling the truth, and you have punished him unfairly.

Occasionally, a partial ban, imposed on the strength of some incidental case, becomes absolute. Occasionally, it is lifted.

No noise is allowed in the dormitory but talking in a whisper is allowed. If you are in a good mood, you yourself will chuckle at an innocent trick but when you are tired, you will penalize an ordinary dormitory chat if only by a few terse words:

"Enough of this gabbling. Not another word.... If I hear anyone's voice again ..."

It is forbidden to enter the office, but children do so. Today is monthly accounts' day and you need some peace. He didn't know, so he came in and, he got what was coming to him. Even if he was not led out by the ear but only told: "What are you doing here? Get out" - even then, your anger was undeserved punishment.

45. He broke a windowpane playing with the ball and you ignored it because it is a rare happening, or because you know whose fault it actually was, or because you don't like punishing.

But when the fourth windowpane is shattered, when the culprit is a notorious troublemaker, who

does poorly in the classroom to boot, you punish him by shouting, by threats, by fussing and fuming.

"I didn't do it on purpose" he says arrogantly, insolently, it seems to you.

The fourth windowpane ... troublemaker ... bad pupil, idler ... and still has the gall to answer insolently. Teacher, I'll put my money on your raising your hand

against him. But clearly the youngster cannot understand, he need not agree that you should punish him as an example. He cannot understand that being less sensitive, he offers a convenient opportunity for resorting to more effective punishment or that you punished not for that single act but for his entire conduct.

He knows that you have forgiven A, B, C but him you punished unfairly....

Supposing, you took a different course and confiscated the ball.

"No more playing with that."

Unfair. The punishment affects dozens who are innocent.

A still milder course. You say that should a pane be broken again, you will confiscate the ball. Now you have placed all under an unfair penal threat, while possibly only four will prove guilty.

Of those four, not all are entirely guilty because one broke a pane which was already cracked, the second only made a tiny crack across the corner, the third indeed broke it but because he was pushed, and truly guilty is only the fourth who is in the habit of doing whatever infuriates the teacher.

46. You have forgiven fully and freely. You think you have done right. Not so.

"If it was me ..." — one says to himself.

Another: "He will go scot-free whatever he does, teacher's pet."

Again unfair.

There are children for whom a frown, a sharp word, or a gentle: "It distresses me" are sufficient punishment. If you want to forgive, the children should know why, and the one should be made to understand that he is not favored above the rest. Otherwise, he will become unruly, spoiled and left a prey to the community whose sense of justice is outraged. You commit an error and you get punished at the hands of one and all.

Forget for an instant about the four broken windowpanes — actually two, since one was already cracked and only the corner was punctured in another. Forget, and see how many groups are discussing and commenting on the event. In each group, this one or that leads opinion for or against you.

The right wing argues that window glass is expensive and teacher will have trouble with the Board because they will say that he is too lenient and the children don't listen to him, that there is no discipline. So, punishment should be on the severe side.

The left wing (advocates of playing with the ball):

"They don't let us play anything, everything is forbidden. As soon as somebody slips up — whoosh! shouts, threats and hell to pay. Do they suppose we can sit still all day, like painted dolls?"

Only the center party takes what comes with confidence and resignation.

Do not smile indulgently, this is no joke, not a trifle. This is the reality of the life of children living in barracks.

So once and for all, as a matter of principle, should punishment in all cases be abolished and the children given full freedom of action?

And what if the willfulness of an individual child infringes on the rights of the community? A playful child will not do his lessons and will not let others, he will not make his bed and will even mess up the beds of others, unable to find his own mislaid overcoat, he will take another's. What then?

47. "Squealing is not right. I won't stand for it." What is a child to do -if he has been robbed, his father or mother insulted, his reputation with his classmates besmirched? What should he do if he is threatened or forced to do something he should not?

Squealing is not good. Who gave this custom its sacrosanct character? Did children take it over from bad teachers or teachers from bad children? For it is a custom which benefits the bad and the worst.

The quiet and defenseless will be wronged, exploited and robbed and they may not call for help or ask for justice. The wrongdoers score and the wronged suffer.

A teacher lacking conscientiousness and efficiency finds it more convenient to shut his eyes to what is going on among the children. He fails to take their disputes seriously and is incapable of a rational examination of them.

"Let them work it out among themselves." Precisely here where his own convenience is involved, the trust placed in the children goes so far as to believe in their common sense, experience and justice and to allow them freedom in such an important sphere.

Freedom? But there is none: no fighting, no arguing, no one to be excused from a game. This one is offended, and he just does not want to sleep next to the other, he refuses to sit at the same table, to pair up with him on a walk. Quite justified, quite natural, but not allowed.

Children are quarrelsome? Untrue — to an equal degree they are well disposed and understanding. Only take a close look at their conditions of work and coexistence.

Try putting forty office workers into one room and keep them for five hours sitting on uncomfortable benches and doing a responsible job under the constant supervision of a superior, will they not get after one another?

Listen carefully to the children's complaints, study them. You will find ways and means to put right more things than one, and to make recompense. "My neighbor pushed the corner of my copybook and my pen ran right across the middle of the page." Or: "The pen caught on the paper and splashed ink all over." A most frequent complaint in the classroom.

48. Of a special nature are complaints concerning school breaks.

"He won't let me play, he keeps butting in..."

Some children get into a state of wild frenzy during a break. They run, jump, push everybody: senseless uproar, meaningless gestures, irresponsible actions. The child runs about with no aim or purpose, knocks against anyone passing by, waves his arms, yells, and in the end strikes someone at random. Notice how often when pushed hard or hit, he will turn round angrily, say nothing, and move away.

Some children, unjustified by provocation, will not leave others in peace. "Go away, leave us alone" is to them a sign to do just the opposite. The children detest and despise them for their want of ambition and tactlessness and complain.

"We were playing, and he ... sir, he always ... as soon as we start playing, he turns up..."

The one who complains, acts on the spur of anger, the tone of his voice is the tone of exasperation. A short break, every minute precious and that so-and-so poisons, steals those brief free-and-easy moments.

Remember that only a child at the end of his tether, feeling helpless, reluctant to struggle, turns to you as to the last resort. He is senselessly wasting time, opens himself to a thoughtless or sharp response. You should have a staple, routine sentence for such an emergency will save you the effort of thinking in a hurry.

"Being a nuisance? Alright, tell him to come over" — I always say.

Frequently, that is all I hear of it. The point was to drive the intruder away. Seeing that his classmate is on the way to complain, he has made himself scarce and that is all they wanted.

If the complainer returns: "He doesn't want to come" — then I say severely: "Tell him to come here at once."

Children in general seldom and only with great reluctance complain. If a certain percentage complain frequently, the matter should be investigated and the reasons sought.

49. "Sir, can I, may I, will you let me?"

It seems to me that a teacher opposed to complaints, is equally intolerant of requests. However, being concerned to find a correct motivation in this case, too, he sets out from the principle:

"All children are on equal footing. No exceptions, no privileges."

Is that right? Perhaps it's only convenient?

The necessity to reply frequently: "No - I forbid it - you mustn't" — is obnoxious to a teacher. Just when it seems we have managed to reduce the number of prohibitions and orders to a bare minimum, it annoys us to be asked to make further concessions. And occasionally, though recognizing the reasonableness of a request, we forbid on the ground that one granted request will start an avalanche. We aspire to that state of perfection in which children will accept the necessity of a line drawn and will ask for nothing more. If, however, you determine upon the difficult duty of nonrefusal but of lending an ear to their requests, and if you record and classify them, you will find that frequently they are common everyday matters, having nothing out of the ordinary about them.

Requests to be allowed to change places at the table used to be a permanent and annoying element. We allowed the children to change places once a month. An extensive monograph could be written on the subject of this minor reform. It achieved so much that was beneficial and arose exclusively out of those irritating requests.

Woe unto the children whose teacher is ready to reject every request not covered by the regulations. For it is just those requests, together with complaints, which make it possible to probe innermost secrets of the child's soul.

50. Apart from the children who approach the teacher directly, we still have to deal with those who submit requests through deputies.

"He is asking if he may, if you, sir, will let him." For a long time such elements infuriated me, and for many reasons:

Frequently, the deputies are children who have many problems of their own, whose frequent pleas have already become annoying. They usually come at the wrong time, when you are in a hurry, busy, irritated. Their requests are often such that the

answer is bound to be in the negative. A latent protective system tends to develop and the deputy is liable to take the credit for a favorable reply. Finally, there is something disdainful about it: "Come yourself, go to that much trouble and don't plead through an advocate."

The futility of combating such requests provided an incentive to seek the deeper reasons underlying the phenomenon. I found them. I found a general human, not entirely childish, subtlety of the soul.

A rejection is no offense to a youngster asking on behalf of another. The one who asks, not being personally involved, does not register the resentment mirrored on the face, a grimace of annoyance, an impatient wave of the hand. He merely takes the refusal for what it is.

At times I had an opportunity to observe how the actual supplicant watched from a distance what effect his request would produce, ready to come forward if summoned and to explain his case in detail.

When we introduced in the Children's Home a system of written communication, the number of requests through deputies diminished markedly. And we acquired an additional routine reply:

"Let him write what he wants, and why."

51. The ex cathedra pronouncement that children's questions must be answered is hammered in mercilessly and the poor teacher, uncritically trustful, comes into conflict with his own conscience since he cannot and does not know how, has no patience to listen perpetually to questions, to keep answering. And he does not even suspect that the more often he must get rid of a small pest with a curt: "Don't bother me," the better a teacher he is.

"Have I written it properly, polished my shoes well, washed my ears clean?"

If the first one who asks is really in doubt, the others merely want to draw attention to themselves, break away for a while from unfinished work, get a pat on the back.

Some questions are difficult, and it is better not to reply at all than to shun them with some superficial, incomprehensible explanation. ... He will understand once he begins to study physics, cosmography, chemistry.... Once he begins to study physiology. And these are some things which no one knows, not even the grownups, not even the teacher — nobody.

One should see the child as he happens to be, thoughtful or superficial. And the thought behind the question, is it idle curiosity or intent to solve a troubling problem, a secret of nature, a moral question? Finally, one should consider the ability to answer the question. And my: "Look it up in the book, you won't understand it anyhow, I don't know, ask me in a week's time" or: "Don't bother me" - will spring from a number of reasons.

I look with suspicion upon a teacher who claims that he patiently answers all questions asked by children. If he is not lying, then probably he is so estranged from the children that they only rarely and exceptionally come to him with questions.

52. If complaints, requests and questions are the key to knowledge of the child's soul, a whispered confidence is a broad thoroughfare leading to it.

Here is a voluntary confession made a few months after the fact:

"We were very angry with you, sir; both him and me. So we decided that one of us would get into your room through the window at night, take your eyeglasses and throw them down the toilet drain. Then we thought that it would be a shame to throw them away and that we should only hide them. We didn't go to sleep and waited until midnight. When I was up on my feet ready to go, one of the boys woke up to go to the toilet. But I did get up again later. I went in through the window - my heart was beating fast — the glasses were on the table. So I quickly snatched them and put them under my pillow. Then we got scared. We really didn't know what to do with them. Then he suggested that we put them back where I found them. So I said that he should do it. But he didn't want to. So I got up again, but this time I didn't go through the window."

Knowing both, I could easily guess where the initiative had come from, how the plot had gradually materialized, why they had not persisted in carrying out their plan of revenge.

This single event might serve as a theme of a whole lecture, so rich is the thought material it contains.

53. If you smile at a child, the response anticipated is a smile. You tell something interesting — you expect interest. You are angry — he should show regret.

This means that you obtain a normal reaction to a stimulus.

But not always. The child reacts paradoxically. You are entitled to your surprise, you should consider it, but do not get offended, do not sulk.

You make advances to a child and he withdraws resentfully, at times clearly avoiding

you. Perhaps you have done him wrong, perhaps he has gone astray — and honesty prevents his accepting an undeserved caress. Make a note and ask about it a week or a month later. Maybe he has forgotten, perhaps with a smile or some embarrassment he will show that he remembers but would prefer not to dig it up. Respect his secret.

On one occasion, I scolded the children sharply:

"What's all this whispering in corners, hiding in the classroom, all these secrets; you ought to know that I don't like it."

The response: calm resignation, spiteful antagonism, gratuitous cheerfulness. The evident lack of regret should have alerted me. I did not understand, I suspected some cunning plot by our diehards. In fact, they were secretly rehearsing a show which they wanted to stage as a treat for us. Even today I blush to think how ludicrous I must have appeared in my rage.

54. My child keeps nothing from me, he confides all his thoughts to me — a mother says.

I doubt it but I do believe that she errs to demand it.

An example:

A child watches a funeral in the street. A solemn procession, candles, solemnity. A child in mourning follows the coffin: dressed in black, as a participant in a rite replete with mysterious poetry. And a thought flashes through the viewing child's mind that it would be rather nice if mummy died.... He looks aghast at the mother, no, he does not want her to die, where do such thoughts come from?

Can such a thought possibly be confided? Have we the right to assail the child at the instant of a dangerous conflict with his own conscience?

If a child trusts you with his secret, be grateful, for his confidence is the highest prize, the best testimony to you. But do not extort it since the child has a right to his secret. Do not compel by plea nor subterfuge nor threat, each of them is equally bad, and will not bring the child closer to you but rather move him away.

It is necessary to convince the children that we have respect for their secrets, that the question: "Can you tell me?" does not mean: "You must." To my: "Why?," let there be no evasion but a straightforward: "I can't tell you. I'll tell you some other time, sir. I'll never tell you."

55. I once observed how a boy of eleven, whispered something to a girl he loved. She responded with a blush, dropped her head coyly and with a shrug of her shoulders said "no."



A few days later I asked him if he could tell me what he had said to her. No confusion whatever, a frank desire to recollect.

"Oh yes, I asked her if she knew the answer to 16 times 16."

I was deeply grateful to him, he stirred so many warm thoughts in me.

On another occasion, I was told that one of the girls had had a mysterious adventure when passing through the park in the evening. Our children are allowed to go out on their own and alone. That is part of the educational program, and to renounce the principle would be a serious blow to us. It would require too much watching. The adventure in the park bothered me. I insisted that she should tell me all about it, or not be allowed to go out on her own any more.

She confessed:

"As I went through the park, a bird overhead dirtied my hat: it did its business on my head."

Of the two of us, I was the more uneasy, it seems.

Were it not that we are wanting in subtlety toward children, we should burn with shame at the dinginess of life as they find it and our absolute inability to protect them against it.

56. A confidence softly whispered is occasionally the whisper of an informer.

You need not feign indignation. It is your duty to listen to an informer.

"He swears at you, sir, he said a dirty word about you."

"How do you know he swears at me?" "Many of the boys have heard."

So just incidentally overheard, no eavesdropping. "All right, but why are you telling me this?" Stumped: he had no particular reason.

"And what do you expect me to do about it?" Stumped: again he doesn't know.

"And do you know why he swore at me?" "He was annoyed, that you ..."

The substance of the matter trifling, the intention uncertain. Probably he counted on arousing the

teacher's interest, perhaps the idea of being in possession of an important secret that could be shared with his elder, appealed to him.

"And you — don't you swear when you're angry?" "I do sometimes."

"Don't do it, it's a bad habit."

Don't act the preacher with him. Perhaps he was really prompted by friendliness, and if not, a few embarrassing questions and lack of interest in the information are punishment enough.

57. Malicious intent: desire for revenge.

"The older boys say lewd things, have indecent pictures and verses."

"What pictures and verses?"

He doesn't know. He was hiding so that they shouldn't see him, and he eavesdropped. He only

speaks about it because such pictures are forbidden. He wants them to be punished.

"Well, did you ask them to show you a picture?" He did but they said, he was too little.

"May I tell them who had told me?"

Never, they would beat him up.

"If you won't let me say who told me I can't do a thing. They will suspect someone else and beat him up."

Alright, he is not afraid. Let the teacher do what he thinks right.

"Thank you for telling me. I'll have a talk with them sometime, and ask them not to do such things again."

I thanked him because he had noticed what it was my duty to observe. If the hideous nature of seeking revenge is to be pointed out, the moral interpretation should be left for later. Enough for today. He feels frustrated, he expected a different reaction and the shot had misfired.

58. The matter may be important and the intention just.

He went into a house where there was scarlet fever. The boys gather in the clothing room, smoking cigarettes, they may set the place on fire. X tempts Y to steal. Z sneaks food to the caretaker and gets apples in exchange. Yesterday, a gentleman invited one of the girls to go to a cafe and wanted to take her for a ride in his car.

He knows why he is telling tales. Sensing a danger or some sort of mischief, he was hesitating, uncertain what to do. He came for advice because he trusted you.

They will be furious and avoid him, too bad, it can't be helped.

The child did his duty — he warned.

I must treat him as an adviser assisting in the solution of a difficult problem. He has rendered me a great service. And now we both think what to do next.

Remember, whenever a child comes to you with another's secret, it always indicts you.

"You have failed in your duty. You didn't know, though you enjoy the confidence of the children, it is not absolute, and not universal."

59. Now that you know, don't be in a hurry.

Don't let a dishonest informer triumph: "I called attention to it, I did my stuff." An honest child you should shield against the retribution of resentment. Putting off the showdown for later, if you keep your eyes open, you give yourself the chance to find out and see for yourself.

Furthermore, supposing you have tracked down the offense and you sound the alarm — at once, then you make it clear to the children that whenever you are silent, you know nothing.

"How did you know, sir, when did you find out, why didn't you say it right away?" — that is one of the most frequent questions asked when you recall an offense committed a while back.

Furthermore, taking your time, you choose a suitable moment for discussion when the child is well disposed, when the problem has 'lost importance with the lapse of time and is no longer an actuality. Well, it was such a long time ago, a whole month. He will tell you frankly what led him to the bad behavior, how it was done, what he felt before, during and after.

Furthermore, you are certain not to lose your temper, you will have had time to think it over, plan and prepare. Your entire attitude to a child or group of children sometimes depends on a sensible solution. ...

Taking advantage of your good humor, a boy asks for a locker with a key.

"Why of course. Then you will be able to keep your dirty pictures in a safe place where the small children will not find them."

Shame, confusion, astonishment.

Now it will be he who will be anxious to have a talk with you. Don't rush! When he cools off, he will promptly hand over the picture to you (it will have lost the spell of novelty), he will tell you from whom he got it, to whom he has shown it. The

calmer you are in handling the matter, the more of a trifle you make of it, the more reasonable, the friendlier you will find him.

60. The principle.

Let the child err.

We should not strive to avert every deed, to set back on the rails in every instance of hesitation, to rush to the rescue at every slip-up. Remember that should moments of real trial come, you may not be there.

Let him err.

When the child's will, small and tender as yet, is locked in conflict against passion, allow it to be conquered. Remember that skirmishes with conscience exercise and develop the child's moral strength.

Let him err.

For if he does not stray in childhood, is watched over and protected, fails to learn how to come to grips with temptation, he will grow up a passively moral person for lacking opportunity and not actively so because of the sheer force of self-restraint.

Don't say:

I hate evildoers.

Rather:

I am not at all surprised that you have erred. Remember:

A child has the right to a lie, a deception, an extortion, a theft. He does not have the right to lie, deceive, extort, steal.

If he has not had a single opportunity as a child to pick the raisins from a cake and relish them secretly — he will not be honest when he grows up.

"I am ashamed of you."

You are lying.

"I despise you."

You are lying.

"I never anticipated that from you. ... So even you can't be trusted?"

Not to have anticipated is your failure. A failure in that you trusted unconditionally. You make a poor teacher, you don't even know that child is — man.

You are indignant not because you have chanced on a danger to which the child is exposed, but because the reputation of your institution, your educational precepts and you personally are endangered. You are concerned only about yourself.

61. Let children err and happily seek to mend their ways.

Children love laughter, movement, playing tricks. Teacher, if life may be a graveyard to you — leave them free to see it as a pasture. You may be in a hair shirt, bankrupt of worldly happiness, or a devoted penitent, still you should have a wise smile of indulgence for others.

An atmosphere of broad tolerance for a joke, mischief, spitefulness, subterfuge, falsehood and naive sin must absolutely prevail. There is no room here for iron duty, stony seriousness, dire necessity and absolute conviction.

Every time I echoed the cloister bell, I invariably went astray.

Believe me, life in a boarding school is so insipid because we set too high a standard of ideals. No matter how hard you try you will never rear absolutely perfect righteousness or timid purity or immaculate innocence oblivious to the existence of evil in the barrack-like life.

Is it not a fact that among your children, you love those who are upright, devoted and gentle because you realize that life will treat them harshly?

Can a love of truth avoid knowledge of the paths followed by falsity? Do you want the awakening to come all of a sudden when the world will have already struck a heavy blow at ideals? Then, having uncovered your first lie, will he not immediately stop believing in all your truths?

When life requires the possession of claws, have we the right to arm the child with no more than a blush of shame and a soft sigh?

Your duty is to bring up men not lambs, workers not preachers — physical and moral health. And health is neither affectionate nor devoted. I wish hypocrisy would accuse me of immorality.

62. Children lie.

When afraid, and when they know that the truth will not come out.

When they are ashamed.

When you seek to force them to tell the truth against their will or sense of honor.

When it seems to them the proper thing to do. "Who spilled it?"

"I did," a child will confess and try to explain himself if he is sure that you will say no more than: "Take a rag and wipe it up," and perhaps add: "Clumsy."

He will also confess a serious offense, if he knows that the teacher is going to press his investigations, that he is determined to get to the truth of the matter. For example: someone put water in the bed of an unpopular boy. Nobody owns up. I have said that until someone has courage to admit it nobody will be allowed to leave the dormitory. An hour goes by; it is past time for the older boys to go to work, and all must soon go to breakfast. They'll eat breakfast in the dormitory. No school. Those who go to work are already late. A murmured meeting in the bedroom. There is a group obviously in the clear, others — under varying degrees of suspicion. Perhaps they are guessing who might be the culprit, perhaps they already know, perhaps they are persuading him to make a clean breast of it.

"Sir ..."

"Was it you?"

"Yes, sir."

No punishment necessary, such an offense will not happen again.

Let the child keep his secret and you empower him to declare: "I know, but I wouldn't say," he will not pretend he doesn't know.

Let the children when confiding speak frankly of those feelings that are not in keeping with the Scriptures.

63. "How fond the children are of you" — a sentimental person exclaims.

Some prisoners are said to become very fond of humane prison guards. But is there a child without a grudge against the teacher? Each has experienced some unpleasant order, a terse word uttered at some time or other, a hidden urge he will not divulge because "it won't work, anyhow." If they do think that they are fond of him, it is because that is how it is supposed to be, because their elders say so; others — because they don't want to deviate. Some don't quite know their own mind. Now it seems to them that they do love him, and then again they hate him. All, realizing my faults, would be glad to change me, to make me a bit better. The poor youngsters cannot grasp that my greatest fault is that I am no longer a child.

"How fond the children are of you."

How they ran up to me, clung to me and crowded around me on my return from the war. But would they not be even more delighted if white mice or guinea pigs had suddenly appeared in the room?

Mother, father, teacher. Should a child come to love you with a deep, sustained, disinterested love — give it a mild hydrotherapy and even a bromide.

64. There are times when the child loves with boundless intensity when it needs you as man in his grief needs God; a child in sickness, and a child terrified by a horrible nightmare.

I remember a night spent at the bedside of a sick girl. On and off, I had been giving her oxygen. Dozing, she held my hand tight. Every time she moved my hand she muttered semiconsciously without opening her eyes: "Mother, don't go away."

I remember how a little boy came to my room, shivering with despair, terrified by a dream about the dead. I took him to my bed. He told me the dream, and about his dead parents, how he had stayed with his uncle after they died. His whispers were filled with warm affection, maybe meaning to compensate me for the ruined night, maybe fearful that I should fall asleep before he had exorcised the lingering nightmare.

I have a letter from a boy, full of complaints against me and the Children's Home. It was his farewell letter. He complained that I had never understood him, that I was heartless and unfair. But to prove that he could appreciate kindness he wrote that he would never forget how once when he had a toothache at night, he woke me up and I wasn't angry with him at all, I didn't shrink from applying cotton soaked in medicine to the aching tooth. Of all the events of two years, he singled out that occasion for a more cordial mention. Yet, a teacher simply must move sick children out of the boarding school and get some sleep at night after his day's work.

65. We should not demand from children either individual or collective sacrifices.

The father who works hard, the mother with migraines, the teacher feeling run down they can stir the feelings once, but repeatedly, permanently, it becomes tiresome, boring, even an annoyance. We may terrorize children into speaking in a whisper, going on tiptoe at the first reflection of pain or displeasure on our faces, but they will do so unwillingly, out of fear, not from any attachment to us.

They will behave and act sympathetically because teacher is in some trouble. But let it happen only rarely, exceptionally.

And we adults do we always surrender to the whims of the aged, to their outdated opinions and senile fancies?

I believe that many children rebel against virtue because they have been

incessantly trained in and overfed with a vocabulary of virtue. Let the child discover for himself, slowly, the need of altruism, its beauty and sweetness.

Every time I remind children of their duty to the family, to younger brothers and sisters, I always fear that I am blundering.

They need no encouragement to take home pictures or candy won in a drawing. They delight in the little brother's pleasure, or perhaps have merely an ambition to contribute in some way, as the adults do.

A child draws out a ruble<sup>12</sup> saved up in the school savings bank and gives it to his sister to buy a pair of shoes. Good fellow! But does he know the value of money, perhaps it is a gesture?

Not the deed but the motive reveals the child, his moral make-up, his potentialities.

66. Using our authority we have oppressed children with the duty to be grateful, respectful. A child feels all that but differently, each in his own way.

They respect you because you have a watch, you have received a letter with a foreign stamp on it, you are allowed to carry matches, and go to bed late, you sign your name in red ink, and you have a drawer with a patent lock, you have all the privileges of a grownup. Much less will they respect you for your education in which they will always find some lack: "And can you speak Chinese, or count to a billion?"

The teacher tells marvelous tales but the caretaker, the cook tell better ones. The teacher plays the violin but a friend can hit a ball higher.

Good-natured children are impressed by everything. The more critical refuse to bow to our wisdom or morality. The grownups tell lies, cheat, are two-faced, and are guilty of despicable evasion. If they don't smoke cigarettes in secret, it is only because they can smoke openly. They can do whatever they like.

The more effort you exert to maintain your authority, the less you achieve, the more care you take, the less will you grasp. If you are not completely ridiculous, completely incapable, if you don't play the fool to sneak into the children's good graces, by flattery and favoritism, they will respect you in their own way.

Their own way. How that is I don't know.

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<sup>12</sup> Some of Korczak's experiences occurred when Warsaw was under Russian occupation and the ruble was an official means of exchange.



They will laugh at your being lean and tall, fat, bald, at a wart on your forehead, at your nostrils which twitch, at the way you laugh, at the way you hunch your back. And they will mimic you, pretending to be lean or fat and twitching their nostrils.

Let them in an intimate, exceptional moment, in a rare friendly chat, say what they think of you.

"You are so odd. Sometimes I like you, sir, but sometimes I could kill you."

"When you say something, it all seems to be right. But when I come to think of it, I realize that you're only saying so because we are children."

"One can never tell what you really think about us."

"One can't have a good laugh at you because you are only funny sometimes."

67. No one protested when in a tale for children entitled *Glory*, I allowed one of the heroes to steal. I long hesitated before doing so, but there was no other way. The boy was strong-willed, had a vivid imagination so he simply had to steal once.

For a child steals if he desires something beyond his capacity to resist.

A child steals: when there is a lot of something, so taking just one will make no difference; when he doesn't know who is the owner; when he has been robbed himself. He steals out of need, or because someone dares him. The object stolen may be a pebble, a nut, a candy wrapper, a mutton, a matchbox, an odd piece of red glass.

In some instances, all children steal when there is tolerance for pilfering. Those small worthless objects are somewhat personal and somewhat common property.

"Some bits of rag for you to play with."

And if the players argue, what then?

"Stop arguing. You have so many, let him have one, too."

The child has found a broken pen and gives it to you. "Take it, throw it away."

He has found a torn picture, a length of string, a bead. If it is alright to throw it away, so it is proper to pocket it.

And gradually, a pen, a needle, a piece of rubber or pencil, a thimble and finally, any object lying on the window sill, the table, the floor, become common property in a way. If in a family such matters give rise to a hundred disputes, in an institution they will run into thousands every day.

There are two ways. The first — wicked — is to forbid the children to keep any

"rubbish." The second — a correct way — is for every object to have an owner. Whatever is found should be returned even if its value be small or none. Every misplaced object should be sought immediately.

Thus a child knows where he stands, and now only the first type of pilfering remains, and not only the worst children are occasionally tempted.

68. Fraud is only a variety of pilfering, a disguised theft.

Wheedling for something, clearly absurd bets, gambling and playing at forfeits, the exchange of valuable objects (a penknife, pen case, chocolate box) for something worthless. Finally — borrowing without intent to return.

Usually, the teacher, for his own convenience, forbids any swapping, giving and taking, playing anything for gain. This ban closes, dams for ever, the loser's chance of complaint.

Hundreds of cases of vital importance, fascinating, specific, fail to reach the teacher, while one flagrant matter that is brought to his attention provides the opportunity for a rhetorical display full of the unreality of sermon. Then all is quiet again until the next fuss. For the ban holds only for a short time as life itself undermines it.

How many ugly, depraving and damaging cases are due to promises, extracted gifts, and deceitful transactions.

A child who has lost a borrowed penknife or ball may easily become a slave.

69. A teacher starting out with the sweet illusion that he is entering a little world of pure, affectionate and open-hearted souls whose good will and confidence are easy to win will soon be disappointed. And instead of resenting those who have misled him, and rebuking himself for having been taken for a sucker he will nurse a grudge against the children for shattering his faith. Is it their fault that the pleasures of the job were emphasized to you, and the pains omitted?

There are just as many evil ones among children as among adults — but the former have neither the need nor the possibility of showing it.

In the children's world everything happens exactly as in the rotten adult world. You will find examples of every conceivable type of man and specimens of every conceivable evil. For children imitate the life, conversations and striving of the surroundings in which they were reared. All adult passions are latent in them.

And if tomorrow I have to meet a group of children, I ought to know already today what they are like. The group will include the gentle, the passive, the good-natured as well as the most wicked, malicious, intriguers and delinquents, the openly

hostile and perverse in initiative, or the hypocritically submissive, and surreptitiously spiteful.

I envisage the necessity to struggle for a set of rules to safeguard the dull and the honest. I shall recruit the positive values of the community to counteract the evil forces. Only then will I be able to proceed with regular educational work, conscious all the time of the limitations of educational influences in given surroundings.

I may be able to create a tradition of truthfulness, tidiness, hard work, honesty and frankness but I shall not be able to make any of the children other than what they are. A birch will stay a birch, an oak an oak, and a thistle a thistle. I may be able to rouse what is dormant in the soul but I cannot create anything. It will be stupid of me to be annoyed with myself or the child.

70. I have observed that some honest teachers show resentment of insincere children. I should like to point out that the slavery in which we keep children breeds both falsehood and cunning in taking advantage of our likings, a hypocritical willingness to gratify, and a self-centered manifestation of attachment. All are afflicted with this weakness to varying degrees.

Peer searchingly into the souls of those you term insincere. They are miserable children. Sometimes ambitious but without real worth. Sometimes feeble in body and ugly they are held in contempt. Sometimes they are surreptitiously trained in hypocrisy, spoiled and warped both by you who dislike them, and by those who — in ignorance of the falsity of their attachment, pleasing ways and exemplary conduct — grant them privileges.

If one such cold-blooded and mean child approaches and embraces you you have no right to turn him away though you may know that it is all callous calculation. Perhaps he is merely clumsy about it. Possibly the others deceive you more diplomatically, with more finesse, and are still better at deceit since they have learned to act so suggestively as to yield to the suggestion themselves?

Perhaps some of those who dance attendance on you, more than you could wish, are the weaker and less liked, who seek your special care, and protection against harm?

Perhaps someone tipped them off: be nice to him — a few flowers, a kiss, then ask what you want. Perhaps the child follows the advice uneasily in spite of his frank though and personality, thus acting according to a rule, awkwardly, without understanding?

I was surprised when one of the boys, reticent, unemotional, prematurely old,

uncommunicative, a misanthrope, all of a sudden began to manifest friendliness toward me. He became the first to laugh at my jokes, made things easy for me, anticipated my wishes. He did it awkwardly, conspicuously, anxious to attract attention to his efforts. This lasted for some time. I gave no hint of the feeling of disgust it aroused ... When finally he came to plead with me to admit his younger brother to the Children's Home, I felt tears filling my eyes: poor little beggar, how much it must have cost him to act contrary to his nature for such a long time.

71. Children disliked by the others and their favorites and leaders. An important problem. Research

might provide the key to unraveling more than one secret of success in life, not by the scale of values and abilities, but by that something intangible, unknown.

Children who are pretty, healthy, cheerful, full of initiative, bold and gifted always have friends, allies and admirers. The excessively ambitious also have enemies. Hence cliques. There are transient favorites of child communities which elevate them in order to enjoy their downfall a little later.

No wonder that a child who knows how to organize entertainment, tell a story, one who likes to and can enjoy himself, is welcome as a companion. He shares his gaiety and imagination with friends as another would give away apples and pears. After all, what do they like if not the wealth of morsels and of spiritual nourishment from which they draw.

Children dislike the awkward and the upsetting — and who are such if not the poor in body and weak in spirit? So these turn to the teacher, since being unable to give anything to the children, they receive nothing in return.

So it is and so it must be. Those who absorb you most, cling to you the closest, are not necessarily the most valuable. Don't expect full rights for them, they ask only a little for themselves.

But on no account should you push them away.

72. A child strives - and let me add, has a right — to take every advantage of whatever assets he possesses, of his -strengths, to focus the attention of others on himself, on his attractive appearance, skill, memory, eloquence, voice, background. If unconvinced we stand in his way, we will earn his resentment because he will suspect malicious harassment, perhaps even jealousy.

"This is our songbird, our gymnast."

Perhaps better not say it? Perhaps it spoils him? And perhaps it only encourages him

to speak out because he is proud of having the best voice or of being the most agile.

More tactless, surely, to tell a child roughly:

"Just because you can sing nicely, do you think that your father is the governor, so you may do what you like?"

Or:

"Do you suppose that grin deceives me?"

"You come with your kisses because you want something?"

True, but you yourself also behave this way.

Don't you make up for your own lack of ideas with your good memory, or for your bad memory with intelligence? Aren't you trying to obtain obedience with a winning smile, because you cannot or will not use threats? Don't you ever try to get improvement with a kiss?

Don't you hide your faults and bad habits?

Why should you deny the child the right you claim for yourself particularly since you have the great advantage of age and power?

The overwhelming majority of children has as yet no intellect. They substitute wit. As Locke puts it, wit is the monkey of intellect. The better the conditions for development you afford your pupils, the sooner the witty monkeys will become men.

73. Children who are always last and late are the touchstone of a teacher's patience.

The bell. Little do the uninitiated know how much of the teacher's effort, how much determined good will on the part of the children it is necessary in order to get a hundred children together at an agreed signal. Only one more line to finish the dictation, one more number to be called in the draw, one more word to finish the conversation; just to the next full stop and not even the end of the chapter in the thriller.

You go out of the room, and wait to lock the door. Noisily, pushing, they all run just a little too eagerly, except for one or two who keep waiting while they put away or take something at the very last moment.

You are issuing shoes, overcoats — the same thing again.

And you have to wait by the open cupboard, by the lamp to switch it off, by the

bathtub to let the water out, by the table until the dishes are collected. You are always waiting for one or two to start or finish what they are doing. They are the ones who mislay their caps just as it is time to go out, break their pens as you are about to start dictation.

"Hurry up! ... Get a move on! ... How much longer must I wait? ... Will you never finish?"

Don't get worked up: it's their nature.

74. A seemingly benign prohibition. You struggle, but it's no use, the children won't listen. Do not get angry.

We forbid talking in the dormitory at night. "You have had all day for that. Now it's time to sleep."

Evidently there is some obstacle to the children's ability to comply with a reasonable request and they go on talking quietly, in whispers, soft whispers. A murmur.

You shout at them. Silence, but not for long. Today, yesterday, tomorrow, it's always the same.

There's nothing left but the cane, force or an inquiry. "What were you talking about in the dormitory

last night?"

"I was telling him how it was at home when dad

was still alive.... I asked him why Poles don't like Jews. ... I was telling him, he should do better, and then you wouldn't get angry with him. ... I said that when I grow up, I would make a trip to the Eskimos and teach them to read and to build houses."

A brutal "Quiet there" on my part would have broken up four conversations.

No offense here but one of those deep, warm spiritual yearnings of children. In the daytime, noise and work, there is no time or place for softly-whispered confidences, melancholic reminiscences, heartfelt advice, or a discreet question. You, wearied by the daylong noise, crave a moment of peace before falling asleep, and so do they ...

You forbid speaking in the morning before the appointed hour. What is the one to do with himself who woke up early this morning, or the one who wakes up early every morning?

Again, the futility of the struggle for morning silence in the dormitory leaves the children triumphant, and me with a discovery which is not decisive perhaps but at

least is not of secondary importance.

75. Another example.

Quite frequently I used to ask the children such questions as:

"How are you getting along? How are things? Why are you sad? How's your family?"

Often the answer was:

"Nothing much, everything is alright, I am not sad."

This always pleased me. It had taken me merely a small fraction of a minute to show my concern for and friendliness to the child. I often patted one or another in passing.

It was some time before I realized that children

like neither the questions nor the caresses. Some answered reluctantly, appearing somewhat embarrassed, some with a cool reserve, at times with an ironic smile. On one occasion, a boy who answered my question with a noncommittal phrase, came to me a short while later with a relatively important problem. As for stroking, it was obnoxious to some children, even those otherwise sentimental and affectionate.

This irritated me, I admit, I was hurt. Finally I understood.

In those routine, carelessly put questions, the child sees neither genuine interest nor the opportunity for making a request. And he is right. When passing around a box of chocolates you plan on every guest taking only one, and not the biggest one at that. You treat a child to a fraction of a minute, he gives you the answer you might expect: "Everything's O.K.," but while respecting good manners, he resents the falsity of the pretended interest in him, he does not want to be treated casually just when you happen to pass him.

"Well, feeling better?" — a doctor asks on his round of a hospital ward.

The patient can sense from his voice and gestures that the doctor is perfunctory, so he answers resentfully:

"Thank you, yes."

76. Children have no experience in the hypocrisy of conventional manners, or rather in the common lies of colloquial speech.

"I give up. It should be quiet as in church. — He is a hothead. — He breaks whatever he gets his hands on. — I've told you a hundred times, and I will not repeat it."

These to a child are lies.

What does he mean "give up?" He doesn't go away but goes on with the lesson. It isn't quiet in church at all. He tore his pants climbing a fence, and they can be mended, so what is this about a hothead? He handles lots of things without breaking them, and if one did get broken, well, it happens. He didn't say it a hundred times, probably no more than five, and he'll say it many more times yet.

"Have you gone deaf, or what?"

No, he hasn't gone deaf. This question is also a lie.

"I don't want to set eyes on you again." Another lie because he will be told to come down for lunch.

How often a child behaves in a rebellious manner only because he prefers a few smacks to listening to miserable nagging. Perhaps a child, believing in the necessity of respect for the teacher, suffers on seeing that respect in ruins? For how much easier it is to give in, trusting in his genuine moral superiority.

77. We undertook a reform in the Children's Home. During breakfast, dinner and supper, the children received as much bread as they could eat. But it was not allowed to throw it around or leave over what had been taken. Let each take what he can eat. It was not all at once that the children could judge their own capacity. Tasty fresh bread made their eyes bigger than their bellies.

Evening, their supper over, the younger ones are called to the dormitory. .

Just then, one of the older girls, having taken a small bite, threw the rest of her bread demonstratively on the table where I was sitting, and walked out dragging her feet. I was so astonished that I could only exclaim: "You disgusting insolent girl." In response came a disdainful shrug and tears. Offended, she went to the dormitory.

I was surprised to find her soon after fast asleep in bed.

A few days later, I discovered what was behind her clearly senseless conduct. She announced that from now on she would go to bed early together with the younger ones.

Being ambitious, she could not make up her mind directly to stoop to going to bed together with the little ones. So, semiconsciously, she provoked my anger in order to have a reason for taking offence, for tears, and, consequently, for going to bed before the usual time ...

A few words about that dragging of her feet.



Some children thought it charming, and began to imitate it. Such old age gait seemed unnatural, ridiculous, unbecoming, even — contemptuous. Some time later I noticed that it was not only natural but specific to children at an age of more intense development. It is the walk of fatigue.

In my private medical practice, I often asked mothers:

"Have you noticed any change in the child's manner of walking?"

"Oh yes, she walks like a sullen princess. Sometimes it makes me furious. She drags her feet as if she were a hundred, or God knows how overworked."

78. Doesn't this particular example prove how intimately the world of psychological phenomena is bound up with the physiological foundations.

It is a mistake to think that having given up the hospital for the boarding school, I betrayed medicine. Eight years of hospital work impressed me sufficiently strongly that everything other than chance events, (like a car accident or swallowing a nail) can be determined in a child, only after clinical observation lasting over several years. Not occasionally as in an illness or accident, but day by day, in the favorable periods of good health.

A Berlin hospital and German medical literature taught me to concentrate on what I know and step by step, systematically, go forward from that. Paris taught me to think of whatever we do not know but should like to know, must and will know. Berlin is a workday filled with small worries and efforts. Paris is the festive tomorrow with brilliant premonition, powerful hope and unexpected triumph. Willpower, the pain of ignorance, and the delight of seeking were my gift from Paris. The technique of simplification, inventiveness in small matters, and order in details came from Berlin.

I dreamed of the great synthesis of a child when flushed with excitement I read in a Paris library the wondrous works of the French classical clinicians.

79. I owe to medicine the technique of investigation and the rigors of scientific thinking.

As a physician, I check the symptoms. I see the rash on the skin, hear the cough, feel a raised temperature. By the sense of smell I discover the odor of acetone in the child's mouth. Some things I notice immediately, the hidden I seek out.

As an educator, I deal with symptoms too: the smile, laughter, the blush, weeping, yawning, the scream, the sigh.

As a cough can be dry, moist and suffocating, so weeping can be accompanied by tears

and sobs or be almost tearless.

I ascertain the symptoms without anger. A child is feverish, a child is whimsical. I bring down the high temperature by removing the cause as far as possible.

I lessen the intensity of the whim as far as possible without detriment to the child's spirit.

I am at a loss as to why my medical treatment fails to produce the desired effect. I do not get angry but merely try to find out. I notice that an order issued by me misfires. It is ignored by several children or by just one. I do not get angry but try to find out why.

Occasionally an apparently insignificant and meaningless symptom reveals an important law, an isolated detail links up fundamentally with a salient problem. As a physician and teacher, I know no such things as trifles, and carefully follow the footprints of that which appears to be incidental and worthless. A minor injury may sometimes ruin the robust, vigorous, yet delicate functions of the system. A microscope reveals in a drop of water germs which lay waste whole cities.

Medicine has revealed to me the miracles of therapy and the miracles worked by efforts to penetrate the secrets of nature. Through medicine I witnessed countless times how men die, and how relentlessly, tearing the mother's womb, a fetus, a ripe fruit, breaks through into the world to become man.

Through medicine, I learned the art of painstakingly putting scattered details and contradictory symptoms together into a coherent image of diagnosis. And rich in keen awareness of the grandeur of natural laws and the genius of man's searching mind, I am confronted with the unknown — a child.

80. The teacher's frown, praise, admonition, joke, advice, a kiss, a tale told as a reward, verbal encouragement, these are therapeutic measures which should be administered in smaller or larger doses depending on the case, the individual characteristics of the system.

There are character deviations and deformities which should be treated patiently with the aid of orthophrenics<sup>13</sup>. There exists an innate or transient spiritual anemia. There is innate poor resistance of the system to moral contagion. All these can be diagnosed and treated. A hasty, erroneous diagnosis and incorrect and unduly strenuous treatment produce deterioration.

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<sup>13</sup> Healing of the mind.

Hunger and overfeeding in the spiritual sphere of life are as material as in the physical. A child hungry for advice and direction will absorb it, digest and assimilate it, overfed with moral precepts it will suffer from nausea.

A child's anger. One of the most important, most interesting themes.

You are telling him a story, he listens inattentively. You cannot understand why, but instead of being surprised as a naturalist would, you grow impatient, angry.

"You don't feel like listening, alright, but you will come asking for one then I will not oblige."

"If you won't you won't," the child replies, "I don't want any favors."

Even if he does not say it, he will think it. You will gather from a gesture, or from facial expressions that he doesn't care about a story ...

Once, making a fuss over a little rascal, I begged him to mend his ways. He started crying and in tears and despair, said:

"Sir, is it my fault that you happen not to like rascals and prefer dumbheads? Tell him to be an urchin, sir, and he won't listen to you either."

His tears held no repentance. He did not protest my caresses and tender words since he considered them a deserved, severe punishment for his countless shortcomings. He was only thinking in exasperation about his future: "This decent but stupid teacher won't understand that I can't be any different. Why does he punish me by making a fuss which I hate? It would be better if he pulled my ear and told me to walk around all summer with a hole in the seat of my pants."

81. Looking back over the enormous results of clinical observation of the child in the hospital I ask: what knowledge did the boarding school give us —none.

I address a question to the boarding school: how many hours of sleep does a child need? The handbooks on hygiene include some sort of a table, copied from one book to another, and compiled by nobody knows whom. According to this table, the older the child, the less sleep he needs. This is a falsehood. Generally speaking, children require less sleep than we are apt to think — or even wish.

The number of hours of sleep varies according to a particular child's stage of development, and frequently, thirteen-year olds go to sleep along with the small ones, while ten-year olds are wide awake and defy the specifications.

That child who waits impatiently for the word to jump out of bed in the morning regardless of weather and bedroom temperature, will a year later become suddenly

sluggish, rise with effort, stretch and procrastinate, and feel cold in the room.

A child's appetite. He is not feeling hungry, refusing to eat, shows aversion, vomiting, uses every conceivable device to get out of it.

A year goes by. Now he eats heavily, devours his meals, snatches a roll from the sideboard.

Favorite and detested dishes?

Asked about his two biggest worries, a boy said: "First, that my mother is dead, second, that I have to eat pea soup."

At the same time, some children can eat three platefuls of pea soup one after another.

But not knowing the general laws, can one speak of individual qualities at all?

And how about the round-shouldered children who after a time straighten up again, and then again stoop? The pale get good color, and grow pale again. The self-composed, suddenly become capricious, obstinate, undisciplined, to return eventually to the normal again seemingly mended.

How much of the arsenical dissipation and orthopedic swindling would be eliminated from medicine had we known the autumns and springs of child development. Where else if not in a boarding school should they be studied? The business of a hospital is to study diseases, violent changes, flagrant symptoms. A children's home should provide the setting for developing clockwork refinements of hygiene, for the micro-observation of small changes.

82. We do not know the child. Worse, we have a prejudiced view of him. It is really shameful how everybody keeps on citing the very same two or three works written in fact at the cradle.

It is shameful how any random conscientious worker automatically becomes an authority on almost all problems. The smallest detail in medicine can boast of a richer literature than entire fields in child care. A doctor is only a guest of honor, not the host of a boarding school. No wonder someone once remarked scathingly that reform of institutions for destitute children is reform of the walls, not of the spirit. Moral indoctrination and not research, still dominates the child care institution.

Reading old clinical works written by physicians we are struck by the devotion to minute detail, which occasionally gives rise to amusement, always to astonishment. They used to count the number of spots on the skin in rash-producing diseases, the doctor remaining day and night by the patient's bedside. Nowadays medicine is entitled to

neglect the clinic a little, pinning new hopes on laboratories.

But pedagogy, having jumped right over the clinic-boarding-school stage, has embarked directly upon laboratory work.

I have spent barely three years in the Children's Home, sufficient to look round, and I am not surprised to have found a treasure of observations, ideas, hypotheses. For this golden land has not yet been visited, nothing is known of its existence.

83. We don't know the child.

The child at the preschool age. (School age is a police classification wherever school is compulsory.) The period of teething, second teeth, maturation. No wonder that under the existing conditions of child observation, we have noticed no more than his teeth, and the hair under the arm.

We are even incapable of visualizing the glaring contradictions in a child's system. On the one hand, vitality of body cells, on the other hand vulnerability. On the one hand, excitability, endurance, strength, on the other fragility, imbalance, fatigue. Neither the physician nor the teacher can tell whether a child is a "tireless" creature or chronically tired.

The child's heart? Yes, I know. The child has two hearts: the central overworked one and the peripheral one in the elastic blood vessels. That is why the pulse fades so readily and as easily reverts to normal.

But why do some children, when influenced by emotion have a slowed and arrhythmical pulse, and others a fast, and rhythmical one? Why some blanch and others blush? Has anyone ever listened to the heartbeats of a group of children after each has skipped rope a hundred times? Is it not possible that at the root of the apparent vigor is the child's inexperience in how to spend his energy so as not to exceed the outermost limits? Why is pulse rate in emotionally aroused girls higher than in boys? What does it mean that a boy may show a "girlish pulse reaction," and a girl boyish one?

These are all questions not for a boarding-school physician but for a teacher-doctor in a boarding school. 84. The teacher says:

"My system of handling the children, my point of view." Though he may have a poor theoretical basis and only a short term of work in the profession, he is entitled to speak this way.

But let him prove that his particular system or point of view has been derived from experience at work, under given conditions, in a given terrain, with given

children. Let him justify his standpoint, cite examples, substantiate with casuistry.<sup>14</sup>

I grant him the right to attempt the most difficult, the most risky, that is to prognosticate, to forecast what a given child will grow into.

But let him always remain aware that he may err. Let none of his views be neither an absolute nor an immutable conviction. Let today always be no more than a transition from the sum total of yesterday's to tomorrow's still greater experiences.

Every problem should be examined independently of the general outlook, and that goes for every fact, too. For facts contradict one another, and only by their number on this side or that is it possible to deduce general laws.

Only under such conditions will his work be neither monotonous nor hopeless. Every day will bring him something new, unexpected, unusual. Each day passed will be enriched with a new contribution.

An unusual or rare complaint, lie, dispute, request, offense, act of disobedience, falsehood, or courage, will be as precious to him as a unique coin to a collector, a unique fossil, plant, or the position of stars in the sky.

84. Only then will he love every child with a sensible love, find interest in the child's spiritual content, with his wants and fate. The closer he is to the child, the more noteworthy characteristics will he observe. In research, he will find both reward and encouragement to go on studying to further efforts.

Example:

A girl, ill-natured, ugly, annoying. If she ever takes part in a game, it is only to wreck it. She will be intentionally aggressive, wanting to be hurt so that she may complain. Show her kindness and she takes liberties. She has low intelligence, lacks aspirations, affection or ambition and is unimaginative.

I am fond of her in the same way that a naturalist is fond of some miserable, nasty creature he is observing. Poor ugly, thing, a Cinderella of nature.

I gave a stern warning:

"Remember, under no circumstances are you to leave the bed."

And I went back to continue the routine evening medical attentions.

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<sup>14</sup> With a resolution of eases of conscience or doubtful propriety

When a moment later the timid: "Please, sir," came from the bedroom, I knew exactly what happened.

He had disobeyed and got out of bed to settle an unbalanced account with a classmate.

Without a word, I smacked his hand several times and, throwing the blanket over his shoulders, took him to my room.

Formerly, six months back, he would have resisted, tried to break away, to hold on to the bedrails, the door frame. Today, he has the experience of several unsuccessful attempts, so he comes along. A peculiarly studied step — a bit faster would imply surrender, a bit slower would signify resistance. I am urging him on with the palm of my hand, very gently, just enough to let him know I am aware that he is not going of his own accord.

There he goes, a grim shadow on his face. You would think that a dark cloud has emerged from his soul, such as must precipitate a thunderstorm.

He stands leaning against the wall, head down, not a blink.

I am finishing up the small medical attentions: some iodine on an injured finger, vaseline on parched lips, a drop of glycerin on a hand, a spoonful of cough mixture.

"You may go back."

I follow him in case he hits somebody on his way. No, he has only glanced sideways, slowed down, may be waiting for anyone to stop him and say: "So you've b e e n t h r o u g h i t."

He reaches his bed, lies down and pulls the blanket right over his head. Perhaps he is lying in wait, perhaps he wants me to get back to my room.

I make a round in between the rows of beds.

He was already well on the way to reforming himself, today he had a bad day. He banged the glass door in anger, so a pane went. He said it was the wind, the draft. I pretended to believe him.

During rope jumping, he wouldn't take his turn. Got offended, refused to jump and upset the others. The children complained. He didn't eat his supper because he found something wrong with the rolls, and the boy on duty wouldn't change them.

No easy matter to explain to the children that he should be forgiven more than others.

The murmur in the bedroom as they fall asleep dies down. Odd hour. Amazing how

easily and well thoughts come just then.

My research.

Weight curves, development profiles, growth indices, prognoses of somatic and psychic development. So many hopes, what will be the outcome? And if nothing?

Is it not enough that I experience a feeling of joyful gratitude as I see them grow and toughen? Is this in itself not a sufficient reward for the work done? Haven't I the right to be a disinterested worshiper of nature, to watch the shrub become green.

A murmuring brook, a cornfield, the leaves of a whispering orchard. Am I supposed to question the grains in the swaying ears of corn, to ask water drops about their destiny?

Why pry? Let nature keep its secrets.

Here they are fast asleep, and each of them has at least one shortcoming to account for, if only a loose button left unsewn.

How petty all this is in the perspective of the menacing morrow, when a single mistake may occasionally be paid for with a shattered life.

So sheltered and quiet!

Whither am I to lead you? Toward great ideas, lofty deeds? Or is my task only to place you on the path to the performance of essential duties — failing which the community will cast you out — but in such a way as to enable you to keep your dignity? Have I the right, in exchange for the little food and care provided for a few years, to demand, bid, want? Perhaps for each of you, your own road, though seemingly the worst, will be the only right one?

In the calm of the slumbrous breathing and my fear-inspired questions, I suddenly hear a sob.

I know this cry. It's he. So many children, so many different kinds of sobbing, from calm and collected weeping through whimsical and insincere, right up to uncontrolled yelling.

It is heartbreaking when a child weeps, but only his sobbing — choked, desperate, ominous — inspires with awe.

"A nervous child." That does not describe it. In our uncertainty, how frequently do we acquiesce in a term having an indefinite meaning. Nervous, because he talks in his sleep, nervous because affectionate, lively, drowsy, because he gets quickly tired, is



developed beyond his age, progénere, as the French say.

There are some rare children whose age is not just their own ten years. They carry the load of many generations. The blood in their cerebral convolutions carries the collected agony of many painful centuries. Under the action of a slight stimulus is released the latent potential of pain, grievance, anger and rebellion. The disproportion between small stimulus and their violent reaction is amazing.

It is not a child but the centuries weeping. It is the whine of pain and yearning, not because he was told to stand in the corner but because he is oppressed, slave-driven, pushed around and ostracized. I am being poetic you say? No, only finding no answer, I am asking.

How taut must be his emotions if a trifle can upset him so. It must be a negative feeling, since only with difficulty can you bring a smile to his face, a look of serenity and never an exuberant manifestation of childish mirth.

I go to him and say in a firm but gentle whisper: "Don't cry, you'll wake the others."

He quiets down. I return to my room. He does not go to sleep.

That isolated sobbing in the silence of the night, subdued at a command, is too heart-rending, too lonely, orphaned.

I kneel down by his bed. I search no handbook for words or intonation and speak in a low monotone:

"You know that I love you. But I can't let you have your way all the time. It wasn't the wind that broke the windowpane - you did it. You wouldn't let the children play. You didn't eat your supper. You wanted to fight in the bedroom. I am not angry with you. You have improved. After all you did go with me of your own free will and didn't try to break away. You are already much better."

He is weeping aloud again. Occasionally, calming down produces the opposite effect — instead of soothing, it stirs up. But the outburst while gaining in strength, is shorter. He is sobbing loudly but quickly quiets down.

"Perhaps you are hungry? Would you like a roll?" The final spasm of the throat. Now he is weeping softly, bitterly complaining, his soul strangely shaken, aching, wronged.

"Kiss you good night?"

He declines with a shake of his head.

"Now, to sleep, go to sleep, my son." I lightly touch his head with my hand.

"Go to sleep."

He does.

God, what will you do to protect this sensitive soul so that life may not drag it in the mud?

## ***Summer Camps***

*... Say rather what hopes you nurtured yourself, what illusions You succumbed to, what difficulties you encountered, how you suffered on coming in touch with reality, what your mistakes were, how, while rectifying them, you were compelled to depart from sacrosanct tenets, what were the compromises to which you yielded...*

1. I owe a lot to summer camps. There for the first time I came in touch with a child community and, in independent work, I learned the alphabet of educational practice.

Rich in illusions, extremely poor in experience, sentimental and young, I believed that, aspiring too much, I should be able to achieve much.

I believed that it was easy to win the love and confidence of the children's little world, that they should be given complete freedom while in the country, that my duty was to be exactly the same to all, that kindness would soon produce repentance in every juvenile backslider.

I wanted to make the four-week stay at the camp a "ribbon of bliss and happiness", without a single tear, for the children from "basements and attics"<sup>15</sup>.

My poor dear comrades, who are now waiting impatiently, as I did then, for the moment to launch yourselves at long last. I will feel sorry for you if, receiving a cold shower at the very outset, shaken to your foundations, attributing the fault to yourselves you prove unable to quickly recover your bearings.

And you are tempted by the voice of others' experience:

"Look, it's not worth it. Do as I do and look after your own comfort. Otherwise, the devil will claim his price, to the delight of those who are jealous of you, and with no benefit to the children whom you are eager to serve. It's not worth it."

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<sup>15</sup> The slum dwellers

You are dependent on the experienced. They get along, one way or another, while you — be candid — stand flabbergasted and helpless.

Poor fellows, how I pity you!

2. What an easy and grateful job! You have under your care thirty out of a total of a hundred-fifty children, and no program whatsoever. You can do whatever you please. Games, bathing, an excursion, a story — complete freedom of initiative. The housekeeper provides board, fellow teachers give a helping hand, the servants see to it that everything is trim and clean, the countryside will present you all with fine surroundings, sunshine, benign smiles.

Waiting impatiently for the day, I was going over in my mind details of third and even lower order importance, oblivious to the most immediate and important tasks. So I managed to get hold of a gramophone, a magic lantern, some fireworks. I bought checkers and dominoes as spares in case they might be lacking among the toys.

I knew that the children should change into camp clothes, that each should be allotted a place in the dormitory and in relation to me, and, above all, that I should get to know the faces of the thirty of my group, and even of all the hundred and fifty.

In the naive belief that it was all very easy, I was captivated by the charm of the assignment ahead of me.

3. How does one go about memorizing thirty names that are sometimes difficult to remember and sounding much alike, and linking them to thirty faces? There is no mention of that in any handbook, yet without it the teacher can establish no authority, promote no progress.

The following questions need answering here: What names and what children are remembered first? What are the individual qualities of the teacher's visual memory? How does this affect the fate of the children and the work in institutions with a considerable number of wards?

Experience teaches that some children are easy to remember spontaneously, and some require an effort. This matter should not be left to time alone, since before you finally know them 'all, you will make a number of mistakes, compromise yourself repeatedly.

The easiest to remember are crippled children, those with some particular mark, the unusual, maybe the small or the tallest or oldest, hunchbacks, redheads, the exceptionally handsome or ugly. Even before he has ever seen a certain child, the teacher's attention is attracted to his name. If the success of a cigarette brand or a particular drug is frequently determined by a lucky name and suitable packaging, unfortunately it is also

this way with people.

Of the avalanche of impressions, we pick out the easiest to remember. Those which call for the least perceptive effort and equitable appraisal are used in judging worth.

4. Obviously, it is important that a child who represents a certain positive value or is able to serve as a model of it should be known. We usually call on children familiar to us, we give them errands, the opportunity to be on more familiar terms, to reach mutual understanding, distinction. And they feel more self-assured, more intimate, already privileged.

A child finds it easier to address a teacher who knows him, whether it be with a request or a question, and the teacher will listen more willingly to him if he had heard, remembered, recognized. Something usually hard to come by is obtained readily, promptly, effortlessly by a child having an easily remembered appearance or name.

Those who stay in the shadows, having developed a sense of injustice or an absolute belief in their own inferiority, withdraw even further and, if you want to know them, you must seek them out. Otherwise you leave them isolated in their conflicts with the community, and without help and counsel in their personal life.

In every office, factory, military barracks, some are being wronged only because the superior is oblivious to their existence, does not know them, does not remember. Thus valuable potentialities are occasionally squandered.

And the children, having quickly gained experience, are waiting, with tense attention for the first meeting with you. A little Mickiewicz or Sobieski<sup>16</sup> expects a jocular question from you. A pretty one begs a friendly smile while an ugly one suspects that fresh troubles are in store for him in the new surroundings. And if you look only a little longer at the first attractive, sweet, self-assured one, and read out an awkward name in a somewhat less firm voice, you have already reassured the first in his hopes and the second in his fears.

5. As for the inner faults and virtues, it will be the quick-tempered and the pesterers, the neglected and the more than ordinarily well mannered, that you will learn to know the soonest. The pranks of wise guys, the whining of bores, manifest their presence. The poorest are a nuisance because of their wildness, the richer and false ones call attention by their good manners. Lastly, there are bound to be some calculating and glib, who will be pressing upon you their service and information.

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<sup>16</sup> Famous Polish poet and military leader-king, respectively

And all those, the pretty, the ones with pleasant sounding names, the richer, the insistent, will demand that you promptly take note of them, place them in the forefront at the expense of the colorless crowd, which is assigned to the shadows, and they are greatly surprised if you refrain from so doing right away. They rebel if you refuse and in a fight they will utilize every method used by adults.

The little "prince" from a school for the well-to-do, or a local bigshot's son from a village school is certain, if he does not make demands on his own initiative, to be prompted by someone to go and ask for privilege. If refused he will get even with: "Tell them that he flogs, that he didn't say prayers, that he said disrespectful things about the authorities, is not a good teacher, and doesn't look after us at all." Or they may smear chalk all over your chair, mess up the toilet, cause a disturbance during an inspector's visit, instigate the insipid and indifferent, involve in some ugly business the most innocent, precisely those whom you are most anxious to shield from any harm.

Looking happily forward to the day of departure, naively, I had no foreboding of how much tact would be needed to keep the menacing mass under control.

I experienced no fears when repeatedly I had to caution some of the children against leaning out of the train windows or jumping onto the platform. Promptly one of the boys offered to keep watch by the car door, another volunteered to take the names of the disobedient. I turned down both suggestions, saying sharply:

"You look after yourself. Wouldn't you be ashamed to take the names of your school friends?"

"They are no friends of mine" — he replied with contempt.

I was childishly indignant.

There were also some who were madly thirsty while I was explaining patiently and ineffectively that they would get some milk immediately on arrival.

With excessive concern I was trying to calm a little boy crying bitterly over being separated from his mother. I was overanxious that none of the children should fall out of the window. Besides that, in my desire to get on friendly terms with the group, I was wasting precious time on idle talk: "Have you ever been to the country? Don't you feel sorry that your little brother hasn't come along?"

I promptly attended to the pedestrian duty of collecting money and postcards from the children, and I was jocularly scolding those who handed over cards already creased and soiled. Resentfully, I calmed the fears of those who, watching how unceremoniously I handled their property, — warned me that their postcards were clean, and the coin given for safe keeping was new and shining. What to do with

the tooth-brushes which they also wanted to hand over I didn't know: "You keep them for the time being."

6. I was relieved to get off the train, proud to find that none of the children was missing, and everything went so well. The rest of the way — in horse drawn carts.

Even with the least amount of experience, it could have been foreseen that the children, if not warned, would make a disorderly dash for the carts, so that the agile and enterprising would occupy the best seats; the awkward would lose their bags and those unfortunate toothbrushes, that all children would have to be reseated and that much noise and confusion would ensue.

Maintenance of order depends entirely on the ability to anticipate. Having foreseen, it is possible to prevent.

Intending to make a longer tour of the town, I should remind the children of the need to go to the toilet, otherwise they will whisper it to me in a streetcar or in the street ...

During a walk we are nearing a well in the farmyard. I stop them.

"Stand in pairs. Come up to the well four at a time."

If I say nothing beforehand, my effort to keep order will be in vain. And should there be a fight, a cup broken, the vegetable garden trampled or the fence damaged, it is not the fault of the children but of the teacher's inexperience.

These are trifles. Such experience, one very quickly acquires given some goodwill. Even so, the very first act of the teacher is of decisive importance and at times affects his entire future attitude toward the children. The ride to the camp was a torture to me. As soon

as the first one, tired of sitting in the cart, got off, I should have ordered him back immediately. I did not. As a result, yelling wildly, in disorder, partly on the carts, partly on foot losing their luggage and prayer books, pushing one another, excited, bewildered, the children finally found themselves all on the veranda.

7. None of the handbooks on education tells where thirty children should change into the clothes provided by the institution. There will always be at least a few for whom all the shirts will be too long, too tight in the neck or across the shoulders.

Heaps of underwear and clothing, a surging, capricious mob, and the person in charge completely lacking in experience. Changing clothing for a few convinced me, and the children too, that good intentions would not do in place of 'order.

With undisguised gratitude, I accepted the assistance of the housekeeper who with no effort, no hurry, promptly attended not only to the children but also to the underwear which in the meantime they had managed to mix up thoroughly. Several who were dissatisfied with too long sleeves, a missing button or excessively wide trousers, she calmed with a promise to put things right the next day.

The secret of her success, and of my defeat, consisted in that, while I expected everything to fit well — spit and polish, and in addition, smart appearance — she knew right away that it could not be done. While I dealt with a few, the rest impatiently waiting their turn, she immediately distributed half of the shirts, the smallest to the little ones, and the large to the medium size and tall, leaving adjustments to the children's initiative by way of exchange. She proceeded the same way with the trousers and blouses. Consequently, some children, those who proved to be adroit and industrious, had their clothes fitting perfectly and some impractical, unwieldy were dressed like little clowns in a circus at the provincial fair. But the most important thing was that when the bell called them to supper all were dressed. Their own clothes, packed in bags bearing numbers, were deposited in the storeroom.

8. How should the children be seated at the table?

*I had not anticipated this problem either. I decided hastily at the last moment, in conformity with the paramount principle of freedom, to let them sit as they liked. However, it didn't occur to me that there were four distinctive seats — at the corners — the rest being exactly alike. So there would be squabbling over those four seats, and the greater the number of pretenders the bigger the squabble.*

*I had not foreseen that a dispute over the four seats would start over again at every meal, and those who had occupied them first would insist on the priority rule, the others on the rule of equality.*

*I had not foreseen that with the seats and friendships constantly changing, the children would also be changing neighbors. So again there will be arguments when serving the milk or soup, a characteristic of which is that if a dish is upset, the contents are apt to be spilled and lost.*

*I had not foreseen that the constant change of places would make it more difficult for me to recognize the children.*

*I was even so unwise as to leave to them the choice of beds in the dormitory: you tell me where you want to sleep. To be honest if a free choice were to be left to me, I shouldn't know myself to which place to give priority. However, the instruction was so evidently absurd that I quickly withdrew it, but not in time to avoid noise and*

*commotion. I allotted beds according to the nominal roll, and I was greatly relieved when relative peace prevailed at long last.*

I was vaguely conscious of the defeats but too dumbfounded to be able to look for the sources.

9. The housekeeper had summoned me for supper for the third time, the other counselors had already left the rooms under their care. I thought that on the first evening, the children should not be left alone as they might be afraid or cry. But the experienced housekeeper maintained that being tired they would quickly fall asleep. How could I believe her? In fact the majority were already asleep.

I went but I was away for only a short while. I soon had to return, and in a hurry at 4t, to dress a cut made by a belt buckle on a forehead. The second victim had a bruised eye which changed color over a number of days, from red to yellow, to black and dirty gray.

"We're making a grand start" the housekeeper said.

I considered her remark tart and offensive, the more unwarranted since it was on her advice that I had left the room.

I should have foreseen that if some of the children went to sleep, others, excited by the new impressions, would not be able to sleep and, being on edge, might start an argument and a fight. Being predisposed to console the homesick and the sad rather than to act the peacemaker, I saw to my great surprise that the one who all the time on the way had been crying was now fast asleep.

I failed to grasp what was most important. The fight, a serious offense, a dangerous harbinger, showed that my authority had been shaken already on the first day of my unfortunate activity.

Parenthetically, I may say that the face of one of the fighters was pitted with pockmarks. Probably this played some part in the quarrel which put so tragic an end to my sunny hopes. "Not a single tear" — that was part of my program; and there had been tears already on our way, and now — blood.

10. I had a bad night. One of the children, unaccustomed to sleeping on his own in a narrow bed, slipped with a bang to the floor from the freshly hay-filled mattress. Another moaned or talked in his sleep. Then again, I imagined that one who was hit in the eye might lose his sight. My nerves were on edge.

For ten years I had been a private tutor. I was no novice or beginner in the educational field. I had read numerous books on child psychology. And in spite of all



that, here I was helpless, confounded by the mystery of the collective soul of a children's community. There was not a shadow of a doubt that it had made new claims, that I was most painfully caught unawares. My pride suffered, I felt weary. Already?

Perhaps I still kept some illusions that the first, exceptional day would be followed by the rainbow and the yearned for halcyon ` days. Yet, what could I do to assure the goodness of subsequent days? I was at a loss.

11. It was a basic error to have spurned the help offered by last year's .aide. He would have been an invaluable assistant during the first days at the camp. Let him watch the door on the train, let him even take down the names. Let him say how to stop children from hiding money, how they usually sit at the table, what was the usual order in the dormitory, which is the way to swimming.

An analysis of all the blunders I committed would be extremely instructive. Unfortunately, though I did take some notes, I left out my failures, the wounds were still too fresh, too painful. Today, fourteen years later, the details have escaped me. I remember that the children would complain of being hungry, that their feet ached from walking barefoot, that the table forks were always 'sandy, that the children were cold, having no coats. I remember the experienced counsellor who was shocked at the lack of order and discipline in my group. I remember the housekeeper who used to give me sound advice about looking after my own good which I was jeopardizing through excessive eagerness. I recall the watchman who complained that the woods were littered with rubbish, the veranda damaged by the boys who had taken bricks out of the pillars, that my group used the most water for washing — and water had to be pumped up into a tank.

Then, the worst happened on the fifth or sixth day, late in the evening.

12. The boys were already in bed when crude music broke out in the sexy. idark dormitory.

Someone whistled shrilly, someone else crowed, a bark, a yell, another whistle, intermittently from different corners of the room.

I understood.

I must already have had supporters among the children. I reasoned, I explained, I pleaded. I could sense both understanding and friendliness. Yet, I was unable to differentiate, far less to organize, the positive forces in my group. So that was it. The ambitious and deceitful whose hopes I had disappointed, whose offers of help I had spurned, had soon ganged together and, taking advantage of my inexperience, spotting my weakness, they issued their challenge.

I walked between the beds. The boys were all lying down, eyes shut, some with the bedclothes pulled over their heads, and all the time, harassing, defying, venturesome.

There was a teacher in the high school I went to whose only fault was that, being indulgent, he could not control the class. I recollect with horror the orgies of malice staged to persecute him.

Only slaves when they feel strong in the face of hated authority can take such vengeance. In every authoritarian school, there is one such victim on the teaching staff, one who suffers in silence, scared of both his superiors and the pupils.

I went through a good deal during those few minutes which seemed like eternity.

13. So that was their response to my kindness, zeal, effort. At first I felt as if I had a bleeding wound. The crystal edifice of my dreams had come toppling down.

Anger and injured pride: I should be the laughing stock of those whom I excelled in genuine feeling, whom I wanted to convince, to set an example for, perhaps impress.

I stopped in the middle of the room and announced in a calm, choked voice that anyone I caught will get it. My heart was thumping, my lips quivering! I was interrupted by a whistle.

I got hold of him, and started pulling his ears. When he protested, I threatened to lock him out on the veranda where a fierce dog was loose at night.

Do you know who took the force of my anger? One who whistled just once and for the first time. He couldn't explain why he did it.

What a fine object lesson those children gave me! Here was I, wearing kid gloves, a carnation in my buttonhole, setting out in search of enchanting impressions and warm memories to be gotten from the hungry, trampled on, disinherited. I wanted to discharge my duties at the cost of little more than a few smiles and cheap fireworks. I did not even bother to learn their names, distribute shirts, see that the toilet was clean. I looked for their friendliness, but was unprepared for the shortcomings bred in the dark alleys of big city life.

It was not work but amusement I had in mind. The children's rebellion opened my eyes to the reverse side of the happy holiday medal.

So, instead of examining my own mistakes, I lost my temper and threatened with dogs.

My associates, the other counselors, had come here of necessity, to earn their living. I came in the service of ideals. Was it not possible that the children's sharp ears had

caught the ring of a counterfeit coin and they reacted?

14. The following day, one of the boys warned me in the afternoon that another row was brewing, and that if I chose to hit someone, the rest would not put up with it, would defend themselves armed with sticks.

I had to act promptly and energetically. I put a bright lamp on the window sill in the dormitory, and at the door I confiscated all the sticks, taking them to my room with the intention of returning them in the morning.

Whether because they realized that someone had let the cat out of the bag, or whether it was the bright light in the room, or the loss of their weapons, the fact remains, that I emerged victorious.

Conspiracy, rebellion, treachery, reprisals was life's reply to my reveries.

"We'll have a talk tomorrow," was my stern announcement in the place of the sentimental: "Good night, children," to which I had treated them to begin with, and which happened to be absolutely unnecessary.

I found myself a tactful victor.

And again life taught me that sometimes good comes from what looked like disaster, that a violent crisis is frequently the herald of recovery.

Not only did I not lose the children's friendship but on the contrary, mutual confidence increased. For the children the whole thing was a minor episode, for me a momentous event.

I understood then that children represent a force that can be encouraged to collaborate, discouraged by spurning, in any case power to be reckoned with. These truths, by strange coincidence, were driven into me with a stick.

The next day, during a get-together in the forest, for the first time I spoke not to the children but with the children. I spoke not of what I would like them to be but of what they would like to and could be. Perhaps then, for the first time, I found out that one could learn a great deal from children, that they make, and have every right to make demands, conditions, reservations.

15. Uniformity of clothes is a hardship to children not because cut or color are all alike but because some children simply suffer physically at having to wear unsuitable things. The shoemaker will fail to grasp the peculiarities of a child's foot unless the teacher is vigilant in noticing, understanding and pointing out. Give a dull child comfortable shoes and he may become nimble and merry. If the camp rules require that the children walk barefoot, those who go about barefoot in town will be pleased,

but a certain number with exceptionally tender skins will endure tortures. Anemic and less mobile children need warmer clothes.

How can a whim be differentiated from a genuine need in an institution if even in the family it is no easy matter? How can one fix the limits of what a child will easily get used to, of what is temporary discomfort and what a peculiarity of his system the problem of differentiating the individual in a mass.

There is also a norm for sleep. The amount of sleep prescribed is calculated according to average requirements, but variation is considerable. Therefore you are bound to come up against children who are always sleepy as well as some whom you will fight in vain to keep silence in the dormitory in the morning. For surely, it is as great a torture to a child to lie in bed sleepless as it is for a weary and sleepy one to rouse himself.

Finally there is the food ration which does not make much differentiation according to age, and entirely ignores differences in appetite between children of roughly the same age.

Hence some children in institutions are unhappy as a result of uncomfortable or insufficiently warm clothes, drowsy, or undisciplined in the matter of sleep, more or less hungry.

These are problems of great importance, decisive in matters of education.

16. It would be difficult to imagine a more painful sight than that of hungry kids eagerly waiting for an extra mouthful, quarrels over a slightly bigger slice of bread. Nothing is more demoralizing than trafficking in food.

This promotes the most violent arguments between a conscientious teacher and a conscientious housekeeper. For the teacher will soon realize that it is impossible to educate a hungry child because hunger is a bad adviser.

Parents may say: "No more bread," and will lose neither the love nor respect of their children. A teacher is entitled to say so exceptionally, but only exceptionally and only when he himself is hungry. The difference between the children's average normal diet and above normal appetite should be compensated with bread, to the limit of desire and capacity.

I know that children will keep bread in their pockets, will hide it under pillows, put it on window sills, throw it down the toilet. This will continue for a week, or, if the teacher is unwise, for a month at most. A child guilty of this offense may be punished, but never the threat:

"Extra bread will be stopped."

For then, the more cautious fearing a reduction, will start hoarding.

I know that children will fill their stomachs with bread, and the rest of the diet provided will go for swill. Of course, wherever carelessly prepared, unpalatable food is given to children who are not absolutely starved, preference will go to yesterday's bread which, though not particularly palatable, is not repelling.

Of course, here and there a dope will eat more than is good for him with consequent trouble and commotion. But believe me, he will do it only once or twice; only the overly protected children lack experience.

There will be squabbles even when complete harmony reigns between housekeeper and supervising staff. If the children have enough to eat, part of the food prepared may be left over now and then. A hot day, a rush before an excursion, slightly burned milk, and the housekeeper complains:

"About half of the cereals were left on the table, and here is the bread found under the veranda."

The teacher may drink a cupful of burned milk to set an example, he may say that there will be no walk unless the soup is eaten, he may issue bread frequently in small lots, show understanding for the housekeeper's problems; but bread there must be. Under no circumstances can he afford to surrender on this score, even for a single day.

The teaching staff is apt not to take the housekeeper's worries seriously. The housekeeper is apt to see unconcern where in fact there is concern. Even given goodwill on both sides, there are bound to be such clashes as occur between men working in different departments of the same establishment. That is essential, and teachers who, having lost their temper, say: "You'd better look after your pots and pans, and keep your nose out of the children's affairs," should be reminded that the housekeeper is fully within her rights if she answers:

"And you had better wipe the children's bottoms because the washer woman can't get their underpants clean."

For if the housekeeper's duty is to see that the kitchen is clean, the teacher's duty is to promote clean habits among the children. Goodwill should point the way to tactful collaboration, provide understanding that they are both serving the same good cause.

I say — given goodwill.

19. The children don't go hungry now, you think, you have overcome their obstinacy. No, they are only lying in wait. Perhaps the excess of salt in the soup today was deliberate, the rice was thick and sticky.

Perhaps the extra large portion of meat on the plate was a trap, and in addition, plenty of potatoes, as much as anyone wants, and sour cherries for dessert — "that will teach him when they all get sick." All the rice in the pail, the children, after the salty soup, drink water all day, gooseberries and yogurt will do the rest.

Remember, young teacher, if a child can be sophisticated in his cruelty, he is unconsciously responding to someone's inspiration. The perversity of an adult, in whose way you stand, is limitless.

Disinherited, trampled upon by life, here these adults take vengeance for their wrongs. Disappointed in their ambitious aspirations, here they find pleasure in uncontrolled exercise of power. They demand to be worshipped, and graciously will permit you to serve them, autocratically ordered about. Colorless and inefficient, humble and hypocritical, here they will find their daily bread at the price of the dirtiest kinds of work and — a shut mouth. If you resist them, don't kid yourself, they are not going to give up without a long, bitter and passionate struggle. A victory won too quickly and easily, carries the germ of defeat. They are waiting for you to tire, meanwhile they try to lull your vigilance or collect evidence against you.

Should the young housemaid come to your room late in the evening to bring or ask for something on the housekeeper's orders, it may be incidental but equally likely there may be a scandal lurking. The younger and less experienced you are, the more deliberate you should be in your actions, the more careful in what you say, the more suspicious if anything comes to you too easily.

20. If you want to swim with the current, submit to authority then go out of your way for those who can do you "good," rely on the cunning and servile, trample on the timid, punish the obstinate and undisciplined. But if you intend to look into every detail, meet every just demand, resist corruption, listen to complaints, then you are bound to make enemies, whether you be a cabinet minister or a humble teacher. If you are excessively self-assured, inconsiderate and overconfident in starting a fight, you will burn your fingers once or twice, and then perhaps you will stop being so eager about further experimenting at the expense of peace and quiet, and occasionally even at the cost of your livelihood and your whole future. The more thoughtless the soaring, the more dangerous the fall ...

Anyhow don't believe me, I am lying, I am an old grumbler. Do as your heart dictates, impulsively, dynamically, uncompromisingly, take the straightest road ... They may get rid

of you, new ones will come, replace you, carry on. No compromise, drive a misfit out of your way, slap a blackguard in the face. You have no experience, all the better. If all experience does is to show how you are going to have to crawl all your life, you want no part of it. Better soar high for an hour... The vanquished will not be venerable to the bald and white-haired, to the young, he will remain a hero.

Do not grumble — that's what you wanted ... Don't say that you have not been warned, that you have been misled, cheated ...

21. The speech concerning the crude music went more or less as follows:

"I smacked the boy, that was wrong. I threatened to lock him out on the veranda where a dog would bite him — that was a bad mistake. But whose fault is it that I did two ugly things? It's the fault of the children who started a rumpus on purpose in order to make me angry. Perhaps I punished the innocent. But whose is the guilt? It rests on those who took advantage of the dark to stay hidden. Why was it quiet yesterday? Because the lamp was lit. You are to blame for my having been unfair. I am very ashamed of myself. I have admitted it and now it is your turn. There are good and bad children. Every child can mend his ways if he wants to. I'll gladly help. I am very sorry that one of the boys should have a black eye, another, a dressing on his head, that Mr. X was complaining about you, and that the caretaker also has a grievance."

Then they all began to tell whether they were good, decent, or just so. They began to tell whether they wanted to improve a lot or only a little, or not at all. I took due note of it all. I got to know the right wing, the center and the left wing in the group ...

There are publications of selected sermons, of political, and legal speeches. Why are there no publications of teachers' speeches to children? Because it seems to the public in general that anyone can address little childish souls. It used to take me a week and even more to prepare some of my addresses to children.

22. We had been jointly deliberating on what was to be done to prevent children littering the woods, to stop the noise at meals, the throwing of bread around, how to arrange general punctuality for baths or meals.

I was still making all the mistakes which I should like to spare you but I did get a promise of help from part of my group.

The foolish things done got back at me in the senseless efforts and futile waste of energy. The children shrugged occasionally, tried to persuade me, frequently I gave in.

I remember a chat about good conduct marks. I didn't want to give marks: all deserve the top one since everyone tries to be good, and if he cannot, he should not be punished for it.

"If I don't write to my father that I have a 'very good', he will think that I misbehave."

"And there is a bad guy in another group, and the counselor gave him 'pass' —

that's something anyhow, and I'm good and I get nothing."

"And if I do something wrong and you give me a bad mark, then I know that's the end of it."

"If there are no marks, one somehow doesn't feel like behaving. I don't know why."

"It's different with me. When the counselor gives marks and I get in trouble, then I think: I don't care, let him put down a bare 'pass.' And if there are no marks, I feel bad about it."

Consider each of these and you will see how important are the problems involved, how clearly the individual differences of children appear.

I gave in. Each gave himself his own mark. Some were evidently perplexed: "I don't know."

23. For a long time, I was the victim of a prejudice that numbering is degrading to a child. I obstinately refused to pair the children, to seat them at the table by numbers. But children like numbers: he is nine years old, and his number is nine, his number is twenty and his aunt's house is at No. 20. Is it degrading to a theatergoer to have a number on his ticket?

The teacher should know the children well, address them by an endearing name as mother does.

It is essential to know about the family of the child under one's charge, to ask how is the kid sister who has been ill, about the uncle who lost his job. If the beds are arranged by numbers, five of the thirty will want to change. This one would like to be next to his little brother, that one's neighbor talks in his sleep, and a third would rather be closer to the teacher's room because he is afraid at night.

They go to the washroom in pairs by numbers. And if he wants to change places so that he can walk with a friend, or the boy next to him is too slow, or he has a sore on his foot, the number should not tie him down. Let him change his place.

For the first few days a number may well stand for a name, concealing the child's individuality until his moral and intellectual image emerges in full. Then, the indispensable number involves no harm.

24. I offered affection, but the children didn't want it, couldn't bear it, were afraid of it. I naively believed that every suffering could be cured, every wound healed within four weeks. I was wasting my time.

I paid special attention to the least valuable children instead of leaving them alone.



I recollect sadly how, yielding to my pleas, they admitted to a game some children who only wrecked it, or how, at my request, they avoided the bullies, who were only encouraged by the indulgence.

I gave a ball to a nitwit. Not knowing how to play, he kept it in his pocket on the grounds that all have equal rights to a ball which was in all fairness handed to everybody.

I extorted promises of improvement, exploiting the goodwill of the honest who were reluctant to commit themselves to the unattainable.

I was happy that things had been going increasingly smoothly, not counting either the sleepless hours or the wasted energy. I lost sight of the children, their games, arguments, problems — for they were petty to me then.

25. Summer camps are difficult, but gratifying. You are given a considerable number of children to take care of all at once. Elsewhere, new arrivals come one by one or in small groups they augment the existing setup. The conditions of supervision over a large area are likewise somewhat hard. The first week — devoted to organizing — is difficult, the last calls for increased vigilance; the children are already beginning to think of city life and revert to bad habits.

A conscientious but inexperienced teacher has the opportunity here to test himself in the least painful way. In the real experience, he will soon learn about the educational problems of a children's home. Not feeling responsible for the children's more distant future he can be more unbiased in his judgment of faults and shortcomings. If he appreciates his failures and blunders, then in the next season, with a new group of children, he will be able to start again building new foundations without witnesses of past blunders or their consequences to deal with.

He has no need to save his strength and to distribute his zeal and energy over a longer period. He will be dead tired by the time the summer is over. So what? He can relax.

The experience gained over the first month will give him satisfaction when in the second he records progress. He will soon notice the difference, and be moved to further efforts.

The first season's work only seems to be irrevocably lost, but it is not as acquaintances, relatives and friends of the children from the first season are bound to come for the second. If you ask, you will find that they already know you and what you expect. Before they have even seen you, they already feel friendly and are willing to accept your authority.

26. My second season started under a lucky star. Having received a list of the children on the eve of departure, I learned the names by heart. Some of them inspired confidence, others fear. I am not joking: just imagine what painter Kurzawa, farmer Slimak, cobbler Niedola<sup>17</sup> look like.

Armed with a notebook and pencil I took down whatever struck me about a child during the first encounter. Plus, minus, question mark next to the name stood for first impressions. Briefly "nice kid, rogue, slow-witted, neglected, insolent" — represented the preliminary characterization which might prove right or wrong but it did give a general idea of the batch.

In much the same way, a librarian rummages through a bulky parcel of books just received, glancing at titles, sizes, covers. A fascinating job, plenty to read!

I took down the names of those specially recommended, seen off by several, lavishly dressed for the trip, and late. Immediately some children were asking questions, making requests, seeking advice, the more interesting because the first. One loses his admission card, and his neighbor quickly picks it up and hands it over with a smile. One promptly answers "present" when his name is called out from the roll, and the mother answers for another. One ejects the intruder who has occupied his seat while another will come to complain. One bows politely and another looks gloomily around. All that is highly significant to a teacher. Observed and memorized or put down in the notebook it becomes valuable diagnostic material.

27. Having collected the postcards, I put them into numbered sheets of folded paper, since some of the postcards were neatly lined and some were greasy and creased. In the first season, the children had a fully justified grievance that they received "home writing" postcards which were not theirs.

I wrapped their money in numbered pieces of paper, and put them all in a handkerchief prepared the day before. This was a deposit, the more sacred because depositing was compulsory. A child handing over a quarter, trusts you with his all and it is your duty to treat it seriously.

This time a monitor was standing at the car door, and also one by each window. I had time to exchange a few words with each child, and to add a few more details in my notebook.

I noted those who pestered for water to drink, complained, argued by the windows.

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<sup>17</sup> These names mean painter Dusty, farmer Snail, cobbler Adversity.

The whole group paraded in front of me for the third time while I wrote their numbers on the traveling bags in indelible pencil. This time, too, when I called out the name, some appeared promptly, others had to be called several times. There were also some who instead of looking out of the window pressed around me, keenly watching how I worked. Again, someone was crying. I sent one of the boys to console the child, he would do it better than I, and anyway a few tears do no harm..

28. I told them well in advance that carts would be waiting at the station, that they should go to the toilet on the train, that they should not try to get on the carts all at once and that jumping off on the way was forbidden. Should anyone receive clothes not properly fitted, they would be exchanged the next day. Two of the last year's veterans would assist in distributing milk, three others would help with the clothes.

I was striking up friendships on the basis of businesslike conversation, not on empty trifling.

I noted which had unwashed ears, long fingernails, a dirty shirt, for a mother who fails to attend to her child before sending him on holiday, is not only poor but also negligent. Sometimes a child is already independent, left to his own devices, or is motherless. Once they change their clothes and wash up, these details will be lost.

I gladly received every offer of help or to pinch hit for me. For I knew now that my job was to organize and control, that I could not manage alone against the lot. I realized that ,I will be efficient if I had time to attend to the most important problems and look after children who were unusual due to their health condition, character, neglect, awkwardness, or high mindedness.

And when the children, having changed their clothes, sat down at the table by numbers, I began to study their faces.

I knew the present group better by now than I had known the last season's batch after several days.

29. I advise memorizing one by his freckled face, a second by his eyebrows, a third by a characteristic mark on the side of the nose, a fourth by the shape of the skull. There will always be one or two in whom a nonexistent likeness to someone else is imagined, who remain indistinguishable for a considerable time. Such difficulties are unknown to a classroom teacher who has the same batch facing him day after day, all motionless on the benches. But they are known to the school proctor, inspector, principal. And it is easy for an unfamiliar child to make trouble on the sly while a few scapegoats suffer for themselves and others.

"So it was you. Not the first time. It's always you."

And the real culprit is laughing himself sick.

I stress the necessity of promptly knowing all the children because all detrimental prejudices - those in favor of and against the child are rooted in the want of this knowledge.

I shall not be far from the truth, it seems, if I say that an attractive looking child with a pretty face has every chance to be marked down as good, and one who is ugly or with some defect will be noted as bad. From this stems the equally unwarranted prejudice of some teachers against pretty children. I repeat that in every case, he will be a bad teacher who is unfamiliar with even one of his charges.

30. In the evening, when they were already in bed, I talked to them about last season's boys.

"I'll speak about the boys who used to sleep in beds number five, eleven, twenty and thirty-two.

"One proved to be always a good sport, the second, was always dissatisfied over something or other, the third made great progress in mending his ways, the fourth had an unfortunate accident at night — he wet his bed. At first, the boys had poked fun at him but later on, they realized that he was sad, weak and awkward, so they started looking after him. Where are they now, what are they thinking about?"

Those four little stories taken from life contained both a moral teaching and the day's schedule, together with the more difficult problems of life at a vacation camp.

I told them what to do, should they be afraid at night, and what if they woke up in the morning before it was time.

All except two, went to sleep.

One of those had left his sick grandfather behind and was thinking of him. The other was used to his mother's good night chat before turning in. He was the only one of the thirty-eight who needed a kiss that night. It occurred to me that being among the most sensitive, he might have been just the one to be bawled out or pulled by the ears through a simple mistake in such confusion and excitement as there was during the first season.

Even the first evening, I found time to make some notes in a special copybook about the first day at the camp. I made notes about each child individually. Already I had at least one small detail to record about half of the children.

First thing next morning I came to the dormitory, and before they had scattered and mixed with others, I started memorizing over again each of the children in my group.

Throughout the day I had kept on asking a different one what his name was.

"And me, sir? What am I called?"

The similar ones or those who seemed alike to me, I placed next to one another and looked at them, while the boys called my attention to particular marks by which they could be differentiated and remembered.

The number of details which initiated me into their private lives or in this or that sphere of a child's spiritual life, went on increasing from hour to hour.

Speedily and enchantingly, under the effect of the countryside and benign educational influences, those convoluted souls were turning toward beauty and harmony. At first they acted surprised and overawed, then ever more confidently and happily.

Yet there is a limit to educational possibilities that no miracle can alter. A keenly perceptive and rich soul, only weary of conditions, will be roused, but a poor and drowsy one will barely be able to force a painful grimace resembling a smile. You feel sorry for them? You have but four short weeks.

Innate, genuine uprightness will fit into the new forms of lovely life. Perversity will turn away resentfully.

Some bushes are restored by a single rainfall, some are diseased or withered, and some weeds are averse to cultivation.

32. I had been watching with keen interest how the children's community was organizing itself, and I understood the first season's difficulties.

While the more constructive children just begin to look around over the new terrain, timidly and reticently get to know, come closer to one another, the negative force has already managed to get organized, to set the pace and gain a hearing.

The one who understands the necessity for rules and regulations, restrictions and adjustments helps the teacher in his work passively, without disturbing, subordinating himself to programs designed for the common good. The one who takes advantage of the teacher's goodwill, scruples, hesitations, kindness or weakness, pushes himself forward, actively and aggressively.

It is astonishing how a boy of twelve, separated from the family, finding himself in strange conditions, under strange supervision, among new peers, experiences no

constraint or embarrassment, and even on the first day, demands, resists, protests, plots, picks his associates, wins over the passive and uninventive ones to his side, appoints himself dictator, and resorts to demagogic slogans.

There is not a moment to lose, you must pick him out without delay, and start negotiating. You are his *a priori* enemy, as is any authority which makes demands and forbids. Persuade him that your authority is different from anything he has yet come across.

33. An example:

On the train, I warn one of the boys that getting out at stations is not allowed. He did it. No response to my order. To my sharp rebuke he gives an offhand reply: "What's the fuss about, I just went to get something to drink." I ask his name.

"He took your name."

"So what!"

And at once the others begin to see him with greater interest. He has already found followers, made an impression. Sometimes a single: "Alright, alright," or a shrug suffices to place him. If that is how it is on the first day, think what it will be like tomorrow, or in a week's time!

I had a talk with him in the evening. Serious, businesslike, as between equals. We agreed on the terms on which he may stay in camp.

In town, he sells newspapers in the streets, plays cards, drinks vodka, and is no stranger at the police station.

"Do you want to stay here?" — "More or less." — "Don't you like it?" — "I don't know yet." — "Why did you come here?" — "A lady talked me into it."

He gave her name and just in 'case a false address.

"Listen, fellow, I want you to be able to stay here for a whole month and like it. But there is one thing I want to ask of you. If at any time you have had enough, just say so, I'll give you your fare back to Warsaw, but don't you run away and don't do anything to make me tend you back against your will. I'll let you do what you like, only no monkey business and don't interfere with the others. Good night."

I shook hands with him.

Don't try to treat him like a child, he will laugh outright or feign repentance. Then as soon as your back is turned he will say something smart, artfully pick out some comical trait of yours to make you a laughing stock. Anything short of sickly

sentiment, because he will undermine, exploit and ridicule you.

34. And there was another.

In a cosy heart to heart talk, away from those silly, timid, cowardly kids he despises, he confided in me. Genuinely moved, he promised to mend his ways.

One should never refer to such conversations and never insist on the fulfillment of the promises. When a few days later he clouted with a bowl a boy who pushed him inadvertently at the table, I reminded him tactlessly and in strong terms of the promise he made. In return came a look full of hate. A few days later, he stole his clothes, changed in the woods, and went off to the station.

A word to young helpers who are unfamiliar with children from the poorer classes. Among them are some most carefully brought up and some woefully neglected. These two categories not only avoid each other but show mutual dislike and disdain. Children accustomed to family life are afraid of neighboring children of the street. An unwise social worker fails to see the tremendous difference between a child who is moral and one who is immoral, he sees only that both are poor, both live in a poor district on the outskirts of the city, that both come from the same "stratum." Precisely for this reason, the moral fears the immoral who is a danger to him. No one has the right to force them into comradeship.

"Wait till we get back' to Warsaw, you'll get what's coming to you" is a common threat among ill-matched bunkmates.

I was once a witness to desperate efforts by a group of Warsaw citizens to promote children's clubs. I read a booklet on similar efforts made in Moscow. The same error gave rise to the same difficulties. When the school children clamored for the eviction of the hoodlums, the manageress said reproachfully:

"My son plays with them, and you don't want to. That's ugly."

It was alright for her son. He would not be beaten up on his way home from work in the evening. No one would shout after him when he is taking a cousin to church on Sunday: "Say, who's that skirt with you?" He will not be stopped in the street: "Hey, you, cough up a dime for smokes."

If her son is out for a walk with his mother and aunt, and a ragged urchin comes up to him, and the aunt quite shocked, asks:

"Where did Tony pick up that sort?" — the mother will answer in a superior tone:

"That's his friend from the settlement."\*

She will smile at the old aunt's God-fearing backwardness.

But a lower class mother will be justified in her fears about and warnings against such friends.

If an adult worker has every right to refuse to be friends with a drunkard and cutthroat for fear of his reputation, and even though there is really no danger involved, so a worker's child has the right, the duty, to avoid bad company.

And what if an urchin merely pretends to be on the level in order, taking advantage of an incidental association, to insinuate himself into a company which otherwise would never admit him? In order to exploit the acquaintanceship, derive some benefit?

The encouragement of association between children of entirely different moral values and experiences in life, children molded only by poverty into the same "stratum," is tantamount to detrimentally involving them in bad company, to subjecting their moral stamina to an unfair test.

36. I insisted:

*"Play with them."*

I was spurring their ambition: "There are thirty of you, and he is only one. You mean to say that the lot of you can't keep one in line, while he alone can upset things for all of you?"

"How are we supposed to keep him in line? He doesn't want to play, and if he does, he spoils the game."

*The children, not I had right on their side.*

I understood much later that if a teacher is prepared to have immoral children among ordinary ones, then his is the entire responsibility, his the duty to be on the alert. It is beyond the children's capability.

The most splendid assumption, it seems, needs verification. The most evident truth which turns out difficult to implement, should be conscientiously and critically examined. We are far more experienced than children, we know a lot of which children have no idea, but as to what children think and feel they know better than we.

If a child wants something but will not say why, maybe he is hiding the real reasons, and maybe he is not sure of them. The teacher's art is to find out, at times to

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\* Korczak actually uses the term "settlement" from the English settlement house idea.



deduce, to get to the bottom of those subconscious motives.

"There is something behind all this" — the more often a teacher thinks that, the more quickly will he perfect himself, the more certain is he to avoid being persistently mistaken because of false assumptions.

37. I was forcing on the children the company of sluggish, clumsy or unpleasant peers.

*That was nonsense.*

They were playing tag. The clumsy one cannot run away or catch anyone. A cheat will run so as to be caught quickly because he wants to be the catcher. If you force the children to play with this kind, they will ignore them, deliberately fail to catch them.

Heavens above! What adult will sit down to a game of cards with a swindler or a bad player?

You have issued the ball on condition that he is to play too. Is it surprising that they accept such a condition with resentment? Will they not beat him up if, because of him, they lose. And who will then be to blame?

Looking after such children calls for considerable tact. To be on the lookout that they get a fair deal, and on the lookout also that they do not get in the way of others.

"We always have to wait for him. It's his fault the game is always spoiled. His fault, too, that you were angry with us, sir, that you forbid it, took it away, warned us."

In the first season, I myself fought for the weak. In the second, I watched, deeply moved, how one of the worst bullies took the quietest under his wing of his own free will.

38. Don't underestimate!

The boys used to play a game called "toss-andgrab,"<sup>18</sup> known to poor children as far back as ancient Rome. The player throws five pebbles on the table or floor at random. Then he tosses one of them up and before catching it, must grab one of the remaining four. There are several grades of difficulty in the game. The game requires only dexterity and five small stones.

Most frequent were the complaints that someone took one or all the stones. At that

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<sup>18</sup> Known in the U.S.A. as "Jacks".

time I still rejected all complaints.

"Aren't there enough pebbles lying about? Get yourself some more."

Three mistakes.

First, every one has the right to his property, no matter how insignificant and valueless. The fact that the loss can easily be made good is not the point. Rather let light-fingers who took my stones find some for himself.

The light-fingered one committed an act obviously wrong — at best unfair. He took someone else's property.

When I took to playing toss-and-grab myself, I found that not all stones are equally suitable. When too smooth they spread over the table too far apart, when too rough they lie too close together.

Five pebbles matched as to shape and color are for a toss-and-grab player like five stallions of the same breed and height, five pearls in a necklace, five hounds at the leash.

There were witnesses who saw, remember and testify to the ownership of the stones. Right was on the side of the children.

39. "He insulted my mother." A long pause, then: "He called me a son-of-a-bitch." As a teacher, I should

[missing line]

him, or at a landlord who refuses to have the apartment stove mended.

"You know yourself what a bully he is. At one time, he used to fight with everyone, now he only calls them names. That is progress already. True, 'son-of-a-bitch' is used with the intent to offend seriously, the same as 'swindler,' 'scoundrel,' 'rascal.' Those guilty of such abuse, mostly in anger, don't really mean what they say. For can anyone seriously think that a boy who has refused to lend his ball, or inadvertently bumped into someone during a game is really a rascal. Some men are violent, some self-controlled ..."

I could see the boy's astonishment that loudly and distinctly I had uttered the evil word. And I said it out loud deliberately since whatever is whispered ferments, festers and irritates. There can be no more harmful factor in education than the guise of false modesty. If you are afraid of words, what will you do if an offense is committed? A teacher must not fear the children's words, thoughts or deeds.

Whoever wants to be a teacher among the poor must bear in mind that medicine

differentiates between *praxis pauperum* and *praxis aurea*. \*Let him remember that we may have to deal with perverts who use refined speech, and heroes of virtue with foul tongues. You ought to know something about the background from which your charges come ...

40. It would be risky to claim that children of the poor are more moral than those of the rich. There are alarming observations on record on both sides, One thing seems clear to me. Observations are made in the cages of city apartments where lack of space, prohibition of noise and running about, boredom and idleness, compel children to seek strong impressions and sensations which will not, however, disturb the peace of the surroundings.

On the basis of observation of children at summer camps, I declare that a normal child always prefers playing with a ball, racing, bathing, climbing trees to retiring secretly into a quiet corner to dream of who knows what.

Boys and girls can be safely left to run about in the woods with minimum supervision since gathering berries and mushrooms will so absorb them that more likely than amorous manifestations is a fight over a mushroom or a "robbery" by the stronger.

A secluded corner of the courtyard in a poor district of the city or the free space between cupboards in a comfortable middle-class apartment nurse secrets for which there is no room in meadow and field. But don't keep the children in bed for eleven hours a day just to suit yourself because they cannot sleep more than eight or nine hours, especially in summer.

41. To my surprise I found at the camp that the children do not resent orders and they submit to bans designed to maintain tidiness, the timetable, and discipline. If any of them broke out, he frankly admitted his guilt and showed regret. Perhaps, would add:

"I know, but what can I do — I simply can't help myself."

Some children try desperately to control their natural disposition precisely in favor of the general order. This struggle should not be made more difficult by exorbitant requirements which only discourage them or turn them unruly.

A teacher should clearly differentiate those orders and bans which are absolute and those which are more elastic. Bathing alone in the river is absolutely forbidden. Also forbidden, but less stringently is tree climbing. Being late for lunch is absolutely ruled out but some relaxation may be shown as regards punctuality in pairing off for a walk. Let those who are late and a mile behind catch up, for no active child can be expected to stand idle waiting for all to gather.

For exceptional children, and with the consent of the community — exceptional laws. This is the teacher's hardest and most gratifying task.

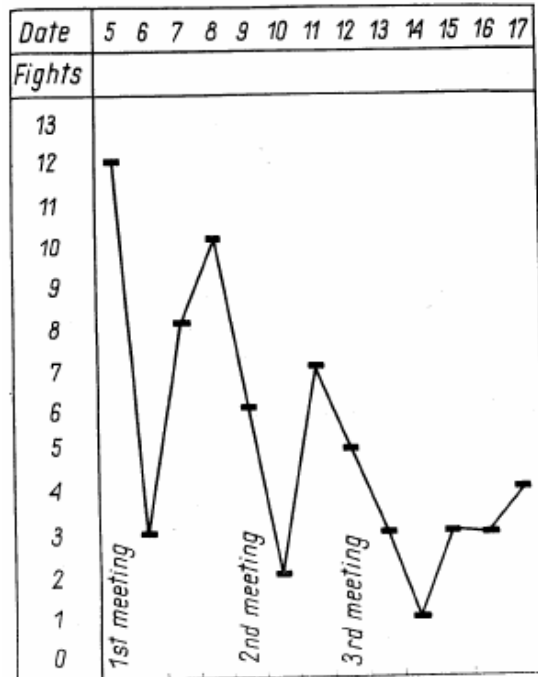
If out of the hundred-fifty there is one who can swim so well that he surely will not get into any danger — his home is on the Vistula, he spends half the day in the water, can easily swim from bank to bank in such a case, if the children agree, you may even allow him to swim all by himself. You must have the courage to take upon yourself the relative fear for his life.

42. The social instinct is natural in children. They may view a certain initiative with uncertainty at first because they are distrustful of adults in general or they may have misunderstood, but soon, if they themselves are given a part to play, they will approve.

How are the children to be stopped from littering the woods with bread, or induced to be in time for lunch, or avoid fighting, and swearing? Even if discussions fail to eliminate a given failing, they always raise the moral standard of the children in general, strengthen the sense of joint responsibility and social duty.

Note how many children were habitually late during the period prior to the meeting, how many fights occurred each day. Keep a record after the meeting, too, post a chart on the wall, you will find that the frequency drops. Going up again? A fresh meeting.

#### CURVE OF CHILDREN'S FIGHTS AT CAMPS



July 5—Thirty children—twelve fights; a meeting to stop fighting; next day — three fights only; again eight and ten — then six fights. Second meeting on the subject of accord, held in the woods. Next day only two fights. Again seven, five — three fights. Meeting to agree on: "One day without fights." As a result of collective effort — the next day, one fight only.

The point of the finest speech is to enhance zeal, to initiate but never to consolidate.

Some ascribe too great an importance to the spoken word, expect too much, others are unduly averse, having been disappointed on a previous occasion. Both are at fault. You will settle nothing with words, but without words you will see nothing through. The word is an ally, never a substitute.

You have no right to expect more.

43. A meeting about the mess in the toilet.

"In the event of a fire or a flood, the best men rush to the rescue at the risk of their lives. Whenever there is a call to do something difficult or unpleasant, always the best are the first to go. We have a difficult and unpleasant job to do so we are appealing to our best. Which of you will volunteer for the duty — half a day each?"

Naturally, many volunteer. But that is only the beginning. For the first two days, you

pick out the energetic ones, easily roused, less steadfast. In those early days the supervisory duties will be the most difficult, and since this is something new, such boys will do their job with all the more zeal. Say why precisely are they to be the first?

You will turn down an offer by a quarrelsome one because you fear disputes, because he is disliked, because they will do things to spite him.

You turn down a quick-tempered one: "You might get annoyed at somebody — you'd better leave this job to others."

The reliable ones you keep for later, confident that their zeal will not cool off:

The timid for even later: "It will be easier then, you wouldn't manage tomorrow."

You warn that the duty supervisor may have to put up with someone calling him "stinker, shit boy." No need to take offense— such will be unworthy of notice!

You explain what to do if a little bungler makes a mess unintentionally — what if deliberately, out of spite, and what if he fails to spot the offender.

You equip him with a broom and a cloth. You should look in yourself during the day at the time of peak frequency, in the morning or after lunch. Take the duty yourself for a quarter of an hour. In doubtful cases, take the cloth and use it.

No need to get upset, teacher: "They've been told so many times." It does not, will not do any good. So why keep nagging? Because some children understand what is involved in a voluntary undertaking, and to the unreliable one I say: "Why did you enter into the undertaking?" This is an important resource. For a child has none of the cynicism of the adults, who will reply:

"Who's supposed to stick to their commitments?"

44. The children's assistance is absolutely essential to the teacher, the prerequisite being, however, constant vigilant control and a duty roster. Only thus can he avoid abuses of power by his young collaborators. Power corrupts! It should be gently and carefully explained that monitoring confers no privileges. It is a position of honor.

In view of the accepted custom that the monitor received a bigger plateful, I laid it down that mealtime monitors should be changed every day. Although this was slightly troublesome to the housekeeper, I considered it necessary.

There were bed-making monitors, one for each row, monitors for distributing washbowls, collecting toys, seeing that towels were hung neatly over the ends of the

beds.

Monitors for picking up broken glass so that the children should not cut their feet.

It is much easier to get to know the children involved in minor duties than during school. There, abilities, the pupil's level of knowledge, random factors come into play. Here, we notice immediately a child who is enthusiastic but inconsistent in his preferences, the ambitious, aggressive, honest or dishonest.

45. By watching carefully how children sort themselves out during the first few days, one soon realizes that the positive forces need help, support, and above all, vigilant and perceptive protection against the two or more who find your system inconvenient.

If it is the duty of authority to protect the community against violence and abuse exercised by pernicious elements, the teacher's duty is to protect children against blows, threats and insults, their property (be it only a pebble or a stick), against trickery, and their schemes (if only playing ball or making sand castles) against subversion.

That done, finger tip control will suffice to prevent backslidings and deviations.

The entire time saved through the children's help and a considerable part of the child rearing ideas we can devote to exceptional individuals with whom it is advisable, or preferable to work separately, because they are unusually valuable, or dangerous, or simply do not conform to the norm.

We have to deal not only with exceptional children but also with exceptional situations which consume a good deal of time. A child has suddenly fallen sick; it's getting dark and four of the children have not yet returned from the woods; a complaint concerning a beggar greeted by the boys with stones or pine cones.

The greater the numbers, the more will there be of exceptional children and situations. Anger will not help at all here. It must be that way. The whole point of organization is that in spite of it all everything runs smoothly, and minor problems take care of themselves, so you may always be able to say:

"You'll have to get along by yourselves, I'm busy."

46. Self-assurance and wise foresight lead to cheerfulness and forbearing. Inexperience is the father of the irritable and exasperated.

Among thirty or forty children, there is always bound to be one abnormal or immoral, one neglected, one mischievous, asocial, quarrelsome and disliked, one

impulsive of a hothouse personality, one awkward or weak.

There's no escaping that! You are arranging a hike. There will always be one frail, one offended, one who is unwilling just because the rest are so eager.

"Big deal, a hike!"

One will be looking for his cap, another will get into a fight in the excitement, a third will run to the toilet at the very last moment, a fourth is nowhere to be found.

On the way, one will have a headache or will be unable to walk any further, one will cut himself, one will grumble about being thirsty.

You are telling a story. Someone is sure to interrupt.

"Sir what's that little wiggly thing over there?" Another:

"He's tickling my ear with his straw."

A third:

"Look, sheep!"

Youthful annoyance threatens:

"If anybody else butts in ..."

Experienced indulgence waits smilingly.

When losing his temper in uncommon situations, does a teacher not realize that without such the job would be lifeless, monotonous, boring; that unusual children offer the richest material for investigation and study, they teach us to search and improve. If not for them, how easy it would be to succumb to the illusion that we have achieved the ideal. And I doubt if anyone is so unwise as not to see that it is always possible to achieve the better, to reach above the relative good.

47. A small point though not without significance. If you are hard working, conscientious, and more capable as a teacher - judge your fellow teachers leniently. Do not make them conscious of their inferiority. If you seek the children's good, you must avoid clashes with your colleagues.

I was the most eager of all the camp counselors. It was inevitable. I longed to work with children. The others were sick of it. I sincerely exulted in the simple conditions of country life while they could find no charm in the hay-filled mattresses or the curds and whey.

When one of the boys had a nocturnal mishap which upset the washer woman, I took the



soiled nightshirt and bed sheet to the well and washed them myself. But the washer woman's perplexity, the housekeeper's embarrassment, the other teachers' astonishment were obvious — and that was precisely what I counted on. Had anyone else acted in the same way, he might have met a scornful:

"Serves him right. Let him see what it's like. It's his kid anyway." Avoid grandstand gestures. If falsehood underlies actions that are good in themselves, they irritate more than words.

Special diligence or the introduction of minor improvements should not get special credit for a new employee. On the contrary, if it were otherwise this would be the worst testimony to a new member of the staff. Let him be most assiduous to spot shortcomings which escape the tired and accustomed eye of the old-timers.

48. I said it to begin with, and I repeat with renewed emphasis. A teacher must at times be a nurse, he must not ignore nor decline this duty. An incontinent child, or one who vomits, or has a rash on the body or head, the teacher must attend to him, wash for him, deal with his ailments. And he must do it with no vestige of distaste. .

Let him go for training to a hospital, to an institution for incurables, a day nursery, whatever suits him, but get used to it he must.

A teacher of the poor must accustom himself to physical dirt. Pediculosis is a worldwide endemic disease of children of the poor. A teacher cannot fail to find a louse on his clothes now and again. Do not refer to it with contempt or abhorrence. The parents and brothers and sisters of your children treat the thing as a matter of course, consequently, care for the children's personal cleanliness should be calm and objective.

A teacher to whom children's dirty feet are nauseating, who cannot bear body odor, and is upset for a whole day if he catches a louse on his overcoat, would do better to find himself a job in a store, an office, anywhere he likes. He should give up the common school, or an institution for destitute children, for there can be nothing more degrading than to hate the way in which one earns one's living.

"I loath dirt, but all the same I am a good teacher" — you answer with a shrug.

You are lying. You have in your mouth, your lungs, your blood air fouled by the children.

Fortunately my medical activity freed me once and for all of the mortal sin to which a teacher is liable. To me, the word "phooey" does not exist. Perhaps that is precisely why my charges like to be clean.

49. The great French entomologist Fabre boasts of his historic observations of insects without having had to kill a single one. He studied their flight, habits, joys and sorrows. He watched them keenly while they played in the sunbeams, fought and fell in battle, hunted food, built shelters, gathered stores. He was never indignant. With

prudent eye he followed the mighty laws of nature in their barely perceptible vibrations. He was a people's teacher. He probed with the naked eye.

Teacher be a Fabre of the children's kingdom!

### **The Children's Home**

1. The technique of running a children's home in all of its minute details depends on the site and on the building in which it is housed.

How many sharp rebukes fall on the children's heads and on the staff because of the architect's errors. How much unnecessary difficulty, extra work, worry results from some oversight in the design of the building. If any modification is even possible, how much effort is required to locate it and to convince others as to its necessity. And then there are errors that cannot be rectified.

The Children's Home was built under the mark of distrust of both the children and staff. It was planned to make possible to see all, to know all, to prevent all. The huge recreation hall — an open square, a market place. One keen pair of eyes can take it all in. Similarly, large dormitories, like barracks. Such a building has definite virtues. It does make it possible to get to know a child very quickly. But this style, characteristic of summer camps or of a mobilization center from which children are distributed to other, differently arranged institutions, has one very irksome feature. It lacks "a quiet corner." Noise, commotion, 'bumping into one another, the children complain, and with good reason.

If an extra floor were ever to be built in the future, I should be in favor of a hotel arrangement, a corridor with small rooms on each side....

In addition to an isolation room — for a sick child — a place should also be provided for children suffering from minor complaints. A child with a bruised leg, 'a headache, a restless night, a bad temper over some unpleasantness should have private place where, alone or with a friend, he can spend some time. Obstructing, pushed out of the way by children playing, resentful and desolate, he arouses the pity or occasionally the anger of those around....

The toilet and urinal should form a self-contained whole with the large dormitory, or perhaps be actually inside it. Separation by vestibules and passages is senseless. The more it is out of the way, the more untidy will it be....

To set the principal's room apart from the children leaves him out of range of significant educational influences. He may be well placed to supervise the office work and finances, to represent the organization extramurally, to write letters to the authorities, but he will be a stranger, a visitor to, and not the host of the home.

Because a home, do not forget, is made up of "minute details." The architect should so locate the principal that he simply has to act as a teacher as well, so he will see and hear a child not merely when summoned to his office.

2. I read somewhere that private philanthropy, while curing none of the social ills, satisfying none of the needs, does perform two important tasks:

It seeks out shortcomings as yet unperceived, unappreciated by the state. It investigates, sponsors and, on realizing its own helplessness, clamors, for support and forces commitments upon the local authority or state, which are able to meet the full range of needs.

The second task is innovation — the search for new ways and means of doing what the state does in a heartless, routine, miserly way.

State care for orphans coexists with private care. Sometimes the private care is better having larger buildings, a more substantial diet, a more flexible budget, more elastic educational trends. However, the tyranny of bureaucratic rules and regulations may be replaced by the unpredictable and threatening whims of the all-powerful benefactor.

When it is considered that in some cases the entire initiative, all the efforts of those in charge must bend to gratifying the tastes of the unprofessional patrons ignorant of the difficulties and secrets of group care of children, then it becomes clear why the better personnel find the burden of work in philanthropic educational institutions so oppressive.

If the powerful patrons only knew how one unsuitable employee can poison an institution, they would perhaps give up imposing them. They would refrain from recommending for staff posts those who, though unsuitable, "deserve a chance." The system of proteges is offensive and a crime.

Proteges among the children also call for careful consideration:

"This child must be admitted. Special circumstances."

A child irregularly admitted, is not only harmful to all, but he derives no advantage for himself. Even simple pressure put on the teacher — not to mention coercion - to accept a child against his better judgment, is unthinkable.

The teacher must have the right to declare: "That child is harmful." We must have faith in him. The teacher must have many rights because work in an institution is difficult. In educational matters, his opinion is decisive.

He should have a certain monthly sum to dispose of at his discretion. Some

seemingly superfluous, or expensive items the purchase of which can be deferred may be immediately needed by the teacher.

An important point:

If the institution has several patrons, there should be a book where their remarks, requests and questions may be set down in writing. They will be fewer in number, more considerate, and contradictory orders will be avoided.

A few words about volunteers. They are extremely useful. With their help the institution enjoys the luxury of services that the regular staff, engrossed in the day-to-day chores, has neither the time nor the imagination to render. One will come to tell a story, another will take a group for an excursion, a few children will be given extra tuition. But they should take care not to get in the way of the regular staff, abide strictly by the rules, be self-sufficient and make no request.

3. The year in which the Children's Home<sup>19</sup> was being built was a momentous one. Never before had I understood the prayer of work and the beauty of real activity. A square on the blueprint today, tomorrow becomes a hall, a room, a passage. Accustomed to heated discussions over views, principles, convictions, here I watched something being created. Every snap decision was a directive for the artisan who gave it permanent form. Every idea must be assessed, calculated in terms of money, feasibility and utility. It seems to me that a teacher is not entirely proficient unless he understands those many things made of wood, metal plate, cardboard, straw and wire, which facilitate and simplify work, save valuable time and thought. A small shelf, a metal platelet, a nail in the right place, each may solve an acute problem....

The building, due to be ready in July, was still unfinished in October. And so in the dusk of a rainy afternoon, the children — noisy, frozen, excited, impudent, armed with sticks and clubs, began to arrive from the country. After supper, they were put to bed. The old Children's Home housed in an unsuitable, rented building, boasted random furnishings, shabby clothes, a stupid and incapable housekeeper and a crafty cook.

I believed that new accommodations, new conditions and rational care would cause the children to accept at once the rules of communal life. But they declared war even before I had time to realize what was going on. I believed that my camp

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<sup>19</sup> Korczak's Dom Dziecka was under construction from 1911 until 1912 when it was occupied. The building still stands at 92 Krochmalna St. in Warsaw.

experience would make it impossible to take me by surprise. I was wrong. For the second time, I was confronted with children as a menacing community in the face of which I stood helpless. For the second time, harsh and evident truths began to take shape out of painful experience.

Confronted with my requirements, the children adopted a position of absolute resistance that no words could overcome. Coercion produced resentment. The new home of which they had been dreaming for a whole year, became hateful. Only much later did I understand the children's sentiment for the old way of life. In the chaos, misery and shortages, there was scope for unfettered initiative, for the sweep of individual, energetic and brief efforts, for the fantasy of flamboyant abandon, for the bravura of a sturdy act, the need for self-denial, the unconcern for the future. Through the authority of a few, short-lived order would suddenly appear. What was needed in the new home, however, was a regular system based on an impersonal necessity. That was why the children on whose help I counted most, wilted and failed. And it seems to me that a teacher who has to work under conditions of disorder and scarce means should not yearn unduly for order and ease. They involve great difficulties and considerable dangers.

In what way did the children's resistance manifest itself? In little things which only an educator is apt to appreciate. Little, that is, they were intangible, and annoying because there were so many. You announce that no bread is to be taken away from the table after meals. One asks — "why?" Several hide the bread, one gets up demonstratively: "I hadn't finished." — No hiding things under pillow or mattress: "I'm afraid somebody will break open the safe." — You find a book under a pillow — the culprit thought "books are allowed." The washroom is kept locked: "Hurry up." And the answer comes: "In a moment." — Why doesn't that one hang up the towel? — "Because I must hurry." — One is offended, three play the same game. — A rumor spreads during lunch that a worm has been found in the soup — conspiracy: they refuse to eat the soup. You spot several obvious leaders of the resistance and make a guess about a few others lying low. You can see furtive wrecking of what you have thought well established, and encounter unforeseen difficulties in any new initiative. Finally, you can no longer discern what is casual or a sign of misunderstanding and what is deliberate ill will. A key has disappeared and is later found and you hear a sarcastic remark:

"I suppose you thought, sir, it was me who hid it?"

Exactly, that's what you thought.

On the question: "Who did it?" you invariably receive the answer: "Don't know." Who spilled, broke, spoiled it? You explain that it's nothing dreadful, but please own up.

Silence — not fear but conspiracy.

Sometimes when I was speaking my voice broke and tears of frustration were in my eyes.

Every young teacher, every new teacher must go through those testing hours. Let him not be discouraged and say prematurely: "I'm no good, it's impossible." It only seems that words are of no avail. Slowly, the collective conscience is roused. Day by day the number of adherents to the teacher's goodwill and to a more reasonable order will increase. The camp of the partisans of a "new order" will be consolidating.

### A REMINISCENCE

One of the biggest rascals broke a rather expensive china urinal while cleaning up. I did not fly off the handle. A few days later the same boy broke a jar containing more than a gallon of cod liver oil. This time I rebuked him, though mildly.

It helped: an ally.

easy the road if the teacher controls the community, what an inferno work is when he writhes helplessly and the community knows it, feels it and vengefully torments him. How great a threat it must be that he will protect himself by resorting to a system of the most brutal violence.

5. The half a hundred children brought over to the Children's Home from the former shelter were a more or less known factor. We were linked by common experiences and hopes. They were very attached to Miss

Stefania,<sup>20</sup> the Matron of the Home, and though they were against organization were nevertheless capable of it. Fifty more children were admitted shortly thereafter and they brought fresh difficulties. A day school organized in our home helped me appreciate the abyss which divided the aristocrat-teacher from the menial child care personnel.<sup>21</sup>

The end of the organizational year found us in triumph. One housekeeper, one teacher, a janitor and a cook — for a hundred children. We had set ourselves free of ill-chosen personnel and the tyranny of institution servants. The child became

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<sup>20</sup> Stefania Wilczyńska was one of Korczak's main coworkers in child care for a period of some thirty years.

<sup>21</sup> Korczak is pointing out the discrepancy in roles between the ordinary teacher in a regular day school and the teacher—child care worker of the institution. Polish terms make this distinction much clearer than it was possible to render in English translation.

the patron, the worker and the head of the home.

What follows is not our work — it is the children's.<sup>22</sup>

### BULLETIN BOARD

In a prominent place on the wall, not too high, hangs a bulletin board on which you pin with thumbtacks all orders, notices and announcements.

Without a bulletin board life is a torment. Suppose you announce in a loud voice and distinctly:

Children: a, b, c, d — will go, take, do — this or that.

Soon they are joined by: e, f, g.

"And me to? — What about me? — and him?"

You repeat — it doesn't help.

"What about me, sir?"

You say:

"You will go, stay..."

Again questions, noise, confusion.

"When? — Where to? — What for?"

Questions, nagging, scrambling. It wearies and irritates. But so it must be. Not all the children happen to have heard, not all understood, not all are sufficiently sure that they know exactly what to do, and the teacher might have forgotten about something in the confusion.

In the confusion of everyday matters a teacher has to issue orders which, being immediate and improvised, are bound to be faulty. He must make fast decisions. Consequently, depending on his personal disposition and awareness, something unforeseen will usually crop up at the last moment. Teachers are not trained in communicating with children by means of the written word. This is 'a big mistake.

I advise a bulletin board even in cases where the bulk of the children cannot read. Not knowing the letters, they will learn to distinguish their names, develop an appetite for words, feel their dependence on children who can read.

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<sup>22</sup> Korczak guided the children in organizing their own institution.

### ANNOUNCEMENT

"Tomorrow at 10 o'clock, new suits will be issued. Since suits are not yet ready for all, the following will not receive them: a, b, c, d. ... Old suits should be handed over to: f and g...."

### ANNOUNCEMENT

"Who has found or seen a small key on a black ribbon?"

"Whoever it was who broke the pane in the washroom, let him admit it."

### NOTICE

"Yesterday the boys' dormitory was dirty again." "Children are tearing books and throwing around pens."

"Don't say: iordine but iodine."

"Easter is in a month's time. Children are asked for suggestions and plans for making the holiday a happy time for all."

"Anyone willing to change places in the dormitory (at the table) should apply in the classroom at 11 o'clock."

Notices, warnings and requests are now posted not only by the teachers but also by the children. You will find everything there. The board lives a life of its own. You are surprised how you ever did without it.

"Please sir, me too?"

"Look on the bulletin board."

"I can't read."

"Ask someone who can...."

The board opens up initiatives for both the teacher and the children. The calendar, the thermometer reading, headlines from the daily paper, a picture, a crossword puzzle, the fight graph, list of damaged items, children's savings, weight, growth. Something of a shopwindow, a child will stop by it whenever he has the time and inclination — just to have a look. Why not put up a list of principal cities, the population of a given city, food prices. Anything may make a hit....

### THE MAILBOX



A teacher who 'understands the value of communicating in writing with the children will soon discover the need for a mailbox.

The bulletin board provides him with an effortless routine answer to questions: "Go and read it." The mailbox provides justification for postponing decisions by saying: "Put it in writing."

It is often easier to write it than to say it. There is no teacher who will not receive letters with a question, a request, a complaint, an apology, an admission.

In the evening there is a handful of sheets of paper covered with misspelled words. You can scrutinize them the more carefully in peace and quiet and to think of things which would have escaped you during the rush and preoccupation of the day.

"May I go out tomorrow, my mother's brother came?"

"The children tease me."

"You are unfair, sir, you sharpen everybody's pencils, but not mine."

"I don't want to sleep by the door because it seems to me that someone is coming in at night."

"I'm annoyed with you."

"The teacher at school said that I behave much better now."

"I would like to talk with you about something very important."

Occasionally you will find a few lines of poetry, unsigned. Something came into his mind, he wrote it down, and not knowing what to do with it, dropped it into the mailbox.

You may find an anonymous uncensored letter containing abuse or threats.

There are everyday, ordinary letters, and some rare and unique ones.

One thing or another keeps on reappearing in the mail. If not today, then tomorrow you will think of how to straighten it out, put it right. You will think somewhat longer over a letter of unusual content.

The mailbox teaches the children:

1. To wait patiently for an answer which comes not at once, not at the first asking.
2. To differentiate grievances, sorrows, requests, doubts which are minor and passing from those which are important. The writing of a letter requires a

decision (even so, the children often wish to get back a letter dropped into the mailbox).

3. To think and motivate.

4. To want and find a way.

"Put it in writing and drop it in the mailbox." "I can't write."

"Then ask someone who can."

Initially I made a mistake I should like to warn against. Regularly, and not without a touch of sarcasm, I told the incurably boring to use the mailbox. Correctly spotting discrimination they were offended with me and took a dislike to the box.

"I've no way of talking to you now, sir."

A similar charge may be heard from teachers: is communication with children in writing not unduly official?

I claim that the mailbox does not hinder but rather helps verbal interchange with children. I select those with whom a longer, intimate chat — whether cordial or stern - seems desirable. I then choose a suitable moment for myself and for the child. The box saves my time and lengthens the day.

No doubt some children are averse to writing, but they are almost exclusively those who count on their personal influence, on a smile, kiss, coquetry, on special consideration and on the opportune moment. They do not intend to ask but to extort. The child who is sure of himself relies on justice, writes a petition and calmly waits for the reply.

### THE SHELF

A shelf can complement the bulletin board. We have none in the Children's Home as yet, but we feel the need of it. On the shelf: a dictionary, a collection of proverbs, an encyclopedia, description and plan of the city, anthologies, a calendar, a book of games and amusements (handbooks on tennis, football, etc.). Several sets of checkers for general use. A library is absolutely essential. Arranging the distribution of equipment for games at certain hours and on certain days and under the control of the monitor prolongs its life, however, opportunity must be provided in the school for probing the free expression of the children's social instincts. They will destroy and lose but that must be accepted.

Let there be a place on the shelf for notebooks in which the children may write odds

and ends. One scribbles catchy songs, another jokes, a third puzzles, a fourth accounts of his dreams. A special book for noting fights or arguments of damaged and lost articles should be here. Occasional news sheets, and monthlies, devoted to nature, travels, literature and social problems may also be filed here.

The reports of monitors may be kept here together with diaries. The teacher's diary, too. Not every diary needs to be kept under lock and key. It seems to me that one to which the teacher confides his disappointments, difficulties, mistakes, items gratifying and joyful, as well as painful, may be of considerable impact.

Here is the proper place for the ledger on who has a town pass, when and for what purpose, the hour of return. Here is also room for a contracts register. Children love to exchange, give away or sell their small belongings. No need to take a negative view of this practice, far less, to forbid it. If a penknife or a leather belt is the child's property why shouldn't he be able to swap it for a pen case, a magnet or a magnifying glass. To guard against fraudulent transactions, arguments and feuds, it is safest to establish a contracts register. If children are thoughtless and inexperienced, give them the chance to acquire the necessary experience.

Since I ascribe great value to the teacher's diary here are a few excerpts from my own:

"I was unfair today in getting angry with one of the boys. Unfair because he couldn't have acted differently. Still, it is my business to guard the equal rights of all. What would they think of me if I were to accept in some what I condemn in others?"

"The older children gathered in my room this evening. We were discussing the future. Why are they in such a hurry, why so eager to be grown up? Naive — they think that to be older means to be free to please themselves. They don't see the chains that hamper our adult will."

"Pilfering again. I know that wherever there are a hundred children living communally, there is bound to be one who is dishonest (only one?). And yet I can't reconcile myself to the fact. I feel a resentment as if against all of them."

"Well, he did improve after all. I was afraid to be in a hurry to be convinced, but I have been watching him attentively for the past few weeks. Perhaps he has found himself a good friend. Let's hope it may last."

"I've stumbled on another unpleasant affair. I pretend not to know. It is sickening to go on nagging, grumbling, getting cross, pursuing investigations."

"An odd boy. We all respect him. He could have a major influence but he keeps himself aloof from all ventures. Strangely secretive. It's not selfishness, not ill will on his

part, he just can't behave otherwise, a pity."

"A wonderful day. Everybody well and fit, active, happy. Everything went well, smoothly, promptly. Oh! for many more days like this."

### THE LOST AND FOUND CABINET

A teacher turns up his nose at the contents of children's pockets and drawers. A little of everything: pictures, postcards, bits of string, tags, pebbles, pieces of cloth, beads, boxes, various bottles, pieces of colored glass, postage stamps, feathers, pine cones, chestnuts, ribbons, dry leaves, paper cutouts, streetcar tickets, odds and ends of something that was and bits and pieces of something that will be. A story, often highly involved, is attached to each item. Different in origin and value, the object is sometimes emotionally priceless. They all signify memories of the past and yearnings for the future. A tiny shell is a dream of a trip to seacoast. A small screw and a few pieces of thin wire is an airplane and proud dreams of flying one. The eye of a doll, broken a long time ago, is the sole reminder of a long lost love. You will also find the mother's photograph and two pennies received from a grandfather now dead, and wrapped in pink tissue.

New objects are added to the collection, some of the old ones lose their value. So he will swap, make a present of it, then regret and recover it.

It happens that a brutal teacher, unable to understand and consequently disdainful, angry over torn pockets, and stuck drawers, annoyed by the arguments and bother when something gets lost, or found lying about without order or discipline — in a fit of bad temper he collects all those treasures and consigns them with the rubbish to the stove.

A gross abuse of power, a barbarous crime. How dare you, you boor, to dispose of the property of another? How dare you require after that, that the children respect anything, or love anybody? You are not burning bits of paper but cherished traditions and dreams of the beautiful life.

A teacher has the duty to see to it that every child owns something which is not anonymous property of the institution but definitely his own and that he has a safe place to keep it. If a child puts anything in his drawer he must be sure that nobody will touch it. The two beads are her precious earrings. A chocolate wrapper is his certificate of shares in a company. The diary is an important document deposited in the archives. Further, it is an absolute duty to help a child find whatever he has lost.

So there should be a glass cabinet for objects lost and found. Every little thing has an

owner. Whether it is found lying under the table or left on the window sill, or half covered with sand in the courtyard, it must find its way to the cabinet.

The smaller the number of ownerless objects in an institution, and the greater the number of small private belongings, the more bothersome is the constant handing over and recovery of found trifles, and the complaining about losses. What do you do when things found are handed to you? You put them in your pocket: sheer dishonesty!

There is a lost property box in the Children's Home. The monitor transfers them from the box to a glass cabinet and returns them to their owners at a specified hour.

At the time of the sharp battle for order, I handed over to the lost property box every cap left lying about, every apron not hung up in its proper place, every book left behind on the table.

### THE STORE

The plague of children's legitimate reasonable needs: copybook, pencil, pen, shoelace, needle, thimble, button, soap. From early morning to late at night. Always something or other is used up, always something is needed — not a moment's peace.

So a store — a small room or only a small chest, even a drawer. But you distribute only once a day at a fixed time. Whoever is late or has forgotten must wait until the next day. Anyhow, who needs to be convinced?

When issuing, you record particulars — what, who, when. If you rebuke a child for constantly breaking pens, you are ready to substantiate your assertion with facts, a figure, comparison with others. Some materials are issued free by the store, some at a nominal price.

### THE BRUSH HANGER

In fact, that heading should have been: Monitoring. I chose to call it The Brush Hanger in order to emphasize that monitoring is worthless unless the community is induced to have respect for a broom, a dust cloth, a pail and a refuse can.

Manual tools have already won respect. And though the book still has pride of place, the hammer, plane, pliers have already emerged from obscurity under the bed, and the sewing machine has been admitted to respectable apartments.

In the Children's Home we dragged the brush and the floor rags out of the cupboard under the staircase and placed them not only in sight but in a place of honor, by the main dormitory door. And strangely enough, in the bright light of day, those

commonplace items have become as it were ennobled and refined, esthetic attractions.

There are six brooms for the two dormitories. If there were less, how many disputes, quarrels and fights would spring up. If we consider that a clean, polished table is as important as a neatly written page, if we expect the children's housework to be not a substitute for hired servants but an element of enlightenment, then we must examine it not just casually, but conscientiously — try out, divide it among all, observe, modify, devote thought to it.

A hundred children — a hundred devotees of tidiness and housekeeping, a hundred levels, a hundred grades of strength and ability, of temperament, character, good or indifferent will.

To arrange monitoring duties is not the beginning but the end of organizational work. What is necessary is not a single "serious talk" with the children but manual work and sensitive, creative thought over a period of several months.

Above all it is necessary to know the work and the children. I have seen in some institutions such terrible sloppiness in the division of work that the monitors' duties became demoralizing, oppressive. The children came to hate any form of self-help.

Some monitoring duties are easy, neither physical strength nor any special abilities or moral qualities being required. They are easily controlled, passively performed and without equipment. For example: arranging chairs, picking up litter.

But anyone wiping off dust must already be provided with a cloth for which he is held responsible.

The classrooms, each having four monitors, call for a harmonious coordination of functions.

There are morning and evening duties, daily or weekly (change of underwear, baths, haircuts), and occasional (beating mattresses), summer (outdoor latrines), winter (snow clearing, etc.).

Every month a new list of names is prepared and posted. This follows written applications handed in by the children.

So:

"I would like to be dormitory monitor." — "I want to clean the classroom and look after bath towels." — "I want to be the washroom monitor, and if not, the closet" — "I want to be in the toilet and also wait at table eight."

There are candidates enough for each of the duties. They stake their claims well in advance, bargain, get the required consent, hold protracted negotiations. A bad monitor must do a lot of running about, worrying and promising before he gets a job for himself.

"I don't want to be with you because you're quarrelsome you're late, lazy."

A fraction of this great educational activity never reaches our attention. Every office has its good and bad sides, every job calls for harmonious coexistence.

Given a new duty, a child has a number of new and pleasant experiences, he runs into unforeseen difficulties. The very fact that he is doing something novel, is an incentive. Before he has time to get really bored, something crops up to compel him to intensify the effort in order to achieve a desired vacancy or to keep his present assignment.

Equal rights irrespective of age and sex are fully respected here. A younger but conscientious child is quickly promoted. A boy takes orders from a girl.

Wherever several monitors operate in the same domain, one is senior. Every floor has one monitor responsible for the whole. There is nothing artificial in this division. To supervise the work of others is a serious duty. The responsibility is unpleasant. Those uninitiated into our organization were critical over this gradation. Everybody should supervise himself.

In life, however, not always does everything go according to plan. Among children, too, there is always a percentage of negligent, dishonest and flighty workers. Nor is it merely a question of supervision. Someone must instruct and help as well. And here a teacher, if he wants to have time for longer talks with eight individual children on particular questions, should communicate in writing with the children in general. The floor and senior monitors, in the major household departments, report how their duties have gone in day books handed in every evening.

Although only certain monitoring duties are compensated in the Children's Home, my opinion is that all should be paid. Trying to make good citizens, we need not expect to create idealists. The Children's Home confers no favor in taking care of parentless children, and in replacing the material care of parents it has no right to avoid making demands on the children. Why should we not teach a child at the earliest possible stage what money is — payment for services rendered - so that he may appreciate the independence which comes from earning money. He should come to appreciate the bad and good sides of possession. No teacher will rear a

hundred idealists from a hundred children. A few will emerge unaided, and let them beware lest they be ignorant of what money can do. For money can give everything except happiness. It even produces happiness and understanding, and health, and morality. Teach the child that it produces also unhappiness and sickness and that it robs of understanding. Let him use the money earned to stuff himself with ice cream, and let him have a stomachache. Let him get into an argument with a friend over a dime. Let him gamble, lose, have his pockets picked, regret a purchase. Let him be lured to take on a duty which seems lucrative and find out that it wasn't worth it. Let him buy his experience.

### THE COMMITTEE OF GUARDIANS

Instead of explanations, I quote from an exchange between one of our hell raisers and his girl-guardian:

April 16th

"I want to be a carpenter, so when I start preparing for my voyage, I will be able to make a chest and put in it all sorts of things, and clothes and food, and I will buy a sabre and a rifle. If wild animals attack me, I will defend myself. I love Hela very much but I am not going to marry a girl from the Children's Home."

Guardian's comment: "Hela is fond of you, too, but not so much because you raise hell. Why don't you want to marry a girl from our institution?"

"I don't want one from our institution because I will be ashamed. When I will be getting ready for my voyage to discover a new continent, I will learn to swim well, even in the sea. I will go to America, work hard, make money, buy a car and travel in it across America. But first I'll go to the wild people and stay there for three weeks. Good night."

Guardian's comment: "Good night. And will you write me a letter?"

"I have talked with R. how it was at home. I said that my father was a tailor, and R's father was a shoemaker. And now we are here in a sort of prison because this isn't home. And to those who have no father and mother life is worth nothing. I was telling how my father would send me to buy buttons, and R's father sent him for nails. And so on. I have forgotten the rest."

Guardian's comment: "Write more clearly."

"Well, that is how it will be. When I get back from my voyage, I will get married."



Please advise me, should I get married to Dora, Hela or Mania? Because I don't know which one to take for a wife. Good night."

Guardian's comment: "Dora says you are just a squirt. Mania doesn't want you and Hela laughed."

"But I did not ask you to find out, I only wrote down whom ;I love. Now I am upset and ashamed. I only wrote down whom 'I love. What now? I will be ashamed to approach them. Please tell me where I should sit so that I can behave myself, and also write me a long story. And please don't show my notes to anyone because I am afraid to write much. But I want to know very much what an Australian looks like. What do they look like?"

Guardian's comment: "If they are not ashamed, you shouldn't be either. One cannot write stories in a small exercise book. If they want you, you can sit at the third table. I will try to show you an Australian. I will not show your diary to anyone."

"I think to be twelve years old is a lucky thing! When I go away, I will say good-bye to everyone. I don't know what to write."

Guardian's comment: "You said you had so much to say that the paper might not be sufficient, and now you don't know what to write."

"Please advise me because I have terrible trouble and there is something bothering my conscience. Well, I am worried because during the lesson, I don't know why, I am thinking about something bad but I am afraid to do what's bad. To steal. But I don't want to upset everybody, I try as hard as I can to do better and not to think about it, to think of travels. Good night."

Guardian's comment: "You did the right thing in writing to me. We'll have a talk and I'll give you advice. But don't get offended when I tell you something."

"I have already improved. I am friends with G., who has already helped me. And I try very hard. But can't I go out more often than once in two weeks? Why, I am just like the ;others, why should they have it better than me? And they go out every week, and I only every other. I want to be just the same as all the rest. Grannie asked me to come every week and I feel ashamed to say that I'm not allowed."

Guardian's comment: "You well know why you are not allowed to go out as often as the others. I'll ask, but I doubt it will work."

"I already had trouble before because I was thrown out of school, I was to be kicked out of the Children's Home, too, if they wouldn't accept me in another school. And now I go to school again. I know thirty five nations. I have a travel book. A real

book. I very much want to have a box. Please answer."

Guardian's comment: "I'll look for a box or try to get one, and I'll give it to you. Can you write me what you want the box for?"

"I need the box very much because I have many things: letters, and booklets and a lot of different things I need. Now, I am not friends with anybody because there is nobody to be friends with. When this copybook is finished, will I get another one? I have not been writing nice because I am used to writing between two lines. I will put everything down, worries, anything I do wrong, what I think, and all sorts of things, I have plenty of interesting things to write about."

The boy was nine, 'the girl, his guardian, twelve.

### THE MEETING

The child's thinking is no more limited nor inferior to that of an adult, it is different. In our thinking, images are faded, ragged, emotions dull and dusty. The child thinks with feelings and not with intellect. That is why communication is so complicated, why there is no more difficult art than speaking to children. For a long time I was under the impression that children should be addressed simply, understandably, in an interesting, picturesque manner, convincingly. Today, I think otherwise. We must 'speak to them briefly and with feeling, without particular selection of words or phrases but frankly.

I would prefer to say to the children: "My demand is incorrect, unfair, impractical but I must insist on it," than to argue and enjoin that they accept my point of view.

To get the children together, complain to them, scold them, and force a decision on them, that is not a meeting.

To get the children together, address them, stir and select a few to take upon themselves the duty and responsibility, that is not a meeting.

To get the children together, tell them that I can't manage, and they must think up something to improve the situation, that is not a meeting.

Noise, commotion — a vote just to get it over with — a travesty of a meeting.

Frequent speeches and frequent meetings make trivial these gatherings of mass suggestion used to initiate or to explain a particular action, or some everyday difficulties.

A meeting should be businesslike. The children's remarks should be attentively and honestly heard, with no misrepresentation or pressure. The decision should be postponed until the teacher can work out a plan of operation. If the teacher does not know how to tackle a problem, lacks the ability or means, the children, too, are entitled not to know, to lack the ability or means.

No promises that can't be realized! The stupid and thoughtless children make promises, the wise and honest ones get angry and scornful.

A way must be found to a common language with children. It doesn't come out of the blue. A child must know that to speak openly and frankly is permitted and advantageous, that understanding and not anger or resentment will result. Further, he must be sure that he will not be laughed at or charged by the others with apple polishing. What a meeting needs is an open and dignified moral atmosphere. There is no more useless comedy than to stage elections and voting to secure a result which suits the teacher.

Besides, the children must learn the techniques of holding meetings. It is no easy matter to deliberate in a community.

One more condition. Any compulsion as regards attendance at debates and voting is indefensible. Some children have no desire to take part in meetings, should they be compelled?

"Talk and talk, and nothing comes of it."

"Why a meeting, sir, when you will do what you like anyhow?"

"What sort of a meeting is that where nobody can say anything without them either laughing or getting angry?"

Such criticism should not be taken lightly, nor looked upon as emerging from ill will. The more critical children are justified in their grievances.

today I judge meetings severely, that is because in my early days at the Children's Home I overestimated their significance, I erred in the direction of a surplus of words.

It is certain that meetings do stir the collective conscience of a community, enhance the sense of joint responsibility, leave their mark. But let us tread warily. There is not, and cannot be, absolute good fellowship and solidarity in any community. With one I am linked only by a common roof and the morning bell, with another by attendance in the same school, a third is close to me by similar tastes, a fourth by reason of friendship, a fifth by love. Children have every right to live in groups and

individually, arranged by their own effort and to suit their own conceptions.

### **THE NEWSPAPER**

In an educational institution without a newspaper the staff seem to me uncoordinated and desperate, pottering and grumbling, going around in circles, leaving the children without orientation and control, proceeding ad hoc and at random, without tradition, without memories, without a developmental path to the future.

A newspaper links firmly one week to another. It binds the children, the professional staff and the service staff into an integral whole.

The paper is read to all the children.

Every change, improvement, reform, every shortcoming and complaint find their reflection in it.

This may be discussed in a few lines, in a short article or in a lead story.

Or it may merely be reported:

"A beat up B." Or: "Fights occur with increasing frequency. There is another fight to report, A with B. We have no idea what the fight was about, but must every dispute end in fighting?" Or: "Down with brute force!" "It must end once and for all." The problem is discussed under such screaming headlines.

For a teacher who is anxious to understand the child and himself, the newspaper is an excellent regulator of words and actions. It is a vivid chronicle of his work, efforts, blunders, the difficulties which have had to be coped with. It is a certificate of his achievements, a testimony to his activity, a defense against possible charges. It is priceless research material.

Perhaps in the not too distant future, teachers' colleges will introduce lectures on educational journalism.

### **THE COURT OF PEERS**

If am devoting a disproportionate amount of space to the Court, it is because I believe that it may become the nucleus of emancipation, pave the way to a constitution, make unavoidable the promulgation of the Declaration of Children's

Rights.<sup>23</sup>

The child is entitled to be taken seriously, that his affairs be considered fairly. Thus far, everything has depended on the teacher's goodwill or his good or bad mood. The child has been given no right to protest. We must end despotism.

### *Code of the Court of Peers*

If anyone has done something bad, it is best to forgive. If it was because he did not know, he knows now. If he did it unintentionally, he will be more careful in the future. If he does something bad because he finds it hard to get used to, he will try. If it was because he was talked into it, he will not listen the next time.

If anyone does something bad, it is best to forgive and wait until he is good.

But the Court must defend the timid that they may not be bothered by the strong. The Court must defend the conscientious and hard working that they should not be annoyed by the careless and idle. The Court must see that there is order because disorder does the most harm to the good, the quiet and the conscientious.

The Court is not justice but it should try for justice. The Court is not the truth but it wants the truth.

Judges may make mistakes. Judges may punish for things which they themselves do. They may say that even though they do it, it is still wrong.

But it is shameful if a judge consciously hands down a false judgment.

### *How to Bring a Case to the Court?*

The bulletin board hangs on the wall where it can be seen by all. Everyone has the right to post his case on the board giving his own name and that of the accused. He may call for a judgment on himself, on any child or teacher, or any grownup.

Every evening the Clerk of the Court enters the cases in a register, and the next day he collects witnesses' statements. Statements may be made orally or in writing.

### *The Judges*

The Court sits once a week. Judges are appointed by drawing lots among those who during the week have had no case brought against them. Five judges are appointed to try fifty cases. For a hundred and twenty cases — no unusual total — fifteen judges

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<sup>23</sup> The reader should bear in mind that this was written before 1920.

are needed, but there may not be as many without a charge against them during the week. Then, lots are drawn among all, and the groups so arranged as to ensure that no one sits in judgment on his own case.

Judgments are passed in accordance with the code. With the consent of the judges the Clerk is empowered to pass some cases to a Judicial Board or to 'a general meeting for trial by the entire Home, so that all may have a chance to hear and know the issues. The Clerk of the Court is a teacher. The judgments are registered and read out in the presence of all. Defendants disagreeing with a judgment may appeal, but only after the lapse of one month.

### ***The Judicial Board***

The Judicial Board is composed of a teacher and two judges elected by secret ballot for a period of three months.

The Judicial Board in addition to handing down judgments draws up laws to be adhered to by all.

Since the Board judges are also liable to find themselves sued, five judges are elected to the Judicial Board only three of whom sit on any case.

### ***The Clerk of the Court***

The Clerk does not judge, he only collects statements and reads them aloud during the Court's sessions. He is in charge of the Court bulletin board, the evidence and judgment registers, the damages bulletin board, the losses fund, and the judgment graphs. He also edits the newspaper.

### ***Court's Responsibility for Peace and Order***

Anyone who, is late, makes a noise, interferes, fails to put things in their proper place, gets out of line, litters and messes up the house, enters forbidden premises, annoys, argues, fights, is disturbing the peace. What is to be done about such persons calls for thought.

The Court may dismiss the case, pronounce the person guilty of a misdemeanor, or ask the Board that the appropriate house rule may be disregarded two or more times a month.

The Board may allow the defendant time to consider his behavior.

The Board may allow one to break the rules by declaring him an exception.

### ***Doing One's Duty***

Anyone who does not want to study and work, who does everything carelessly, harms himself and is of no use to anyone.

If the Court cannot help him, the case must be turned over to the Board. Perhaps he is sick. Maybe he should be given time to settle down. Maybe he should be completely exempted from work?

### *Protection of People*

All sorts of people live together. One is small, one is big; one is strong, another is weak; one's clever, another not so clever; one is happy, another is sad; one is healthy and another is sick.

The Court sees that the big do not bully, and that the small do not make themselves a nuisance to the big. That the clever do not take advantage, or make fun of the less clever. That the bad-tempered does not annoy, and that he is not teased by others. That the happy should not joke at the sad.

The Court must make sure that everyone has what he properly needs, that there should be no misfortunate and offended.

The Court may forgive but at the same time say that someone has acted unjustly, viciously, very badly.

### *Care of Property*

If the garden, quadrangle, house, walls, doors, windows, stairs, stoves, windowpanes, tables, benches, wardrobes, chests and beds are not looked after, then all will suffer, get damaged, dirty and ugly. The same applies to overcoats, suits, caps, handkerchiefs, plates, cups, spoons and knives. It would be a shame if they got lost, torn, broken, smashed. Also books, copybooks, pens, toys should be handled with care and not destroyed.

Sometimes the loss is small. Sometimes it's big. Sometimes the trouble involved is small, sometimes it's considerable.

Whoever did the damage must himself bring the case before the Court. The Court then decides whether he should make good the loss himself or whether the damage should be covered from the Court fund.

The same applies to the children's private belongings.

### *Care of Health*

Disease, disability, death are great misfortunes. A new pane can be put in the

window, a lost ball can be replaced, but what to do if someone loses an eye?

Even though no misfortune has actually happened, all should remember to be careful.

The Judicial Board decides how long the announcement of an accident or illness arising from carelessness should be kept on the Court bulletin board.

### **No One Knows Who....**

No one knows who did it. Nobody is willing to admit. With considerable care, it is always possible to find out. But how unpleasant it is to pry, investigate, suspect. In case it is unknown who did it, he is charged and tried in *absentia*. The judges examine the evidence and the judgment is posted on the Court bulletin board. Should it be an offense which disgraces the institution as a whole, the Board rules that a black mourning patch be placed on the flag of the Home.

### ***Everybody Does It***

Should something occur repeatedly, it is not practical to try all. A plan must be made.

Everyone comes late. No one hangs up his cap.

Not true, many but not all. One does it a few times during the week, another once a month. But it is true that there is disorder.

The Board decides that a graph be posted or undertakes some other measure to correct the situation.

### ***Exceptions***

Someone cannot settle down, someone is breaking the law. The Court tried and nothing helped. What now? If one is allowed to do what is generally forbidden or released from a general obligation, will anything terrible happen?

The Judicial Board may declare someone an exception until such time as he himself comes to say that he can and will conform. The Board rules whether or not the names of such exceptions should be posted on the Court bulletin board.

### **§§ 1-99**

There are ninety-nine paragraphs providing for dismissal of the charge or for a statement that the Court did not try the case. And after the trial, everything goes on as if none had been held, or in the event of a trace of guilt, the defendant undertakes to make an effort never again to do anything of the sort.

### **§ 100**

The Court does not declare him guilty, does not censure or state the Court's



displeasure, but considering § 1,00 to be the minimum punishment, includes the case in the judgment count.

#### **§ 200**

§ 200 provides:

"You were at fault."

Too bad, it cannot be helped. May happen to anyone. Please do not do it again.

#### **§ 300**

§ 300: "He did the wrong thing." The Court censures.

Under §§ 100 and 200, the Court requests —here it orders.

#### **§ 400**

§ 400 — serious fault.

The paragraph states: "You behaved very badly or: "You are behaving very badly."

Paragraph four-hundred is the last resort, the last effort to spare the guilty disgrace. It's a last warning.

#### **§ 500**

§ 500 provides:

"Whoever has committed such an offense, remains utterly indifferent to our requests and orders, either has no respect for himself or no regard for us. Therefore, we cannot spare him.

The judgment with full name is to be published on the front page of the Court Gazette."

#### **§ 600**

The Court rules that the judgment be posted on the Court bulletin board for one week and published in the Gazette.

If § 600 is applied to persistent wrongdoers, the defendant's graph may be posted for even longer. Only the initials are to be made public and not the name in full.

#### **§700**

In addition to what is provided under § 600 the text of the judgment is sent to the family.

It may become necessary to expel him so the family should be warned. If the family were to be told suddenly: "Take him out" they might complain at not having been warned, at being kept in the dark.

#### **§ 800**

### The Judgments Graph

§ 800 provides: "The Court finds itself helpless. Maybe the kinds of punishment used long ago in institutions would help, but here they don't exist."

A week is allowed for thinking it over. During that week he can bring no complaints to the Court, nor will the Court hear any charges against him. We will see if he intends to improve and if so, for how long.

The judgment is published in the newspaper, posted on the bulletin board, and the family is informed.

### § 900

§ 900 provides:

"We have abandoned hope that he is capable of correction."

The appropriate judgment is:

We do not trust him."

Or:

We are scared of him."

Finally:

"We want nothing to do with him."

In other words § 900 expels from the institution. However, he may be allowed to stay if he can find someone in the Home to vouch for him. The expelled may come back if he finds a guardian.

The guardian is tried by the Court for all offenses of his ward.

A teacher or one of the children may act as guardian.

### § 1000

§ 1000 provides:

"We expel."

Every expelled child has the right to apply for readmission after three months.

### *The Judgments Graph*

As in every hospital the patient has his own temperature chart, a record of the disease and the condition of health, so the graph of the institution's moral health is posted on the Court bulletin board. All can see whether things are going well or not.

If during one session, the Court issued four judgments under § 100 (100 X 4 = 400), six verdicts under § 200 (200 X 6 = 1200) and one under § 400, the total will be: 400+1200+400 = 2000, and the graph will show that during the current week judgments against defendants amounted to two thousand.

### *The Code*

The Court dismisses the case without trial.

§ 1. The Court makes it known that A has withdrawn his charge.

§ 2. The Court considers the charge senseless.

§ 3. The Court cannot get to the bottom of the matter — so it dismisses the case without trial.

§ 4. The Court declares itself satisfied that nothing of the kind will ever happen again. Case dismissed.

N. B. The defendant must express his agreement when this paragraph is involved.

§ 5. *The Court refrains from trying the case expecting that such offenses will soon stop without intervention.*

§ 6. *The Court postpones the case for a week.*

§ 7. *The Court accepts the admission of guilt.*

§ 8. ...

§ 9. ...

The Court approves — expresses gratitude — regrets.

§ 10. The Court finds in the act committed by A not guilty but an example of civic courage (gallantry, uprightness, honesty, lofty impulse, sincerity, good-heartedness).

§ 11. The Court expresses thanks to A for notifying it of his guilt.

§ 12. The Court apologizes for having caused inconvenience by the summons to Court.

§ 13. The Court, expressing regret for what has happened, is of the opinion that A is not guilty.

§ 14.... § 15.... § 16.... § 17. ... § 18....

§ 19. ....

The Court finds A not guilty.

- § 20. The Court finds that A fulfilled his obligation (acted as he should have acted).
- § 21. The Court finds that A was entitled to act (speak) as he did.
- § 22. The Court finds that A was within his rights.
- § 23. The Court finds that A did not offend B.
- § 24. The Court finds that A told the truth.
- § 25. The Court finds that A was not at fault
- § 26. ....
- § 27. ....
- § 28. ....
- § 29. ....

The Court lays the blame on conditions - an accident - a number of persons - someone else.

- § 30. The Court finds that A could not have acted otherwise.
- § 31. The Court lays the blame on conditions - an accident - and finds A not guilty in what happened.
- § 32. Since many have been doing the same, it would be unjust to lay the blame on one.
- § 33. The Court blames B for what A did.
- § 34. ..
- § 35. ..
- § 36. ..
- § 37. ..
- § 38. ..
- § 39. ..

The Court requests a pardon.

- § 40. The Court finds that B has no justification for being angry with A.
- § 41. The Court requests that the alleged offense be overlooked.
- § 42. ....
- § 43. ....

- § 44. ....
- § 45. ....
- § 46. ....
- § 47. ....
- § 48. ....
- § 49. ....

The Court pardons, perceiving no bad intent.

§ 50. The Court pardons A who may have been in ignorance or did not understand, and expresses the hope that it will not happen again.

§ 51. The Court pardons A, who did not entirely understand, and expresses the hope that it will not happen again.

§ 52. The Court pardons A who did not precisely foresee the outcome (he did it unintentionally, through carelessness, by mistake, through oversight).

§ 53. The Court pardons A since there was no intention on his part to offend B (infliction of mental pain).

§ 54. The Court pardons A on the ground that it was a joke (a silly joke)

§ 55. ...

§ 56. ..

§ 57. ..

§ 58. ..

§ 59. ..

The Court pardons, taking into account extenuating circumstances.

§ 60. The Court pardons A since he did (said) it in anger, being quick-tempered, but he will do better.

§ 61. The Court pardons A since he did it out of stubbornness, but he will do better.

§ 62. The Court pardons A since he did it through false ambition, but he will do better.

§ 63. The Court pardons A since he is quarrelsome, but he will improve.

§ 64. The Court pardons A since he acted out of fear but he wants to be more

courageous.

§ 65. The Court pardons A because he is weak.

§ 66. The Court pardons A since his action was provoked by teasing.

§ 67. The Court pardons A because he did not think twice before he acted.

§ 68. ...

§ 69. ...

The Court pardons since he has already been punished, and since he regrets it.

§ 70. The Court pardons since A has already been punished for what he did.

§ 71. The Court pardons since A regrets his action.

§ 72. ..

§ 73. ..

§ 74. ..

§ 75. ..

§ 76. ..

§ 77. ....

§ 78. ...

§ 79. ..

The Court pardons with some effort.

§ 80. The Court pardons A, being of the opinion that he can be made better through kindness only.

§ 81. The Court is trying out a judgment of not guilty.

§ 82. The Court pardons, not having lost the hope that A will improve.

§ 83. ..

§ 84. ..

§ 85. ..

§ 86. ..

§ 87. ..

§ 88. ..

§ 89. ..

Extraordinary judgments of not guilty.

§ 90. The Court pardons, considering that A wanted it so badly that he could not summon strength enough to resist.

§ 91. The Court pardons since A has not been long with us and us unable to understand that there can be order without punishment.

§ 92. The Court pardons since A is due to leave us soon and the Court would not wish him to leave annoyed.

§ 93. The Court pardons A on the ground that he has been spoiled by excess of universal kindness and indulgence and cautions A that laws are equally binding on all.

§ 94. The Court, taking into consideration the ardent plea of the friend (brother, sister), pardons A.

§ 95. The Court pardons A since one of the judges insisted.

§ 96. The Court pardons A because he refrains from saying anything to explain his action.

§ 97. ..

§ 98. ..

§ 99. ...

§ 100. The Court, not pardoning, states that A committed the act with which he is charged.

§ 200. The Court rules that A acted incorrectly.

§ 300. The Court rules that A acted wrongly.

§ 400. The Court rules that A acted very wrongly.

§ 500. The Court rules that A acted very wrongly.

The judgment is to be published in the *Gazette*.

§ 600. The Court rules that A acted very wrongly.

The judgment is to be published in the *Gazette* and posted on the bulletin board.

§ 700. The Court rules that A acted very wrongly. The judgment is to be published in the *Gazette*, posted on the bulletin board and communicated to his family.

§ 800. The Court deprives A of rights for one week, summons his family to discuss

the situation. The judgment is to be published in the *Gazette* and posted on the bulletin board.

§ 900. The Court seeks a guardian for A. If no guardian is found within two days, A will be expelled. The judgment is to be published in the *Gazette*.

§ 1000. The Court expels A from the institution. The judgment is to be published in the *Gazette*.

### ***Supplements to Judgments***

- a) The Court expresses appreciation for truthful evidence.,
- b) The Court expresses surprise that A did not report it himself.
- c) The Court requests that there be no repetition of such occurrences.
- d) The Court will approach the Board with a request to prevent such incidents in the future.
- e) The Court requests the Board to grant permission to refrain from execution of the judgment.
- f) The Court expresses the fear that A may become a harmful person when he grows up.
- g) The Court expresses the hope that A will grow up to be a courageous person.

### **THE COURT GAZETTE No. 1<sup>24</sup>**

#### ***On the Court of Peers***

Grownups have their courts. Those courts for grownups are not as they should be. So every few years they are changed slightly. Courts for grownups impose various kinds of punishments: fines, detention, jail, hard labor, even death. Those courts are not always just, sometimes they are too lenient, sometimes excessively severe, at times in error. Someone pleads "not guilty," and is not believed. Sometimes he is guilty but gets off scot free. People constantly think what should be done to make the court fair. But there are also people who think what should be done to make the courts unnecessary altogether, because men should commit no crimes.

In schools it is the teacher who passes judgment, the teacher who punishes. He stands one in the corner, sends another out of the classroom, gives one detention. Often he shouts, occasionally he hits. Sometimes punishment takes the form of no dinner, no visit to the family.

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<sup>24</sup> This is Korczak's means of explaining the Court of Peers to the children.



Here, too, neither anger nor punishment is always just. So, here, too, people think what should be done, what changed. There have been, and will be various attempts. One such attempt is our Court of Peers.

The Court of Peers declares someone not guilty or guilty and pardoned. Or it does not pardon and invokes § 100, which means that it is just a bit displeased, or paragraph 200, 300, or 400.

The Court does not fly off the handle, it does not shout, abuse, or is offensive. It speaks calmly: "You acted incorrectly, wrongly, very wrongly."

Sometimes the Court tries to make a defendant ashamed of himself. Perhaps being ashamed he will be more careful.

Our Court has already sat five times. In weekly meetings it has investigated two-hundred and sixty-one cases. And though it is hard to say yet whether the experiment has been a success, something can already be said about it.

The first week there were thirty-four cases. All the defendants themselves put their cases before the Court.

We posted three notices.

The first one said:

"Everyone who was late yesterday is requested to register at the Court."

Thirteen signed.

The second, a few days later, said:

"Everyone who went out without permission, please, inform the Court."

Six came forward.

The third, again a few days later, said:

"Everyone mixed up in the noise in the dormitory yesterday, please inform The Court.

Fifteen registered their names.

Thus thirty-four cases were tried at the first sitting.

The Court pardoned all the defendants.

The preamble to the Court rules states:

"If someone does something wrong it is best to pardon."

Only nineteen times did the Court pronounce: "Guilty." <sup>25</sup>

Only ten times:

"§ 100."

Only six times:

"§ 200."

Only twice:

"§ 300."

Only once:

"§ 400."

We know that there were those who consider that the Court pardons too many.

There is § 1 in our code.

It states:

"Charge withdrawn."

This means that the plaintiff who brought the complaint himself pardons.

Of all the paragraphs, that first one appears most frequently in the Court's judgments.

There were a hundred and twenty cases in which there were plaintiff and defendant. And in sixty-two of these the plaintiff himself later agreed to pardon the defendant.

Some say:

"What punishment is that — a hundred or two-hundred?"

For one child it is a punishment, for another it is not.

To get angry is no punishment either:

"So what? They shouted at me, are angry, but what do I care?"

Some do talk like that.

It also happens that if a child is sent out of or locked in a classroom, even beaten, he says:

"So what? — I've been standing by the classroom door, sitting in detention for an

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<sup>25</sup> This seems to refer to the whole five sessions.

hour, that won't hurt me."

Whoever maintains that § 100 is no punishment, let him answer, sincerely: would he like to be tried in the Court and be sentenced to § 100 or 200, or would he not?

If § 100 is not distressing so much the better since we want all to behave well, without deserving small punishments, small discomfort. We even want all to behave properly without fear, without anger, without the Court. And perhaps it will be this way in the future.

§ 100 is punishment and everyone understands that. Whoever says otherwise either has not thought about it or doesn't want to tell the truth.

The longer the Court is in existence, the more often we break the habit of being angry, of scolding and of punishing, the more serious will seem not only § 100 but also all the other paragraphs that pardon.

There are some who say:

"To run with any petty nonsense to the Court." That also is not entirely correct.

We can never be sure whether someone has put himself or someone else before the Court just for fun. We have § 2, which provides:

"The Court considers that such cases do not merit a trial."

Out of two-hundred and sixty-one cases, only four times did the Court rule that a case was not deserving of a trial. Only four times! But even here we cannot say for sure that it was a joke, a silly joke.

Occasionally, a minor case causes great pain. People are not all alike. One cries where another will laugh.

A case of one calling another names-- a trifle or not? It seems to be a petty thing, yet how many tears have been shed over it.

We had forty-three cases of name calling. And there were some who felt truly aggrieved, because it is hard to distinguish between an innocent nickname and persecution which is annoying or worse.

Is it a minor matter if someone has been given a cold shower for fun, or has had something snatched from him and then been teased about returning it? If I am in a good mood, I will laugh it off. But if I happen to be harassed, the joke makes me cross, it hurts, then, surely, I am entitled to be in no mood for jokes, not willing to joke with everyone.

The Court has been in existence for just a month. Not everyone understands what it

is all about. We are sure that there will be less cases, that the Court will win its due respect.

Some say: "Some kid is going to be my judge."

To begin with, there are five judges and invariably one of them is older. Secondly, not every kid is silly. Thirdly, all that is needed to judge is honesty, and a kid can be honest, too.

Perhaps it is not a nice feeling being judged by someone younger. But after all, the Court is not there to give anyone nice feelings.

"It is unpleasant to be a judge" — some say.

We believe it is so. And precisely for that reason the judges are appointed by drawing lots. This system is better than voting.

If some sits often and long on the bench, he is apt to become spoiled and to come to look at the misdeeds of others as if he himself were incapable of them. But by being a judge once he can learn a great deal. He can see how difficult it is to be just and how important justice is.

We have had the Court for only five weeks. One cannot say much about it yet but it seems to us that the Court has been of great use.

If anyone is told: "Stop it or I'll sue you," and he stops, the Court knows nothing of that but has done good all the same. It has afforded protection.

We know that the children often say with a laugh: "I'll sue you." Is anyone so stupid as not to be able to distinguish a joke from the real thing? It also happens that some say with a laugh: "Take it to the Court."

Sometimes it is an innocent joke but sometimes a jibe against the Court which looks into every question seriously, calmly and honestly, and will not refuse help to anyone who asks for it. The Court always finds time to question, hear a complaint or defense. It never hurries and pokes no fun at even the smallest problem, behind which is always hidden someone's sorrow or anger.

Yes, the Court is not a nice place for those who are labeled stooges, for those of whom it is said "still waters" (run deep), and for the crafty who do a lot of harm but in a sneaky way. A stooge knows he is disliked, so short of something really bad, he can do quite a lot of harm. A quiet one can annoy more than one who yells and hits. And a sneaky one will wriggle out of a tight spot. That is why they would prefer to be without the Court; so they try to make it a laughing stock, to undermine it. Even so, the Court will not take offense, it will go on carefully seeking improvements and changes, serving to the best of its knowledge and ability.

The situation will always be that one has ten cases brought against him every month, and another barely one a year. It cannot be helped, and no change is necessary. Let everyone

decide for himself what the Court means to him.

There was a concern whether the Court would be able to cope if too many cases were to pile up. That fear is no more. The Court can deal within an hour or two with all the week's cases, though there may be a hundred of them or more. And, obviously, the beginning is always the hardest.

If the Court could achieve such complete order that no one would be bothered any more, no one would have to supervise, then all of the week's business could be settled within an hour, all the week's bad deeds could be swept clean as one sweeps the room in the evening or in the morning. That would surely be very good and convenient.

Let us now examine several cases from the past few weeks. Perhaps they will convince us that the Court is useful just because it is never in either a bad or a good mood, never likes nor dislikes, always listens calmly to an explanation.

Case 21. Noise in the dormitory is forbidden. But they messed up his bed, so he protested angrily and loudly. § 5.

Case 42. Some boys poured cold water over him for fun. What should he do? Throw water at them, too? Hit? Argue? Pardon? Probably he will, but not yet, not right away. He will pardon, but don't let them do it again.

Case 52. One of the girls is walking on stilts. A boy comes up: "Give me those stilts." She does not want to.

The boy starts hitting her, grabs the stilts out of her hands, pushes her, strikes her in the face. The girl weeps. Instead of having fun, she is miserable. What have I done to him? She sues the boy and then forgives him. § 1.

Case 63. Everyone calls him names. At first, it upset him badly, now he has gotten used to it. No good trying to fight and argue with the whole world. At that moment the Court was established it offered a prospect for new and better arrangements. So he picked the one who bothered him most frequently and most viciously, and laid his charges before the Court. We called him before us after a month: "Are they bothering you less?" Less. And a smile of gratitude for the Court which had extended its protection.

Case 67. A girl was late in returning from a visit to the family. Why? Except for a single aunt she has no one. For some time she did not want to visit the aunt and seemed to have something against her. The reason was none of our business. Finally she went, became reconciled. Then she went out for a walk with a cousin. They sat down on the grass and talked. She forgot about the time. The Court pardoned her.

Case 82. The monitor wanted to cut a boy's fingernails but he claimed that he needs them when he is digging (he works with the gardener). The job would be finished in four days, then he would let her cut the nails. Is that a reasonable defense? § 61.

Case 96. The roster for airing bedding is finished, and no new one has yet been posted. The monitor asks: "Will someone volunteer to do the airing?" Nobody comes forward. So she turns to two boys: "You'll have to do it." They refuse because they have been doing it recently. § 1.

Case 107. She had a book from the library, took it outside to the courtyard where she was on potato peeling duty. She forgot the book, left it on the bench. A two-year-old came along and tore it. § 70.

Case 120. A football was accidentally kicked into the courtyard next door. The boys went to look for it. A little boy found the ball and did not want to return it. This started an argument. We received a complaint that the boys misbehaved. § 3.

Case 127. A boy put on someone else's jacket by mistake. Similar mistakes may cause spread of the itch.<sup>26</sup> § 31.

Case 144. A boy took someone else's leather belt and refused to return it. He took it for fun, and kept it for fun. He ran away, and teased. "Give it back to me right now." — "Take it..." — and he runs away teasing. Certainly not a very serious case. But this and similar cases teach us that not everybody likes such jokes and even those who do, are not always in the mood nor will they joke with everybody. § 54.

Case 153. He banged the door, and asked the Court to judge his offense. What happens if not everyone who bangs the door puts his name on the Court bulletin board? What will happen if someone else does something really wrong and keeps it secret. Just such petty cases are interesting because they show a sensitive conscience. There are many such cases, and presumably, there will be plenty more. Some people feel uneasy if they have done something wrong and go scot free. § 31.

Case 160. Going out into the yard in front of the house is allowed only at certain hours. One of the older girls goes out. The monitor, a boy and her junior, tells her to come back. She does not like it, does not want to take orders from someone younger than herself. What should he do? He brings the case to the Court. The Court is not going to chop any heads off. It will pardon but express the hope that there will be no recurrence. And a hope expressed by the Court does carry weight.

Case 165. An unjust accusation. We have had several such cases. An unjust accusation often hurts more than a blow. A girl is counting her pennies. A boy comes up: "Show me." She says: "Why should I?" "You don't want to show me because you stole them." He lost a penny yesterday and has been looking for it. She does not know about that and

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<sup>26</sup> The itch means a contagious disease spread through clothes.

even if she did, how could he recognize his penny. What right has he to offend her? §1.

Case 167. Some boys have broken a girl's string of beads. She picks them up and threads them again. As she bends down, they put cherry pits on the back of her neck. "Stop it" she says annoyed. "And if we don't?" "I'll sue you." "Go on—sue us." The Court session: complaint withdrawn. § 1.

Well over fifty such cases. We may be wrong but it seems to us that those cases have taught some to respect their neighbors, others to be more tolerant.

Case 172. A boy climbed up a tree to show a friend that he could do it but asked the Court's judgment knowing that climbing is not allowed. § 90.

Case 206. He washed a little bowl in the clothing room not knowing it was against the rules. Having been told, he asked judgment. § 51.

Case 218. He was talked into bringing the case to the Court. He did, and now he; realized it was a silly thing to do. It would have been more to the point if the one who got annoyed had brought the case to the Court. § 1.

Case 223. Four boys were doing their lessons at the table. Afterward, the table was found to be smudged with ink. The Court heard the case, and it was shown that one of them had written on it 36:3, and another had spilled some ink. If not for the Court, all four would have been blamed. § 4.

Case 237. They were enjoying themselves trying to catch one another until one of them was struck hard with a cane. His arm hurt him badly so he sued. It stopped hurting so he invoked § 1.

Case 238. This case may seem laughable to some. They were both in the toilet. One of them, by mistake, accidentally wet on the other, the second retaliated in kind, deliberately. § 200.

Case 252. The girl in charge of the floor has a lot of trouble with this boy. He forgets, cannot be found, sweeps the floor carelessly. She warned him many times that she would take his case to the Court. But she has pardoned him. Maybe he will improve.

Case 254. The monitors are sweeping the courtyard in the evening. One of them must still tidy up the toilet, and both must wash their feet before going to bed. Just then, some boys lock them out in the courtyard, for fun, and won't let them in. § 100.

Case 258. She always lags behind. The monitor tells her to leave the washroom but she gets angry, won't listen, uses bad language. "I've got to stay" — she says. "You always have something against me." In this case, too — case withdrawn after a few days — an application to the Court has taken the place of angry words. § 1.

Case 260. He was making noise before the morning bell. He asked for a judgment. The Court has pardoned him, with a request that he should not do it again. § 32.

## **COURT GAZETTE No. 9**

### *"They Don't Scare Me."*

The Court does not help. Some are not scared of the Court — such remarks can frequently be heard.

So, some are unwilling to bring a case to the Court. They keep out of the Court's way. Others rely on § 1 because in any case the Court gets nowhere. Finally, there are some who say: "You can sue me it doesn't scare me."

And the number of cases that failed to reach the Court went on increasing. Until finally H. was relieved of his monitor's duties. Neither he nor any of those who knew about the matter considered it necessary to go to the Court. Not only H. but the older girls as well, and then the boys stopped suing one another.

The more noteworthy, therefore, that even so there were some who did sue one another to the very last. This indicates that there are always honest individuals who refuse to follow others, are guided by their own conscience and good sense.

The Court does not help.

It is always easier to damn something than to use one's head. There are always enough tongues to wag but not enough heads to think. Someone has said: "It doesn't help," and the rest follow like sheep — "doesn't help."

And the ones who make the most fuss are those who have found the Court an inconvenience, a restriction, a danger. Because the Court gave the right to make a complaint and to have it considered on its merits.

"He will get either § 4 or § 54."

For one, § 1 and § 4, and § 54 will do the trick, for another even § 800 will get you nowhere.

The Court's job is to introduce order in the community, but it neither can nor wants to work miracles.

It would be a miracle if an idler, awarded § 100, suddenly became hard-working, or a loud and interfering bully turned quiet and kind. Likewise at school, bad marks will not convert a dummy into a model pupil.

But the Court gives everyone the right to declare:

"As of tomorrow I will watch my step. I have made up my mind never to do it again. I want to avoid doing it."

And should anyone try to hinder him in his resolve, he may sue him.



An example:

A boy who is quarrelsome has made up his mind not to quarrel. Some certainly set out to make him angry, for there are those who dislike it if anyone tries to be better. He sues those who provoke him. What if they accuse him of bringing unjustified charges? The Court will know how to sort it out.

The Court works no miracles, but no miracles will be worked either by requests, warnings, anger, the cane. And wherever there are penalties, there must be some who say:

"So what? That didn't hurt me."

And they do not improve, but get worse and vulgar. "Doesn't help. So what to do, keep on bringing cases to the Court?"

Well, is it so much trouble?

Ch. was being provoked incessantly and by everyone. He kept on suing. They laughed at him, teased him, and he kept on making charges. At last they stopped bothering him, so he stopped suing.

I am sure that if a bad monitor were to be sued three times every day for two weeks he would simply have to improve. It happens that those in charge of floors are too lazy to take down names of offenders. It is easier to make a fuss, argue and tear their hair over being unable to cope. Because in bringing a case to the Court, they lay themselves open to the risk that the Court may not take their side because they consider themselves infallible ... because they resort to hasty quarreling instead of gentle explaining ... because they have not enough patience to wait a few days.

There is too much meanness, that is why the Court has been used as a means for seeking revenge. The nasty clamored that the defendant be at least hanged right away. Consequently \$ 4 or \$ 100 satisfied nobody.

When in the summer we discussed anger, one of the boys wrote:

"When I am angry, I could kill."

The Court would not impose the death penalty, so such boys had a grievance against it.

There were also other grievances:

"The Court listens to one side, and not to the other."

If a younger boy sued an older one the latter, though summoned, would not appear. There was nothing to be done about it.

In general, the older ones did not show up in the classroom, though they were asked to

come.

This contempt of the Court was proof of insufficient understanding of what it stood for. Even worse, failing to understand, they scorned and laughed at it.

For some, the Court proceedings were a sort of game. For others they were an unpleasant duty which they tried to avoid.

"I sue someone on purpose so as not to be a judge." This was either a lie or a dirty trick.

Instead of teaching truthfulness the Court taught to lie; in place of frankness it produced evasion; instead of training for bravery it developed cowardice; instead of awakening the intellect it reared idleness.

There were more mysteries as no one would admit to anything. Why? If they were not afraid of the Court why conceal? One prowled in other people's lockers but did not have the guts to say: "It was me." Another took someone's pen, he is not afraid of the Court but will not admit: "I took it."

Worse: they were angry with those who said they had lost something. Things had gone so far that if anyone had been robbed he was afraid to speak up because he knew that he would not recover the object and would only let himself in for unnecessary trouble.

Thus, some, instead of searching, sued the unknown thief. Others — the decent ones — were afraid and did not sue at all.

What about § 1?

One sued, and forgot what it was all about. Anyone who has his head on straight will say to himself:

"If I can't even remember what my case was about, I ought to invoke § 1. Why waste time and make unnecessary trouble?"

They do not come to the Court. They do not invoke § 1. Why? Because they cannot understand that it is not a question of being bossed about, spied on, warned, but a question of the proper cause.

And statements in the Court?

Frequently, it was embarrassing to listen, embarrassing to record. And it would have been so easy to say: "I was wrong."

But that happened three times — only three times — out of 1950 cases.

It would seem that the Court could have given the adults some respect for the children. But on the contrary, even those who formerly had some respect began to lose it.

Still worse. The judges conspired either to acquit or to judge leniently. That was the line of least resistance. Finally, things reached the point where a judge hit another who wanted to conduct the trial according to his conscience.

It is hardly possible to delay. The Court serves no useful purpose but is harmful. The Court does not introduce order but disorder. The Court does not improve anyone but, on the contrary, spoils the better ones. Such a Court cannot possibly be allowed to exist for even a day longer.

Six months of hard work wasted. Whoever takes his job seriously will understand how much it hurts and saddens us. ;

Unfortunately, they had no fear of the Court and consequently no respect for it; lacking respect they were not honest with the Court or even with themselves. They refused to reflect, to see themselves as they were or make an effort to improve.

I know that a Court is essential, that in fifty years time there will not be a single school, not a single institution without one. But as regards the Children's Home, the Court is harmful, they do not want to be free, they want to be slaves.

H. I am selecting only some of his cases.

Twenty charges of using bad language. Nine times § 1, nine times he was pardoned — it did not help. Twice § 4, then § 63 and § 82. Three times \$100, once § 200, once § 300.

Eleven charges of being a nuisance, teasing and jibing. Twice § 1; four times § 54; twice § 82; once § 41, § 100 and § 200.

One charge of disturbing others at work — § 300.

Twelve charges of fighting. Three times § 1, twice § 54, §§ 32, 60, X80, 81, twice § 100, once § 200.

Ten cases relating to monitoring duties — twice § 1, once § 4, §§ 32, 82, and twice each § .100, § 400, § 500, § 700.

Three charges of misbehaving during lessons. §§ 80, 82 and 200.

Three charges of having dirty hair. §§ 1, 54, 200. Failed to wash his hands— § 100.

Broke an inkpot. § 81.

Broke a jug. § 31.

Gave his food 'away. § 4.

Cheated at play. § 100.

Used abusive language. §§ 60 and 200.

Was late. §§ 70, 82.

Mixed in. § 100.

Incorrigible; and yet not one could be found bold enough to invoke § 800 and thereby exclude him from the Court.

## COURT GAZETTE No. 19

### *The Judicial Board*

For six months we had the Court without a Board. It was desirable to try out first, and only then to extend and improve.

The courtroom was not big enough. Having to deal with a hundred cases weekly the Court was obliged for lack of time to rush through important matters with insufficient care.

The Judicial Board has already been operating for ten weeks, has examined seventy cases, an average of seven a week.

Referred to the Judicial Board are:

1. All cases of late return from visits to the family.
2. Cases in which, in addition to invoking a paragraph, it becomes necessary to issue a universally binding law.
3. Actions for damages (a broken windowpane, destruction of an object).
4. Cases in which the judgment is liable to invoke a § above. 500.
5. In the event of an individual being involved in so many cases in one week that they must be tried concurrently.
6. More difficult cases requiring a thorough and lengthy examination of the parties in order to establish where right lies.

The Clerk of the Court proposes:

"That we transfer this case to the Board." Usually the judges consent. In a few cases, they rule that they can deal with the case.

Occasionally defendants themselves request that the case be transferred to the Board. The Clerk of the Court usually, but not always, agrees.

This has not yet been finally settled, but the matter is under consideration.

### *The First Case*

H., a small boy, had already had a number of charges brought against him. The Court's judgments are of no avail. He openly laughs at the Court, he has overstepped the possibility of further tolerance, clearly proving that the Court, on its own, is no help. There were two possible courses. Either to pronounce the Court useless and wind it up, or bar that particular boy from the Court.

Finding himself in the dock once more, he gave vulgar offense to the Court, and on

grounds of contempt of the Court, the case was turned over to the Board.

H. testifies that the Court made him furious, that he was upset by the constant bringing of charges, that he was continually being threatened. Wherever he went, whatever he said, he immediately heard:

"I'll sue you!"

Finally, having lost patience, he told the Court bluntly:

"To hell with the Court. I'd rather have my ears pulled and hands smacked."

Fair enough. Better for him to go on fighting and have his hands smacked once in a hundred times than to mend his ways and abide by universally binding rules.

The members of the Board split into two camps. Some argued that he should be pardoned just this once. Others demanded \$ 900. In the end \$ 800 was invoked. H. was barred from the Court for a week — and for that week he was to do as he liked:

1. He did not get new socks on Saturday being late when they were issued.
2. On Sunday, he had his hands smacked for refusing to sweep the floor.
3. On Tuesday he had his ears pulled for starting a row during potato peeling.

Because he was barred from the Court, not a single case was brought against him.

H. figured in one more case. He called one of the older girls a bad name in front of visitors. Since \$ 800 had already been invoked, the Court pardoned him applying \$60.

### *The Second Case*

Unruly, quarrelsome, idle. Always thinking himself right, he takes offense at any remark addressed to him. A bad monitor, poor worker. It was his fault that the soup was thin, because he did not put in twenty pounds of potatoes provided for it. \$ 90.

He already has a job.

And already there is a complaint that he is an idler.

### *The Third Case*

An older girl.

Without asking permission she took scissors, the private property of a housemother, and

mislaid them. Four weeks have passed and she has offered no explanation nor even bothered to look for what she lost. § 400.

The Board examined three other cases at its first sitting:

1. Monitor I. refused to collect the litter. § 55.
2. Potatoes being baked in the boiler room. § 41.
3. Late for monitor's duty. § 30.

### *Second Week*

The Board had only one case.

A boy who reads books at lunch and supper does not respond to rebuke.

Asked by the Judicial Board whether he would like to be made an exception, to be permitted by the Board to read during meals, he answered in the negative. § 4.

### *Third Week*

*In connection with cases concerning irregularities at the lockers, the Clerk suggested that:*

- I. *Keys be done away with since they are superfluous if they fail to secure items kept in the lockers; or*
- II. *Special monitors be appointed to sit at a table by the locker cabinet from morning until night; or*
- III. *The cabinet be kept locked and opened only at fixed times of the day for an hour; or*
- IV. *Catch the inconsiderate troublemaker.*

*The Board turned down the suggestion. The unknown offender received § 3 (circumstances unknown) because:*

1. *Many of the children allow others to go to their lockers in their absence;*
2. *The children keep their books in lockers together and take them without the owner's knowledge;*
3. *Occasionally, the wrong lockers are opened by mistake.*

*If not for the Board, the cabinet would have been locked, causing a good deal of inconvenience to all. B. has had eight cases brought against him. Eight cases in one*

*week.*

1. *A girl is standing quietly, he begins to push her and knock her about. "I'll take it to the Court." "Take it and be damned." He goes on making a nuisance of himself. § 63.*

2. *A girl is holding a letter. B. pulls the letter out of her hand, runs with the letter all over the room, threatens to tear it up. § 63.*

3. *A boy is sitting by himself. B. begins to pull at him, push him and knock him about. § 63.*

4. *A girl is standing by the wastepaper basket. B. puts the basket over her head. § 63.*

5. *One of the boys played with him in the morning, but does not want to again in the evening. B. follows him, is a nuisance, will not leave him alone. "I couldn't get rid of him." § 63.*

6. *Comes up to a girl:*

*"Suppose I beat you up?"*

*"Go away."*

*He won't go, hits her, pushes her off the chair. § 63.*

7. *Comes up to a girl:*

*"You had the itch."*

*He follows her and keeps on saying that she had the itch. § 63.*

*In addition, he was charged with misconduct during the performance of a duty. "He argues over the job given him, has a hundred answers to everything, interferes, disobeys." § 93.*

*B. got off scot free when the plaintiffs interceded for him.*

*"B. is not a bad kid, but annoying, stubborn, without ambition. When told: 'Go away — leave me alone,' he just takes no notice — laughs and goes on pestering. Otherwise, he is quite clever, at times it is nice to have a talk with him. B. says he feels lonesome because he has no real friend who would want to help him be different. They were too lenient with him in the store so he is spoiled, but now he will do better."*

### ***Other Cases***

*A case of two juniors misbehaving at the table. § 81.*

*Two children are charged with absenting themselves from school without permission. § 41-50.*

An unfair rating of a monitor by the girl in charge of the floor. The Board ruled that he should be rehabilitated.

#### *Fourth Week*

The fourth week brought only three cases, including one of a handkerchief mislaid in the laundry or in the linen storeroom.

#### *Burned Boots*

Two boys burned two pairs of clogs and a pair of boots in the boiler room. They were told to do it by the housekeeper.

"Quite wrong. They could have been repaired." "They were fit for nothing."

"Boots even in the worst condition can be repaired."

§ 33: The boys were doing what they were told — it was not their fault.

#### *The Linen Closet*

On Sundays, the boys come to the sewing room to sew on buttons, etc. One took some cotton which was not supposed to be used. Another wanted to mend a pocket though the other pocket was alright, and one is enough.

This one was told: "Leave the room." And he said: "Look at her, she'll forbid me, order me around. I'll show her ... I'm going to sew it on anyway and what're you going to do about it?"

"She wanted to kick me out like a dog. Some have two good pockets ... there was only a small hole in my second one."

Evidence having been heard, the first boy was dealt with under § 40, the second — § 200. It was decided that mending should be done in the recreation hall, not in the sewing room, that the girl in charge should keep a book like those in charge of the floors do. It was also to be checked whether it is not actually better to use cotton for sewing instead of ordinary thread.

#### *Fifth Week*

Five cases.

Another Court hater has emerged.

G. has five cases in the Court.

He raises hell in the dormitory. Refuses to undress, approaches different beds, speaks loudly ... if admonished he laughs it off. Sings and whistles in the washroom; when someone says: "Stop it," he answers: "You can take it to the Court."

As a monitor he pleases himself, takes offense, does not sweep the floors at all,



or does it carelessly. He follows his own whims. He tells 'lies. He said he had swept the dust from under the stoves and it was not true.

When summoned to the Court, he does not come to plead: "I'll go when it suits me."

One of the boys is sick:

"What are you doing in bed, what's the matter?" Receiving no answer, he knocks the other boy about.

And here is how *G.* defends himself:

"I can't stand it, I hate the Court, I don't want to have anything to do with it. I am not going to defend myself either by speaking or in writing because I know that often I am in the wrong. Everybody holds the threat of the Court over me, and that's what makes me the most angry. Let them sue me but not threaten." § 700.

It is true, the Court is not a pleasant place. But it was not set up for fun. Its business is to watch over law and order. The Court's purpose is to prevent the teacher's having to enforce obedience brutally with a cane, shouting like a rude cowhand or farm laborer. Instead, the teacher can calmly and reasonably consider, advise, assess the situation together with the children who frequently know better who is right or the extent to which one of their members is at fault. The Court's business is to replace arguments with thinking, violent outbursts with educational activity.

## THE CASE OF B.

### *Again before the Judicial Board*

Lazy, disobedient, careless as kitchen monitor, he adopts the same attitude toward his new duty. There he did no potato peeling, here, no staircase sweeping. What does he care if all the children have to eat thin soup. What does he care if everybody is kept waiting with scrubbing the steps since the unswept staircase cannot be scrubbed.

"I'm not coming and that's that. I don't feel like it."

Three times they come to get him but no result.

"If I were to charge him every time, that would mean every day. He never brings the shovel, he throws the rubbish out of the window, or sweeps it under the stove. If for once he does bring the shovel, he never puts it back in its place. Never puts the brush and the rag where they belong. If you call his attention, it is always he who is right."

"Not a bad kid but excitable. Gets offended and says unpleasant things in anger. Gets around to thinking later on, but he's got to have everything put under his

nose. Never on time!" § 82.

Such are those who spoil the good name of the Children's Home. It becomes increasingly difficult to find a good job for our boys.

At his place of work there have already been complaints about B. — and he has not been there long.

### *A Row*

The kitchen. M. comes in and says:

"Listen — I met your sister, she sends you her regards."

"I care!"

"What sort of a girl are you? Don't even want to hear that your sister sends her regards."

"I heard you the first time."

Outlookers begin to laugh.

M. turns to another girl.

"Would You \$ay that if I had met your sister?" Everybody laughs.

D. gets hold of a weight and throws it at one of the girls. When she gets into a temper, D. often raises hell. § 200.

### *A Game of Dominoes*

Formerly, if anyone was called "a cheat," we didn't know why. Now, since permission has been given to play for candy and money, charges of cheating are increasingly frequent, because what was once done secretly, now can be done openly under the Court's control. Why should everyone suffer if only three or four are cheating? And what goodwill be done by a ban if it is impossible to check whether they play dominoes and checkers for fun or for candy? Besides, whether a boy loses candy, which he has to buy, or money comes to the same thing. Some spend money on useful things because they are sensible. These children play seldom, have learned to be cautious. The thoughtless and fools spend money in a silly way, and likewise lose money in a silly way. Possibly the loss of a few paints playing with a cheat will make them 'careful." And, when the child is grownup, he will not be likely to gamble away a fortune or someone else's money, something which also happens occasionally.

§ 3. In fact, nobody knows who cheated whom. Such cases are always very difficult for the Court to decide.

### *Sixth Week*

Two important matters have been straightened out. The carrying of laundered

linen up to the loft to dry, and the issue of games. The first step has been taken toward clearing up the troubles over prayers.

### *Uncooperativeness*

"I always have no end of trouble whenever the linen is to be taken up to the loft. The boys refuse to do it or they do it unwillingly. One is tired, another has no time, a third says he will come soon. Unfortunately, it happens that I have brought charges against one who does the job more often than the others. And it happened because I have altogether given up asking those who regularly refuse. I got angry when he said he was tired when I didn't see why he should be. He had been back from school for half an hour, already."

"What's the use of my talking? They'll pronounce me guilty anyway, because only girls are thought to tell the truth. I don't like going up to the loft because it breaks into reading or a game, and on top of that she pulls such faces it makes me see red. Anyhow, you can leave it to me to get the boys together for carrying the linen. We'll do it all on our own. But don't let her think that I'm doing it because she has brought the case to the Court." § 5.

"They were playing a game of dominoes. I said: 'Come and air the sheepskin waistcoats.' They said that they had done some airing lately, but though one hadn't done any, he said he was tired. He showed up ten minutes later. But it was too late by then."

"I had to go with a letter to 99 Marszalkowska St. Then I was playing a game of dominoes. I just wanted to finish it. I'll do my share of airing so that nobody can say I'm lazy." § 4.

### *Toys*

"I brought the matter to the Court because it's beyond me. They take the games and don't bring them back, leave them on the table, lose the lotto numbers and the checkers. I have to put up with a lot of unpleasantness over this."

"As you get something, somebody at once books it next. I have to tidy up the classroom so I lent it just for the time I would be busy. How should I know he'd lose it."

"I took the picture lotto, then suddenly I was called to have a bath. So I had to put it in my locker because I had nobody to give it to." §§ 40 and 50.

The Useful Amusements Club has set up the following rules at the request of the Judicial Board:

- I. Playing lotto and dominoes for candy, postcards and money is allowed only on Saturdays and Fridays from half past four on.
- II. Anyone is allowed to quit the game when he has lost 30 groszy.

- III. The most anyone may lose is 50 groszy.
- IV. Debtors must pay up within a week.
- V. Marked dominoes must be destroyed.
- VI. Whoever takes the lotto is responsible for seeing that everything is left in order:
  - a) no papers left under the table,
  - b) the lotto returned on time,
  - c) the stakes made clear before starting,
  - d) responsibility assumed for any loss of the numbers.

N. B. Checkers are issued after six o'clock.

Games must not be taken fifteen minutes before the time fixed for their return. They must be returned five minutes before each meal.

### *Prayers*

"He always makes a fool of himself at the table. During prayers he makes faces to make everybody laugh. He is good-natured and happy, but he should behave himself during prayers."

The Clerk suggested to the Board that a rule should be issued providing that anyone misbehaving during prayers would be excluded for one week.

The Board decided to suspend the matter until it was another boy's turn to lead the prayers.

The accused was dealt with under § 4.

### *A Judge in the Dock*

The lot fell to him to sit on a case. He did not come — did not want to.

Why?

1. Because afterward grievances arise over the severity or injustice of the penalty.
2. Because he does not like the Court, he would rather have nothing to do with it.

The Clerk proposed that § 50 be invoked and exclusion from the draw for one to three months....

He doesn't understand!

He doesn't understand that to be a judge is no fun but a civic — and unpleasant — duty.

He doesn't understand that the Court cannot exist without judges.

He doesn't understand that: "I don't like it — don't want It" — does not mean: "I will not." For every man must frequently do things he does not want to, does not like to do.

If the Court were no use, nobody would petition it, and since they do, it means that it is useful. So it is everyone's duty to help, not to hinder its work.

They say — severe, unjust — well, they can come back to the Court, they can appeal. Of the three thousand cases so far, only four appeals have been lodged. Whoever does not indulge in idle talk but is concerned for the justice of the judgment, can bring his case again to the Court after four weeks. The careless and stupid don't do it preferring to grumble about it.

### THE FIRST YEAR OF EXPERIMENT

I assessed the value of the Court and the usefulness of the code during the one-year trial period. The smallest number of cases during a week — fifty; the largest — a hundred and thirty.

Twenty five issues of the Court Gazette were published in that year. The first, given here in full, was issued after the first month of the experiment.

The ninth issue appeared six months later when the Court was suspended for four weeks. After the intermission, the Judicial Board was set up and Court Gazette No. 19 reported on its activity.

It will be best, it seems to me, to tell how things went:

I quickly realized during the first weeks that many petty matters, annoying to the children, creating a disturbance, did not and could not reach the teacher. A teacher who claims that he knows everything that goes on is deliberately lying. I have satisfied myself that the teacher is no expert on problems affecting children. I have satisfied myself that a teacher's power exceeds his competence. There exists an entire hierarchy among the children in which every older one has the right to humiliate, or at least to ignore a child two years younger than he, that willfulness is strictly apportioned according to the age of children. And the guardian of that edifice of lawlessness is the teacher. Sic volo, sic jubeo.<sup>27</sup>

What can be the result when the teacher does not whip or at most administers an

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<sup>27</sup> So I want and so I order.

occasional smack and an older child emboldened by impunity strikes a younger or a weaker girl in the face and takes the stilts away from her?

It became a custom, a tradition, that a thirteen-year-old would borrow a pen or blotting paper from a tike and, when asked for its return, would say sweetly: "Leave me alone! Don't bother me."

There were dozens of such "minor" cases. One had to learn painfully so as to understand them.

Many issues were still being settled outside the Court. The belief that it was "better to talk it over" than to go to the Court over any petty thing was so deeply rooted that there was no way to fight it. This lowered the Court's authority. If the older children find the Court unacceptable, if a number of major issues fail to reach the Court, it becomes something in between a game and a half-hearted settlement of matters which baffle everyone. In place of: "Leave me alone," the new formula became: "Go on - take it to the Court."

The charge that the Court did not help because nobody was afraid of it, or thought much of it had a most annoying and destructive ring. Note that this situation prevailed in an institution in which officially no punishment was practiced.

When we speak of punishment, we think only of the cane, detention, deprivation of a meal and the like. We ignore the fact that a raised voice, anger, "telling off," threatening, a change of attitude to a child from friendly to hostile, are all severe penalties.

Fatal for the Court was "litigiousness" on the part of small children. Charges over every, petty nonsense. Half of the cases were trivial disputes among a small group of the youngest. A good laugh over little boy X or little girl Y being regular customers of the Court, intensified the contempt. "Go on, sue me" became the usual response to a justified grievance. It seemed an absolute necessity to cut down the number of cases.

But how?

To announce that the Court would not hear nonsense? Never! An odd phenomenon! Though at first, the judges tended to look condescendingly on all cases concerning the little ones, and even if they involved hitting, abusive language, being a public nuisance, the same judges soon realized that the criterion of importance of a -case was the mental suffering inflicted, the plaintiff's feeling of having been wronged.

Why should a broken pane be important and the destruction of a child's private property, "a trifle"? Is cheating in a game for chestnuts not a culpable dishonesty just because chestnuts, not money, are at stake?

Playing for chestnuts gave rise to a considerable number of cases, was the source of countless disputes. What does a teacher do in situation like that? Forbid the game? Forbidding, he commits an act of brutal force. Forbidding, he makes it difficult to study the children while gambling, in which the most readily manifested are those

characteristics which prove of tremendous importance in later life, such as: irresponsibility, greed, impetuosity, dishonesty, etc. To forbid such games would, in my opinion, be detrimental to the teacher and the children alike. Playing for chestnuts, the little ones got their first schooling in the rule of law. At the beginning quite unimaginable things used to happen. One owed a hundred chestnuts and announced stubbornly that he had no intention of giving them up. Why? "Because I don't want to."

Two have decided on a partnership. They will pool their chestnuts. Then they quarrelled and: "I'm not going to share my chestnuts with you." Sometimes I was staggered by the evidence. In broad daylight, with witnesses around, a boy robbed a girl of her chestnuts and impudently declared: "I want them, what are you going to do about it?" The only answer is to ask an older friend to help — but how? He will hit the culprit, push him around, drop him on the ground. Barbarian customs in a respectable institution in the capital city of a civilized country. But until recently, not only would I have acquiesced in such a state of affairs but would even have found some enchanting aspects to it. I tended to take a light-hearted view of it since a gay little urchin appealed to me more than the somewhat awkward hussy. The fact that this disarming little rascal tyrannized a group of children, while at the same time making, up to me, that a little pilferer was being reared in the spirit of the right to be lawless — those aspects escaped my attention, were below the threshold of my teacher's consciousness.

Sometimes a single matter better characterized a child for me than months of familiarity. Occasionally, one particular matter better characterized the social environment than detached observation over a number of months.

As the Clerk of the Court I was learning my ABC's, perfecting myself, finally to become an expert on children's problems.

A heap of troublesome rubbish, wrinkled, scratched chestnuts came to life. There were some plain chestnuts, some exceptionally good for the game, others memorable and some particularly lucky. "I always win with that chestnut, I made it clear before we started."

I ask, what teacher has time for such matters, is eager to examine them from the point of view of fairness, law, and not merely to bestow on them an indulgent smile?

Those petty cases drove me to consider all the complex problems of communal life. I had a vision of an asocial, antisocial type of child, an individual refusing to subordinate his habits and tastes, and insisted on an answer to a pertinent question: what is to be done about him?

"I hate the Court; I would rather have hands and head smacked, anything rather than the Court. I can't stand the Court, hate it. I don't want to charge anyone, or anyone to charge me."

There were several of them. The Court caught them unawares — an unforeseen and most dangerous enemy-recorder, enemy-propagandist, enemy-telescope.

One does not want to explain anything, does not care for right or wrong, has not the slightest intention of giving way. The cards may run his way or may not but he gets a kick out of the gamble. The hazard excites him. He lives from one exploit to another abandoning himself to the mood of the moment. Violent outbursts set him alight.

To anyone in the fortunate position of being able to do research on the educational implications of the Court, I strongly recommend for observation precisely these children.

Significantly enough, that handful overthrew the Court. When I decided to suspend the Court I had no doubt that there would be no more than a brief recess for a couple of weeks or so for the purpose of introducing certain modifications and additions. Even so, it was a grave setback to me. For I realized then how hard it would be for Courts to prove themselves in educational establishments conducted by others.

I know that all teachers of quality would like to be rid of the detested necessity of grumbling, scolding, sermonizing, battling unless, in the manner of German schools, they desire to coldly and with dignity administer the chosen weapon to a specific part of the body, strictly according to the rules. But I know, too, that the Court as such must disappoint their hopes of ridding themselves easily, fundamentally — and most important promptly — of those hundreds of petty transgressions, offenses, misdemeanors, shirkings, frictions that occur in any community which has to be molded into a law-abiding society. The Court will never replace a teacher, nor will it do some of his work. It will rather extend the range of his intervention, hamper and complicate his job, deepen it, and fit it into a system.

One may issue copybooks, pencils and pens to the children at various times, trying to carry everything in one's head. Result — disorder. One may issue them on certain days at a certain hour, noting the date of issue. Result — order and even a certain amount of justice. Of course, there may still be institutions for children where meals are served at no fixed time, where the children eat whenever they feel like, the fast eat in greater quantities and more often than the retiring and timid. Without the Court one may allot and supervise punishment, scolding, admonition and reproof. Disorder, but not beyond what is generally tolerated. The teacher manages somehow, and the children, too.

It is amazing how every problem left unsettled, every carelessly defined order or ban, every oversight, come to the surface and exert retribution in the Court. Evening



excitement and uproar in the dormitory.. A long list of maddening cases in various shapes and forms was a constant reminder throughout the year of the necessity to do something. It sounded the alarm with mathematical regularity and precision that the question of the children's hours of sleep remained open, pending. The Court was in fact powerless because what was needed was either outright violence — the cane — or the solution of a difficult problem in harmony with the children's physiological requirement.

Every un-implementable, that is educationally bungled, regulation tirelessly pleads for abrogation and concessions. Every child who does not fit the general law must become a legitimate exception.

In this case, too, what is needed is conscious, creative and devoted thought on the part of the teacher.

An incompetent teacher lets the class get out of hand. The Court intervenes. The pupils become diligent, well-behaved — not at all, that would be a miracle, and further indulgent to the teacher but killing to the children.

My decision to suspend the Court cost me some painful hours. Some children, a group small but vicious, exploited the Court for their own ends. They respected it when convenient, scorned it when it proved restrictive to them. Disarray sneaked up on us, initially concerning minor matters. What if the feeling of impunity were to sink deep roots? Not everything can wait for a whole week to be attended to. "I won't peel potatoes, I won't sweep the floors." Charges are submitted to the Court — meanwhile the boy gets out of peeling potatoes. What then? Things used to be even worse: "My case is up before the Court, no need for me to sweep the floors. Sweep the floors? Not me, I've already been charged."

And the judgments were mild. No group of judges dared to go beyond 'S 400. The opposition carefully kept up pressure against the application of more severe paragraphs. The basic difference between a jury and the Court of Peers is that in the latter case, the judges and defendants are linked by a thousand ties and to invoke a severe paragraph would mean to injure. We well know how unpleasant and troublesome are courts of honor. But above all, why do violence to one's own feelings and lay oneself open to unpleasantness, if often even a severe paragraph will not help anyway?

Opinions concerning the Court were divided. Apart from a few determined opponents and protagonists of the Court, the bulk believed that it was useful but needed changing.

"The Court is necessary but it achieves nothing. It is good for some children but of no help to others. In time, our Court will be very useful. If the Court were different, it would be very necessary."

Those few sentences, taken from answers to a questionnaire, illustrated perfectly the children's attitude to the novel setup.

Regarding the Court as an experiment which might fail, I tried to take advantage above all, and as completely as possible, of the vast factual material it was yielding. Lacking the time

to do more, I was trying to sketch at least the outlines of every case. Of equal interest were statistics, causality, common and unusual cases, relationships between plaintiffs, defendants, judges. The impression grew on me that in the future, the head teacher (not the combined teacher and administrative director) must be Clerk of the Court.

The Court is necessary, essential, there is nothing to replace it.

The Court is bound to be of tremendous educational importance. Unfortunately, we are not yet ready for the Court. Not yet — or not yet for us.

The Court did not burst upon us in a solemn fashion, as an important legislative act but sneaked in meekly and timidly. And yet when suspending the Court, I had a distinct feeling that I had staged a coup d'état, and perhaps was the victim, but the children soon dispelled that. What next?

Some children sighed with relief, they were rid of a vigilant watchdog. Others, anxious to prove that the Court was unnecessary, behaved better than before. There was a group which kept asking when the Court would be resumed. Moreover, a sizeable group displayed little interest in the Court, as is generally true in all human relations.

As regards the charges leveled against the theory of the Court from outside, one was constantly repeated:

"The Court accustoms the children to suing."

For me, as for every teacher, there exist no "children" as such — there are individuals, highly diversified, some diametrically opposed, each reacting differently and in a specific way to their surroundings, so that any general charge can induce only an indulgent smile. Not in the whole year was there a single proof that the Court had been disposing toward litigation. On the contrary, a number of facts seemed to support the view that the Court taught the children to appreciate how inconvenient, detrimental and senseless law suits were. Under the influence of the Court and against its background, a giant work, in my opinion, was proceeding - the development of a growing awareness of the conditions and laws of social relationship. To anyone who is not contemptuous of a children's community, who understands that it represents a world and not a world in miniature, the figure of 3500 cases will sufficiently demonstrate that I cannot go into details here. To do so would require several bulky volumes. There is one fact, however, that I want to put on record. Out of a hundred children, only one boy was not cured of litigiousness, while a great many children were cured, and probably completely.

After the recess, three important additions were made to the code.

1. Anyone dissatisfied with a judgment should be entitled to lodge an appeal after one month.
2. Some cases to be removed from the Court's jurisdiction and turned over to the Judicial Board.
3. The children to have the right to sue the adult staff.

Here, I cannot possibly go into all the details.

Over a period of six months I brought charges against myself on five occasions. I accused myself of boxing a boy's ears, throwing a boy out of the dormitory, putting a child in the corner, offending a judge and suspecting a girl of pilfering. In the first three cases I was dealt with under § 21; in the fourth — under § 71; and in the last — under § 7. In each case, I submitted an extensive written statement.

I declare that these few cases have been the nub of my training as a new "constitutional" teacher who avoids maltreatment of children not because he likes or loves them, but because there is a certain institution which protects them against the teacher's lawlessness, willfulness and despotism.

### ***THE CHILDREN'S PARLIAMENT***

Monitoring duties have by now a seven-year history in the Children's Home. They have passed the acid test in a number of institutions for children. The kitchen, laundry, stockroom, care of the building, looking after younger children all are in the hands of wards, now transformed from ten-year-old monitors into fourteen- or fifteen-year-old staff members. The institution newspaper carries on, the Court has been active without a break for the past two years. "We have matured to the point of attempting self-government." This is the way our Parliament was created though nothing definite can as yet be said about its prospects. The Parliament is composed of twenty deputies. Five children constitute a constituency, any candidate receiving four votes is elected. All are entitled to vote but candidacy is restricted to those who have never been brought to the Court on charges of dishonesty. The dishonest (pilfering, fraud) are granted the right to rehabilitation. The Parliament endorses or rejects laws drafted by the Judicial Board. It declares special holidays and grants the right to issue memorial cards. Since the Court is empowered to require the expulsion of an inmate, the Parliament should strive to make the admission of new children and the release of older ones — even members of the -staff — dependent on its vote. Caution is advisable, the limits of the Parliament's prerogatives should be extended slowly, the limitations and checks on its operations may be ample as long as they are unambiguous and forthright. Otherwise, there is no point in holding elections, in playing at self-government. We must not mislead either ourselves or the children. To play that game would be distasteful and harmful.

#### ***The Calendar***

Below are cited some paragraphs from the draft:

§ 6. The Parliament shall declare festive days over and above religious holidays. These are

either proposed by a deputy or promulgated to mark the issue of a memorial card.

§ 9. December 22nd. There is a slogan: "Not worth getting up" (shortness of the day). Whoever wishes, may sleep on, not get out of bed. Whoever wishes may not make his bed. The details will be worked out by a legislative committee of the Parliament.

§ 10. June 22nd. There is a slogan: "Not worth going to bed." Whoever likes may stay up all night. Should the weather be fair, a night march across the city will be arranged.

§ 12. The first day of snow: "Tobogganing Day." As the first day of snow will be considered the day in which snowfall occurs at one degree below freezing point. Snowballing, an excursion, tobogganing for those chosen by vote.

§ 18. All Souls Day. During morning prayers teachers who have died will be commemorated.

§ 19. The 365th dinner. The housekeeper will be presented with candy as a mark of appreciation of her efforts. Likewise kitchen monitors. Slogan: "Kitchen Fete."

N. B. Proposals for a Laundry Fete will be welcomed.

§ 22. Dirty Children's Day. Slogan: "No washing allowed." Anyone wanting to wash on that day [must] pay a fine to be fixed by the Parliament.

§ 24. Punctuality Day. The shoemaker who never used to be on time, promised, and then brought the boots and shoes on the expected day and hour for a whole year. He was awarded a punctuality card by the Parliament. In commemoration, the children are permitted, under the Parliament resolution, to stay out for an hour longer on that day.

§ 27. Untidy Day. Whoever is voted as caring the least for his clothes will receive a garment so that he may not look untidy on festive days.

§ 28. Cauldron Day. On one occasion one of the older boys ungraciously refused to help in carrying the cauldron when the kitchen lift to the dining room broke down. On that day, two of oldest boys will be chosen by lot to carry the breakfast up even though the lift will be in order.

§ 32. Encouragement Day. Whoever has had the largest number of judgments against him during the year will be adjudged not guilty for one whole week's offenses. He may act as judge if he likes. Encouragement Day is introduced to commemorate one of our biggest rascals who on only one occasion succeeded in getting by for a whole week without having a single charge pressed against him.

§ 40. The Parliament will decide the number of years during which 'a particular festive day is to be preserved in the calendar.

### *Remembrance Cards*

The tentative rules for` the presentation of remembrance cards — not yet passed by the Parliament — include the following paragraphs:

§ 3. The inscription on the reverse of the picture states:

"Pursuant to the Parliament resolution dated ... a remembrance card for ... has been granted to ... (name)." The date of the grant may be declared a festive day, included in the calendar.

§ 4. The applicant for a card should submit his application on a clean sheet of paper in his own handwriting, neat and legible, listing the actions and facts he would like to be commemorated. The actions may be either good or bad, useful or harmful, praiseworthy or otherwise. The card may be a pleasant or unpleasant remembrance, a means of encouragement or warning.

§ 5. If the Parliament chooses to emphasize an event worth remembering, it may be included in the calendar of victories and defeats, of commendable efforts and acts of negligence, of proofs of strong or weak will.

§ 7. The picture on the card should be related to the occasion — for example:

1. For rising immediately on the sounding of the morning bell ... in the winter months — a snowy landscape; in the spring months - a spring view, etc.
2. For peeling 2000 pounds of potatoes — a "flower card."
3. For fights, arguments, unruliness — a "tiger card."
4. For looking after small children and new arrivals — a "good care card," etc.

§ 10. Whoever carries out conscientiously the duties of a monitor in the same post for more than one year is entitled to a postcard with a view of Warsaw. The Parliament sees the Children's Home as part of Warsaw and wishes to offer a souvenir which may prove the more precious to those who may in the future have to leave their native city.

§ 12. The Parliament will devise ways and means of issuing jubilee cards in addition to remembrance cards. For example, anyone who regularly gets up early, and therefore is in possession of remembrance cards for the four seasons of the year, may also receive a "strong will" card, etc.

§ 14. Health cards should be introduced gradually (for those who are never ill, grow fast, cultivate sports), remembrance cards for participation in shows, games, work on the newspaper and in the work of the Court.

§ 17. A farewell "forget-me-not" card is the last to be issued bearing the signatures

of all the children and teachers.

The farewell card is not a reward but a souvenir, a remembrance. Some will lose it on life's road, others will treasure it forever.