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SELECTED WORKS
of
Janusz Korczak

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Selection from Polish

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This volume appears on the twenty-*fifth anniversary* of Janusz Korczak's death *at* the hands of the Nazis. It is dedicated to his memory *and to* the lives of all who act to enhance the humanity of man.

PREFACE

I exist not to be loved and admired, but to act and love. It is not the duty of those around me to help me but I am duty-bound to look after the world, after man.

Janusz Korczak June, 1942

Duty-bound to look after man, of course. How elementary. How human. Yet, how noble and great and revealing is this instance in Korczak's life. He wrote these lines a bare two months before his death in the gas chambers of Treblinka. He wrote them while in bed, exhausted from another day's effort to keep the most gruesome aspects of life from his charges. He wrote at night, in his institution in the Warsaw Ghetto, surrounded by his two hundred children for whom he still feels duty-bound to act and whom he must love. For Korczak this behavior is natural. It is the expected, the inevitable tying of conviction to action, of theory to practice. But what has been the road? How did Korczak come to be at this point? Where does he fit? What has he done?

To those familiar with social work and child care in the United States, Korczak will appear to fit the era in which he lived. The turn of the century and the first few decades of the present one produced at the same time the Muckrakers and the great charismatic leaders of child welfare. This period saw the flowering of concern and its expression in literary works, and the inexorable pressure for change, for social reform based on certain theoretical assumptions. The Abbott sisters and Homer Folks, Julia Lathrop and Jacob Riis — the melding of insight and determination, of theory, lofty ideals and practical, implementable and implemented solutions. Like them, Korczak looked at poverty, at misery, explored them to their innermost depths, identified with their victims and led his small, undermanned army, just like his own legendary King Macius, in the direction of the better life.

By training Janusz Korczak was a pediatrician. By trade, temperament, conviction and ultimately final act of heroic self-denial he was a *wychowawca*. A strange word this one to the English-tuned ear. And an untranslatable one at that. It designates a profession which although it exists in the English-speaking world has gone unnamed. A *wychowawca* is he who rears a child and who, as a matter of professional responsibility, cares for physical and social development. He is not a parent. Nor is he a teacher (although this is what we call him in the translation), but one who shares, supports the functions of both and who, in times of need, replaces either or both.

As a *wychowawca* Korczak probed the child's very being, trying to see, to know, as well as to feel and to do. He did not come to his calling unprepared, nor did he have many illusions. "Looking back over the enormous results of clinical observation of the child in the hospital," he wrote at one point, "I ask: What knowledge did the boarding school give us — none." But he did not despair. On the contrary, his medical training and clinical experience and his zeal to help goaded him into activity. Working on the basis of this own

assumptions and continually subjecting them to detailed, even painful, doubt became his trade-mark: "The most splendid assumption, it seems, needs verification. The most evident truth which turns out difficult to implement, should be conscientiously and critically examined." But it "should be examined independently of the general outlook" and facts should be piled up so that by "their number on this side or that they will permit deduction of general laws." Having acquired "willpower, the pain of ignorance, the delight of seeking" as a "gift from Paris" where he worked as an intern, and the techniques of inventiveness and order from Berlin where his work followed, Korczak was prepared for his self-imposed assignment. The boarding school became the source of his "treasure of observations, ideas, hypotheses."

Any night could find Korczak sitting in his glass cage in the middle of the boys' dormitory observing the children, noting their behavior, delving into causes and roles. Any day could find him running a children's court or a newspaper, sweeping the stairs, clearing the dishes or administering medications. Each observation, every experience was carefully noted, nurtured, held up to the light of some theory, some experience, and filed away for future use. Clearly, the purpose was to instruct the present and to develop laws for the future. The first resulted in an outpouring of guides, observations, instructions. The second, developing laws, delayed perhaps quite unconsciously until the years of leisure and wisdom when the amassed facts will array themselves as evidence for or against a particular position, was cancelled in Treblinka.

Laws Korczak never lived to give us, but a rich legacy remained after him which will serve his purposes as it helps a child. Its hallmark, the point around which all of Korczak's writings revolve, is a passionate, almost religious, reverence for the rights of children. Sometimes, goaded by adult callousness, ignorance or even ill will, his views on the rights and capabilities of children border the extreme and seem to us fanatical dissertations unreal and useless in practice. Yet Korczak breathed life into them — made them practical by his own experiences or, in the event of failure, carefully reported his disappointments and their probable causes.

The child's capacity and his rights are constantly in the forefront. They are part of every relationship. They are consciously weighed, discussed and taught so that ultimately they may be unconsciously, naturally implemented. "When I play or talk with a child," Korczak writes, "two equally mature moments — mine and the child's — have intermingled ... When I am annoyed with a child — again togetherness, only that my evil, hateful instant breaks into and poisons this mature, important instant of his life." And the child's background, the weight of his prior experiences is esteemed, becoming a source of information about his capacities and needs and a source of concern about one's ability to fulfill them. "Whoever wants to be a teacher [*wychowawca*] among the poor must bear in mind that medicine differentiates between *praxis pauperum* and

praxis aurea." Work for the poor and work for gold are distinct, and the former is difficult but has its rewards in possible accomplishment. One learns to overcome the shameful burden of generations, to break the chain of poverty and degradation, to restore the rights of childhood. One also learns that "there are some rare children whose age is not just their own ten years. They carry the load Of many generations and ... under the action of a slight stimulus ... the latent potential of pain, grievance, anger, and rebellion [is released]." Then "it is not a child but the centuries weeping."

How to incorporate these observations, how to bring them into play so that the care of children away from their parents may be at once more scientifically based and more human? It would never be sufficient to amass facts, to discover principles, to formulate laws; they must affect the child, his peers, their lives. This cannot be accomplished, Korczak believed, unless, following in the footsteps of the doctor who saved the child from the grips of death, the *wychowawca's* assignment is "to let him live, [to] win for him the right to be a child." To accomplish it those who work with children must not be supervisors of walls and furniture, of quiet in the playground, of clean ears and floors, cowhands watching that the cattle do no harm, that they do not disturb adults at their occupations and pleasures; custodians of worn-out pants and boots, and stingy dispensers of cereal; guardians of adult privilege and careless executors of their inexpert caprices. Instead, they must join their knowledge and affection, their objective analysis and subjective empathy and focus these upon the child as man, child as needy unspoiled being, child as equal.

This combination of knowledge and affect, cold analysis and passionate love permeate the works Korczak left behind. Repeatedly, and in many different ways, he tells us that knowledge alone is not enough, but neither is love alone. High flown theories may be useful, but they must be adjusted to, become reflections of the behavior and demands of children. He would, no doubt, agree with Kurt Lewin that nothing is as useful as a good theory, but he would define a good theory as one which highlights and is based upon the assumption of nobility of a child.

A prolific and indefatigable writer, Korczak left a voluminous legacy. He wrote in the slums of Czarist Warsaw. He composed a whole book on HOW TO LOVE A CHILD, while moving about the Russian front lines as a World War I medical officer. He wrote in the quiet of institutional nights and in the constructive turbulence of daytime activity at the Children's Home. Compelled to write by a conviction that "notes are the entries you use to draw up a balance sheet of your life," he produced books and pamphlets for children, essays and instructions for adults and an elaborate public accounting for himself.

It is probably presumptuous to select from such an accounting or to organize it out of

temporal sequence, but given the volume and nature of materials we have been compelled to do both. The pages that follow are therefore not a representative sample of Korczak's writings, but rather a deliberately selected one. Beginning with a four-page "Application" which in the author's own words summarizes his essence, it moves through observations on classrooms, single children, summer camps, child rearing in general, boarding schools and institutions, and ends with the full text of Korczak's "Memoirs" written in the few months before his death.

THE APPLICATION is, as Korczak implies, a last will. Written in the Ghetto, and when he must have expected momentary death, it is a summing up of past experiences, present state of the self and possible future usefulness. In a few brief paragraphs it tells of the man and the situation. More — it tells of the man in the situation.

EDUCATIONAL FACTORS shows Korczak's interest in the individual as well as the social situation. Beginning with the classroom where he is sure to see the aggregate as such and the individual within it, he moves on to focus on the little kindergarten girl, Helcia, and the young war victim on the Eastern front, the orphan boy, Stefan. A few days, two weeks of observation with each and an outpouring of notes, comments, insights, advice and, always, self-analytic soul searching: Am I right? Should I do it this way? Could it have been better?

HOW TO LOVE A CHILD is at the center of Korczak's writings. Beginning almost chronologically he analyzes the child, the child and mother, child and parents, child and peers, child and great, restricting, demanding world. Item by item Korczak chronicles his observations. Then, as if exhausted by the effort, he notes in observation 99 that he will never again try to discuss all stages of development in such a short pamphlet. Yet, he continues and enters now the most incisive, the most expert writing. THE BOARDING SCHOOL, SUMMER CAMPS, and THE CHILDREN'S HOME follow in order. The latter contains observations on a children's court which merits a few words of comment. Children's courts were, of course, not unknown in other countries at the time of Korczak's experiment with them. Generally they have been regarded by professionals as anachronistic at best and pernicious at worst. Reading Korczak's comments on *his* court leads one to the conclusion that neither quality applied. Rather, that the court compelled accountability, introduced a measure of equality and re-course, and taught self-government.

THE CHILD'S RIGHT TO RESPECT revolves around the child as man. Not the child as a potential someone. Not the child as an expectation. But the child as he is and his inalienable right to be himself, to explore and experiment, to seek and search and even ... to suffer.

THE SPECIAL SCHOOL section contains only a few of many observations on

delinquency and its treatment. Those incorporated in the present volume appeared, among others, in a journal entitled *Special School*, founded, and edited until this year, by Professor Maria Grzegorzewska. Korczak was sensitive to the problem of the deviant, as distinct from the poor or deprived child, and insightful clinician that he was, noticed that the differences were administrative, institutional and not personal. At one point he wrote that only the uncritical *wychowawca* can accept the utility of dividing institutions into custodial and correctional. Taken seriously, such a division rules out the thought of reform in the first category and of good care in the second.

LOUIS PASTEUR and FORGIVE ME CHILDREN are qualitatively quite different from the other materials. Appearing first in a periodical supplement entitled "In the Sunshine" these are but a small sampling of numerous writings addressed to children. They show Korczak's simplicity of style and consistency of thought. Their unifying theme, as in all of Korczak, is love and respect for the child as he is.

FORGIVE ME CHILDREN contains an interesting, but not surprising extension on this theme when the frailty of childhood and of old age are joined and the young support the old and weak.

Finally, the MEMOIRS, consist of Korczak's last writings. Failing in health and in hope, yet faithful to his children to the very end, Korczak tries for a semblance of reason in the midst of madness. That he fails is no surprise; that he attempts it is yet another measure of his stature.

Before embarking upon these materials the reader may want an assessment. Was Korczak right: are his observations, conclusions, generalizations consistent with fact? Is Korczak relevant: can we apply what he tells us? As to the correctness of his observations there is little doubt. More difficulty is encountered with the conclusions and generalizations. Some insights are remarkably consistent with subsequent social and psychological formulations. There is evidence to support Korczak's views on the crucial role of the peer-group in the life of children and young people and the major impact it has on the development of personality. Similarly, there is beginning to be much material reflecting the consequences of prolonged deprivation which moves the onus of failure from genetic to environmental forces where Korczak would place them. Korczak's resistance to the purely psychological at the expense of a sociopsychological interpretation of phenomena, while in little favor among the early disciples of Freud, would certainly align him with the more recent. On the whole, however, it is difficult to judge Korczak's writings purely as theoretical or research statements because they are a unique blend of observation, generalization and belief.

Is Korczak relevant? This appears easier to judge. As we read his description of children of poverty our own preoccupations and solutions come into question and

alternatives come into view. The "weeping of centuries" in the child of deprivation. The utility of work as a means of self-expression and self-fulfillment. The meaning of "clean" and "dirty," lowly and noble tasks, occupations, assignments. The capabilities and defects of public and voluntary welfare structures. The meaning of ideology whether it be religious or political or social. All of these concerns of Korczak and of our generation of professionals testify to his relevance. However, the most telling testimony of applicability and utility of his views is contained in Korczak's life and particularly the last few months of it. He tested the applicability of his views by implementing them in the children's court, in self-rule, in work assignments to children of all ages, in staff self-analysis. And, finally, perhaps most convincingly, his views proved themselves under the horrible conditions of war and of the Warsaw Ghetto. The fact is that Korczak's institution, containing two hundred children from the sidewalks of this murder factory functioned almost to the last with an unbelievable degree of order and even creativity. Was it Korczak's system or his personal capability that made it possible? Undoubtedly both. Any useful approach requires the skill to implement it, but skill must be channeled down a constructive path if it is to bear results.

Whether right or relevant, Korczak's claims were modest. In a personal message given every child upon completing his stay, Korczak wrote:

We did not give you God, because you must look and find Him within yourself.

We did not give you love of country because your heart and reason must dictate your own choice.

We did not give you love of Man, because love comes from forgiveness which must be discovered through effort.

We did give you one thing — a longing for a better life, a life of truth and justice which you must build for yourself.

We hope that this longing will lead you to God, to Country, and to Love.

In the very last entry in Korczak's memoirs, probably written no more than several days before his death, he wonders about the guard, marching with gun on shoulder, in front of the institution — his occupation, his background, his motives. Maybe he is a teacher, or a waiter, maybe he does not know that it is the way it is. Still an effort to understand, to look for the human — even in the midst of hell.

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University of California, Berkeley June 5, 1967

INTRODUCTION

All the ideals and principles which we profess have only such value as we impart to them by our personal life.

Janusz Korczak

There are natures so simple and noble that their very being seems improbable, as though they cannot be of this world. Eliminate them, however, and humanism in the history of humanity would be of little significance.

As related to Janusz Korczak, probably little known to the American reader, that opening sentence calls for elaboration and justification.

Let us glance at the highlights of his life story. We feel an urge to know what went to the molding of the personality of this man who became a legend and a challenge.

Janusz Korczak, born Henryk Goldszmit, first saw the light of day in 1878 or 1879 — precise date unknown. He was born in Warsaw, in the part of Poland then under Russian domination as a result of the partition of the country — from 1785 until 1918 — between Austria, Russia and Prussia. He was the son of well-to-do intelligentsia parents (father a lawyer, grandfather a doctor). His Jewish family had for generations been steeped in the traditions and culture of Poland, and Janusz Korczak considered himself a Pole. Only after thirty odd years was the question of his pedigree to become a problem — to grow year by year more acute, until it involved his life or death.

We have dallied over this earliest moment of the biography because of its importance. Korczak must have been right when he said that daydreams establish the program of a life.

So far, this introduction to life demonstrates intelligence, imagination, and sensitivity — an excess, a dangerous excess of sensitivity. Shortly, it will become clear that this boy also has character and a good heart. He moves out of his comfortable childhood immured in a beautiful house. He goes first to a private school where learning is enforced with the cane. Later, to a typical Tsarist secondary school, with teaching in a foreign language — the Russian language — with dull lessons learned by rote, the curriculum overburdened with Latin and Greek, the pedagogues having the mentality of prison guards or drill sergeants. Humiliation, frustration — the necessity in self-defence to seek regions of the spirit far and fair. In the meantime, his father dies in a mental institution. A catastrophe, and an apprehension for the rest of his life: "So I am the son of a lunatic? So I bear a dread hereditary burden?"

On the heels of opulence comes poverty, the more painful because proud, desperately

hidden before the eyes of strangers. There's nothing for it — must help mother, must start earning. Hence — giving lessons, cramming, rushing from one rich house to another, working with children not always pleasant, for a pittance. Can it be that all this will lay the foundations for the vocation of an educator? Rather will it imbue a sense of grievance, of rebelliousness, and regret that for one's own studying, for books read with hungry passion, there remain only the nights. If therefore he contemplates future work in some profession, it is rather in the profession of medicine. At the same time, he has interests and aspirations of quite a different bent: he writes poetry, short stories; he possesses also a thick copybook with the sinister inscription — *The Suicide, a Novel of Psychology and Manners*. The hero has come to hate life lived in the shadow of lunacy.

At long last — his matriculation certificate, a document of release from confinement, and — the university. Saying good-bye after matriculating to the only real teacher in his school, to the man who taught him to love Hellade — Henryk will unexpectedly kiss the hand of the good philologist.

Such is Henryk — a poet in the strength of his emotions, an inquiring mind seeking the good in life -- when he starts to study medicine. Named after his grandfather, he intends also to follow his profession. It is the year 1898, a year in which first steps will be taken toward profound spiritual metamorphosis, as a result of which after a few years a personality later to be known as Janusz Korczak will be molded and set.

The origin of this name is connected with a certain historical novel. At twenty, Henryk writes a four-act play entitled *Which Way?* He is entering it for a young writers' literary competition announced at that time in Warsaw. Rewriting the play in a hurry — it is the last day for the receipt of entries — Henryk suddenly realizes that he has not yet devised a pen name, as required by competition rules. On his table lies a book, a historical novel, the name of the hero of which is Korczak. At random he assumes that name — and under it wins his first small laurel, the prize in the competition.

During the period of Henryk's university studies, important changes are developing in the political life of the country. The initiative in Polish politics, hitherto shyly nursed by conservatives trying to coexist with the Tsarist regime, is now passing into the hands of young radicals. Politics are abandoning the drawing rooms and going out into the streets. In Warsaw, there are noisy anti-Tsarist demonstrations; the subterranean river of conspiracy is intensifying the struggle both patriotically and socially; society, the university students in particular, is becoming more and more radically minded.

We cannot here seek an answer to the riddle as to why a young man of such sensitive conscience and exceptional personal courage did not throw himself into the active political struggle. Suffice it that both then and later he will only make clear on

which side he takes his stand. He publishes his writings in the socialist press, he has close friends among socialists, for years he will regularly contribute to funds for the aid of political prisoners. Even so, he deliberately avoids every political activity, and until the last he will maintain a skeptical attitude as regards the possibility of human problems being solved exclusively by revolution.

He is seeking another "theme of life," the meaning of which he will explain later in a letter to a young friend:

"If the theme of life be satiation — of stomach or spirit — bankruptcy will forever hang above our heads; such a theme will exhaust itself. Surfeit or a sense of void. But if you receive in order to nourish, then you have an aim, you are conscious of the need of achievement — to fuse own suffering into knowledge for yourself and joy for others, to drown it in own aspirations. Then, failure may be the more painful, but it will never deprave,"

At the time when one is ripening intellectually, choosing one's own "theme of life," one is instinctively seeking an association, intercourse with some powerful, rich and iconoclastic personality. From this point of view, the teaching body of Warsaw University was probably the poorest of all Russian alma mater. Whoever could raise the means went to study abroad — in Petersburg, Moscow, Dorpat.... But in Warsaw there existed another, unique source of learning, a free academic high school, a credit to any nation — the Peripatetic University. In secret, with many a glance over the shoulder for fear of police spies, in constantly changed meeting places, in private flats, university program lectures were given by such eminent scientists as the Polish sociologist Ludwik Krzywicki, the geographer and publicist Nalkowski, the pedagogue and psychologist Dawid, the philosopher and theoretician Mahrburg, the orientalist Radliński and many others — all men of profound learning and noble character.

The years 1898-1900 were in the history of the Peripatetic University a period of peak achievement. They were, too, the period of maximum development of clandestine teaching in Polish, and of educational work. The Polish intelligentsia, both young and not so young, was working seriously and soundly in conditions of strict conspiracy, with supreme self-sacrifice, in a climate of the noblest idealism.

Henryk joins the ranks of this army, perhaps the most splendid that ever existed in Poland. He enters this environment shyly, with veneration for the cream, the spiritual elite of his country. He soon finds guides and friends, learns principles he will never betray.

All this is not now readily apprehended, deciphered — like the whole of that period, like the old Warsaw.

Let us try to visualize this Warsaw of the year 1900, the capital of a conquered country. The royal castle is the residence of the Tsar's Viceroy, Prince Imeretynski, from the dynasty which once ruled the also conquered Georgia — which probably explains why he is the most humane of all Viceroys so far. Warsaw has some half a million inhabitants. No electricity, no motorcars. A horse tram rides the rails — one horse in summer, two in winter. At the turnpikes at the city boundaries, tolls must be paid by those entering on horseback or in carriages. Here and there are still pools and rivulets, reminding of the seven streams on which Warsaw was built. The great Saxon Park (Ogrod Saski) in the center of the city, beautiful then as never since, with the Mineral Springs Institute—but not beautiful for all; the poorly clad are forbidden entry. There are no cinemas, but there are theaters with top ranking companies, talented actors. First rate restaurants, numerous coffee rooms. A good circus and a racecourse; sport scarcely exists yet, is but in the introductory stage among enlightened and well-to-do circles the Rowing Club, the Cycling Club, led by Count August Potocki. In the afternoons, along avenues shaded by enormous chestnut trees, near the palace of the last king of Poland, near the residences of the industrial magnates and the aristocracy — carriages, landaus, gigs, victorias, and mounted guards officers pass idly to and fro. At noon there arrives in the slums a mobile kitchen, run by philanthropic societies — it is popularly called "Trabizupka" (The Trumpet-Soup). A cook in white apron, chef's hat and sitting beside the driver blows a trumpet, calling the hungry for a plate of cabbage soup or pea soup for three kopecks or even bring your own plate — gratis. The Old City is a lair of poverty, crime and brothels, of homeless children and cutthroats. Here and there a policeman emerges, searches pedestrians and if he finds a knife longer than the breadth of his palm he calls the accompanying Cossacks to whip the offender. But Janusz often walks here — we know that; he roams here freely, has friends here, is loved and respected; nobody will molest this singular student.

One feels that in the years 1899-1902 there are living simultaneously two men — Henryk and Janusz.

Henryk is studying medicine, giving lessons, and writing articles for an illustrated humorous weekly. Sometimes he leaves his cosy room where his mother's love envelops him; and in the Old City appears Janusz, a mysterious student, friend of vagabonds and villains, sharing the life of this dark underworld, teaching children gathered in a cabby's poor shelter, taking care of them — and writing *The Drawing Room Child*.

"Here the years have piled up a dark and sinister potency, there is no peeping in here without mortification" — so thinks Janusz, already understanding how on a pittance "one can keep the family: pay for the room, for food, clothes, washing, paraffin, doctor, druggist, and the priest for burial — and occasionally get drunk and throw a name-day

party. Now I understand why the children have gray skins like prisoners, bow legs, and why of ten born under a roof four survive; what I do not understand is how those four grow up and have strength to work."

In coexistence with them, in work for them, in his first, unhappy love — which he also experiences among them — his "apprehensive and shameful pain of life" is molded into a hot iron of self-criticism, mobilizing his willpower.

"I feel that concentrating in me are unknown powers, which will burst into flame, and this flame will burn in me until my last breath. I feel that I am approaching the moment when I shall excavate from the depths of my soul the aim which will be my happiness."

These words have the ring of an oath strangely sublime and prophetic in view of the further path of his life.

In 1904, a radical social-literary weekly publishes serially *The Drawing Room Child*. The author does not here set out to entertain or to sentimentalize. He is accusing and debunking the social structure, conventions, but above all the bourgeois family. His visions tremble in clouds of hallucination, grotesque, and documentation, all fused together with a guilt complex, and moving by its enormity of suffering.

"His soul became clairvoyant through suffering" —so writes a perceptive critic. "And at the same time, Korczak became a humorist. Nothing is easier than to look at the world and men, at events and judgments with the observant eye of comedy. Nothing is easier —provided one sees with the eye of despair. Against that darkened background, everything stands out with a clownish clarity. Despair cuts across all pathos. What remains is but a form, becoming ridiculous by its perseverance in the face of nothingness...."

The success of the novel attracts publishers —readers want Korczak. But Korczak is absent, has gone abroad, is somewhere in Manchuria where there is a war, working in a field ambulance. So a selection of his articles and short stories published in the Warsaw press and signed only "Henryk" is hurriedly thrown together. In the author's absence, they appear in book form under the superscription — "Janusz Korczak (Henryk)."

Here ends the transformation from Henryk to Janusz. For the last time, those names linked — to part forever. Henceforth, there is only Janusz Korczak, a man at one with himself, mature practitioner in a literary art which is his very own.

Returning from the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-5, Korczak works in a children's hospital in a sordid Warsaw suburb. He carries his medical skill further, answers every call by day or night, treats the poor gratis, and in cases of real need leaves

money alongside the prescription to pay the druggist. But in well-to-do homes on main streets, where he is called with increasing frequency, he takes top fees. He publishes frightening essays based on his experiences as a doctor in the slums of the great city; he also writes articles and stories for literary periodicals.

With money saved by pinching and scraping, he twice goes abroad, gets a year's practice in Berlin clinics, six months in Paris, and a month in London.

The secret of this skilful doctor, dedicating to the most indigent what he has learned in the best hospitals of Berlin and Paris, begins to intrigue Warsaw society — he becomes a figure suggestive of the aura of the gospels or some lofty social Utopia. The author of *The Drawing Room Child* is welcome in the Warsaw salons. People well placed are trying to make him fashionable, to create an eminent doctor to the rich. But that is not his way; he has only contempt for careerism; he is eccentric, always ironical, a rude plebeian....

And in the very place, in the children's hospital and the clinic where, it seems, he has found eternal sanctuary for his nature, he has periods of doubt and unease. He is increasingly conscious of the helplessness of medicine in the face of appalling social conditions.

He spits out sarcastic, rebellious words:

"When, in the name of all the devils, shall we stop prescribing salicyl against poverty, exploitation, lawlessness, and crime?"

There slowly matures in him the notion of abandoning medicine. From educational problems in his literary work, he passes to direct work. He leaves the hospital for a boarding school. He moves to the Children's Home, built according to his directives in 1911, and to the end of his life he will run this institution.

This is the moment for me to testify personally —and thereby to correct Korczak's own statement in *The Application* to the effect that he knew nothing about management — that I have never met a manager who drove himself so hard, who was so tactful, so penetrating, and so consistent in his relations with his staff. Come what may, he would unquestionably have been successful with the Children's Home, although the writer was overwhelming the educationalist. Even so, a great stroke of luck for Korczak and for the Children's Home was the participation of Stefania Wilczynska who, as soon as she returned from pedagogic studies in Belgium and Switzerland, integrated herself with the institution. In assessing Korczak's educational practice in the Children's Home, it is essential to bear in mind the unflagging energy of Stefania Wilczynska, her organizational talent and profound understanding of psychology, her devotion to the children, to whom she sacrificed thirty years of her work and life,

and with whom and with Korczak she died.

In the years 1911-14, in spite of the vast labor and worries involved in his activity as educator, Korczak writes and publishes four splendid books, forever an integral part of Polish literature. At the same time, he is supplementing his knowledge of pedagogics. He reads and studies a great deal, thinks persistently, and constantly returns to a vision which is to become a complex with him: "A great synthesis of a child, concerning which I had daydreams in the libraries of Paris, while excitedly reading the great and extraordinary French classics of clinical medicine."

The war finds him with an idea — his own, mature, but not yet formulated. Had he been killed then, in 1914, over the heart of this captain of the Russian army would have been found the words: "How to love a child."

With a copybook so inscribed on the cover he goes to war, and writes during the campaign, whenever opportunity presents itself — in field dressing stations, in a chance billet when all is quiet, sometimes on a forest tree stump. Breaking free from the entire, surrounding, bloodstained nightmare, with all his knowledge as doctor and educator, he concentrates on this single — to him paramount — problem: how to love a child. It is love which drives his pen — love informed but divining that there is more to know; love searching with the *eye* of the psychologist the vast processes of change, from birth to maturity; love illuminating with poetic penetration the mysteries of childhood, or unmasking the ignorance and egoism of grownups with their pseudoscientific subterfuges; and all this with a satiric passion, which Korczak somewhere explains incidentally: "I wrote this book in a field hospital to the accompaniment of the cacophony of gunfire, during the war — there I realized that the path of tolerance would not suffice."

In 1918, Korczak returns to liberated Warsaw, which at long last is once more the capital of an independent Polish state. He brings the MS of *Howto Love a Child* ready for printing. He cannot characterize it — a study? a poem? a manifesto? He knows only that this is his synthesis — the synthesis of the child — concerning which he had daydreams in the libraries of Paris. Later he will clarify it, specify the third part, and in *The Child's Right to Respect* he will popularize it in his broadcast *Talks by an Old Doctor*, in "Jocular Pedagogics." There will be further creative artistic achievements in his novels *King MaciuS the First* and *When I Am Small Again*. But to his basic conception of world and child he will add nothing — for to add would be to change.

The first ten years after returning to independent Poland — the years 1918-28 — witness the peak development of the literary creations and educational activity of Janusz Korczak, his greatest achievements in both these fields, and also his maximum

intensity and variety of research, enterprises and works of all kinds.

In this period, he gives definitive, practical form to his educational method, implementing it in two institutions: the Warsaw boarding school for Jewish children — The Children's Home — of which he is the director, and in Our Home at Bielany, near Warsaw, a boarding school for Polish children, managed by Maryna Falska. Korczak plays an active part in the life of these two children's republics, linked in cooperation and friendship. He also lectures at two higher schools, works as an expert in juvenile crime cases at the Warsaw Court, writes and publishes ten works — an average of one a year — including four of the most important in his literary output, and also makes an experiment probably unique in the history of the press: he starts and edits "Maly Przegląd" (The Little Review) — a periodical printing stories, articles, notes and letters exclusively by children and young people. Of these youthful correspondents he has over two thousand. There are also clubs of co-workers in all bigger towns in Poland, together with foreign correspondents (all of school age). With so many activities, Korczak is breathless and short of time; he starts a search for some technical help, a secretary, and thus, in 1926, we meet.

I was then a law student compelled to interrupt my studies and temporarily earn my living as a stenographer. A well-wishing lady, who was also a friend of Korczak, sent me to him, and so I found myself in the recreation hall of the Children's Home, among the youngsters gathering round someone in a doctor's coat — not white, but khaki. I learned that this was "Pandoktor" (Misterdoctor); in the children's mouths the two words "Pan doktor" became one, a nickname — "Pandoktor." The children were laying wagers with him for a candy or two that during the ensuing week they would not have more than two fights, not tell more than one fib, or that they would not tease anyone.... "Pandoktor" was taking these wagers, giving advice, paying out on the bets. He was about fifty, of medium height, thin, and youthfully quick of movement, with a small, fair beard and pinkish bald head. Through nickel-framed glasses, the eyes smiled at me the eyes of King Macius. He shook hands — a hand warm and dry, extremely pleasant to the touch — and invited me to his den. We climbed up and up, until at last we reached an attic. He knocked at the door. From the other side came in answer a chirping, a twittering, and a fluttering.

"It alarms my lodgers if I enter suddenly. Once one of them nearly killed himself so I always give them a warning knock."

He led me into a room large and very light. The sparrows sat nonchalantly on chair arms and window sill, and eyed us, gossiping chirpily. I soon learned that in addition to these lodgers there was also domiciled here a family of mice, and often on a sofa sat some child, playing or looking at a picture book — a child who perhaps after an illness or some grief needed calm and care, so the Doctor took him upstairs to his den.

An iron bedstead, a cupboard, a massive 19th century writing desk once his father's, bookshelves and a few odds and ends needed by a solitary man — nothing but necessities. A Venetian three-part window gave on to a panorama of quadrangle, with children playing far below, a dovecote, and the roofs of Krochmalna Street, a street of workers, craftsmen and shopkeepers. All in all, this room under the roof of the Children's Home had the atmosphere of a student's attic and a lighthousekeeper's lookout.

Below, on the lower floors of the great building, worked, the wise and good, always calm, watchful educator and manager — "Pandoktor." Here upstairs, in the room above the Children's Home, above Krochmalna Street, as it were, above the whole quarrelling and incomprehensible world, another man lived his own profound and troubled intellectual life — Janusz Korczak. He surveyed the world with that "charitable skepticism" of Anatole France, and all the dramas, disappointments, antimonies of the contemporary world presented themselves to his eyes as a "sinister humoresque," as *The Madmen's Senate* which finally he managed to put on the stage. He wrote numerous letters to boy and girl readers of the "Maly Przegląd" striving to explain to them as simply as possible the principles of life, to elucidate what is most difficult in man and in the world. On the same theme, he gave radio talks, during which children and grownups alike listened with bated breath to the voice of the Old Doctor. His rather low, warm tone, and the fact that he often paused as if seeking the precise word in just the way one does when talking to oneself or a confidant, created a sense of intimacy, of co-feeling.... Here, at that worn, old-fashioned desk, he wrote *King Macius the First*, the eternal tragedy of every noble reformer. And here on a certain night, while he was playing with the mouse called Penetration, a sigh escaped him, and the mysterious, occult words — "When I am small again." Those words bore him back as on a magic carpet into the lost world of first adventures, first feelings, initial impressions, and were to be used by him as the title of a fascinating story. I am not aware that any writer before him created a hero — or rather a condition — having such a divided ego. Not schizophrenic, but normally and freely living in two ages of man. It was a unique and strange art — to become a child again but to retain full consciousness of his own mature being.

In this room, working together with the most splendid character I have ever had the good fortune to meet, I spent four years. For two years I was also teaching in the Children's Home and in Our Home; as to the Korczak educational method, I might therefore speak from personal observations and impressions. That would present a more plastic picture, but would transcend the bounds of this essay. I must therefore be satisfied with a general and brief explanation of Korczak's basic principles.

As regards the main thesis of Janusz Korczak's educational method, the method of

education within the framework of children's self-government, he was not an innovator. At the beginning of this century, before the First World War, there were numerous pedagogical experiments moving in the direction of liberating youthful initiative and self-reliance. Efforts were made to replace compulsion by agreement, by a treaty with children and young people, to make possible for them an active and responsible participation in their own common life. In England and the United States, there existed for some time "little republics" after the ideas of Homer Lane or William R. George; in Germany there were "free school communities" in Wickersdorf and Odenfeld; in France — Ecole des Roches Moulins; Szacki was experimenting near Moscow with children's self-government in summer camps. All these attempts embraced common principles and aims, which in the course of implementation in different countries assumed slightly different forms, according to local pedagogical traditions, history and cultural climate.

Korczak took over those progressive pedagogical concepts of his age, but realized them in a way that was absolutely new, his very own, not found elsewhere, and created the best organized and most democratic children's society. The pupils of the Children's Home and Our Home had their own Parliament to which they elected members. They had different degrees of citizenship, depending on the assessment of their colleagues as to their study effort, behavior, the degree to which they helped one another, and finally their contribution to the maintenance of general order and cleanliness. There was a newspaper, a legal code, and a Court of Peers.

Here were certain throwbacks to the most splendid Polish pedagogical traditions from the period of the Enlightenment in the years 1775-94, when the science of teaching was rapidly making a career in Poland.

The Polish state, weakened internally by the irresponsible sway of the magnates, found itself threatened by three rapacious neighboring powers. The necessity to reform the state, to educate the nation, to train for good citizenship demanded radical and comparatively modern remedies. Suffice it to recall that the world's first ministry of education was then created in Poland under the name of the National Education Board. There were attempts to secularize the schools; reforms were introduced in the medieval teaching curriculum; methods based on the most advanced ideas of the time were advocated; for the first time in schools, lessons on morality were given, expounding lay ethics; an element of self-government appeared through the pupil's Courts of Peers.

Such a Court of Peers became a fundamental and characteristic feature of the Korczak method of children's self-government. He aimed above all at creating an institution supremely educational, obliging the children to think and reflect, so that in self-criticism they might better understand both themselves and their colleagues in the

light of their respect for the laws of a friendly community. At the same time, Korczak sought to give the Clerk of the Court — a teacher — an additional field of close cooperation and observation, one more opportunity of getting to know children and their problems.

An important educational element was work, freely undertaken by the pupils for the benefit of all. The children cleaned and tidied the house, helped in the kitchen, the dining room, the library, looked after their weaker, younger, or sick colleagues. The idea was to make work a habit and a means of assessing one's own value. A no less important educational element was the *children's public opinion*. This was expressed both in the judgments of the Court of Peers and in the plebiscites, to some extent indisputable and documented. There was a plebiscite, after a trial period, on every new pupil, in order that he might be awarded this or that degree of citizenship; also, when one of them wanted to advance after a three months improvement period during which he was sponsored by an older pupil or by a colleague respected and reliable. Each child voted by handing in one of three pieces of paper: one bore the mark "+" — meaning "Yes, I like and esteem him"; a second, the mark "-" — meaning "No, I dislike him. I don't trust him"; and a third with "0" — meaning "I don't know. He has made no impact on me." After the "votes" had been counted, the proportion of friendliness, dislike and indifference stood out on the blackboard plain for children and teachers to see. Precisely that was the idea — to replace assumptions, clues, suspicions, by overt facts, to measure and record, like a temperature, the actual and real opinion of the children's community. Further, plebiscites were held on young teachers also, after a trial working period.

Finally, it is necessary to take into consideration the *teacher's inspiration* in the direction of awakening and stabilizing the *will to self-education*, in order that the child may see his own shortcomings and failures and try to overcome them.

The credo of education in Our Home is to be found in the words of its directress, Maryna Falska: "Not words, not moralizing — rather such a structure and atmosphere that the children may set a high value on their presence here, may make supreme efforts to correct their failures and to adapt themselves to the expectations and requirements of the community." Thus, making clear on the one hand the results and consequences of every action, and on the other helpful methods of self-control, the whole system was constantly echoing the words of Shakespeare: "Master yourself once — and you will acquire strength for the next victory."

To arm with self-knowledge, to establish the habit of work, of self-control and friendly relationships, to impart a quantum of humanity, later to set them free to decide for themselves — that is what Korczak wanted for the children. Striking here is the complete absorption, so to speak, of the doctor in the educational task.

Korczak does not want to mold the child according to this or that pattern and program in the interest of the state, the church or some particular social class. The welfare of the child himself is for him the great and first commandment. In this respect, Korczak is diametrically opposed to Plato with all his caricatured epigones in the pedagogics of total states.

In the panorama of his century, Korczak stands silhouetted as a solitary wanderer. A stranger to all —everywhere respected as a decent foreigner. Nationalist and clericalist Poles could not forgive him his Jewish origin. Unassimilated Jews saw in him a Polish writer, a representative of Polish culture. The social left wing, active revolutionary youth above all, was repulsed by his skepticism and by his not linking the problem of the child with the struggle for a change in the social structure; conservatives saw him as a leftist, almost a bolshevik in the matter of children. In literary society, he would not join any group or school — he was admired, but with a tinge of regret, as a great talent but an illegitimate offspring of pedagogics which were treated with some contempt. The pedagogues were alarmed by his aspect of an iconoclast, and a tribune acting in the name of an exploited social class for as such he treated children, his proletariat of small feet and the labor of maturing. That troubled the pedagogues — perhaps after all Korczak is only a literary phenomenon?

This may seem to be the tragedy of an innovator born at the wrong time or in the wrong place. Objectively speaking, it indeed has that aspect. But subjectively, Korczak did not consider himself a tragic figure. Of course, he frequently suffered, and not only for personal reasons. But whatever his harassments and spiritual conflicts, he kept them close, with only occasional references in letters to nearest friends, sometimes in his creative work. In everyday life, he remained the personification of self-possession and serenity of mind. Through sixteen years of constant contact with him, I recollected only a few occasions when the Old Doctor blew up, was irritated or depressed. I repeat, in his approach to the world, to people, there was something of the kindly skepticism of Anatole France. The skepticism Korczak flaunted, the charity he tried to hide, camouflaging his lyrical sentiments. He was often moving but also comic when he tried to act the old cynic.

And what a sense of humor! That specific humor gave him in his youth fame as a feuilletonist, floods his novels with serenity, bobs up in essays when among serious and objective reflections he suddenly introduces a thumbnail caricature or a metaphor. He could recount an anecdote marvellously, and was sometimes himself the hero of an amusing incident.

He was able to color work with the charm of play, to draw great inspiration from petty affairs, and he had an idiosyncratic attitude to the three P's — he hated pedants, feared politicians, and was suspicious that pedagogues demoralize children.

He won hearts by his sincerity and forthrightness. He never had reason to feel very lonely, he had friends and devoted admirers.

No, he was not embittered by his situation as stranger among his own people, he was not prostrated by failure. Simply — although it is not so very simple — he was a good man, and his goodness transcended common experience, was above the ordinary human measure. Whatever he did was done in splendid harmony with his nature and he fully "enjoyed being alive" —which, if we can believe Montaigne, "is the highest and almost godlike perfection."

After the siege and fall of Warsaw in 1939, Korczak called me to his room. In the Children's Home as throughout the city the windows were lacking glass. From somewhere the Doctor had managed to acquire a crate of panes, and I had a cutting diamond and was a glazier. Korczak was in high boots, in the uniform of a major of the Polish Army. I expressed my astonishment at seeing him in this uniform, for which formerly he had seemed to have the reverse of liking....

"Yes, formerly. It's all different now...."

"Doctor, that doesn't make sense. You are simply provoking the Nazis, flouting them with this uniform which nobody any longer wears."

"Precisely. Nobody. The uniform of the soldier betrayed." The last word. No further discussion.

Only after a whole year did he give in to the persuasions of his friends, urging on him that he was endangering not only himself but also the children. But when during the removal of the Children's Home to the Ghetto, members of the Gestapo stole a cartload of potatoes, the Old Doctor went in his uniform to the Nazi administration of the city. When they discovered that this man, quarrelling about potatoes destined for Jewish children, was himself a Jew and not wearing the yellow armband because he refused to recognize such a badge of humiliation and dishonor — they promptly put him in prison. The Gestapo put him under interrogation, trying to extract the names of his co-workers and his organization, because they could not believe that this insolent demonstration had not been ordered.

Former pupils managed to gather sufficient funds to buy him out of prison before he was sentenced. He returned to the children — with the Children's Home already in the Ghetto.

I shall not attempt here to sketch this quarter encircled by high walls, this quarter shut like a trap, where half a million people were crushed together in conditions persistently macabre. I should like only to make a few observations about the Memoirs and to reconstruct the last talk I had with Korczak.

The very first pages of the *Memoirs* reveal the intention to rule off the account, to transfer to somebody in the distant future the last testament of his own experiences, dissensions and beliefs. The introductory reflections are examples of the literary craft — sentences beautifully molded, perfect, ready for the printer. But the further he proceeds with the work the more does his initial conception become confused and shattered. Complete psychological detachment from the agony of the *Ghetto* proves to be simply not possible.

Korczak leaves the Children's Home in the morning and goes to the Aid Committee, calls at the houses of the rich, appears even in the offices of known, compromised collaborators. He begs, threatens, quarrels. He cares not who it is who gives or whether sufficient remains for others. He is the father of two hundred children and he must provide for them. This is a different Korczak: exhausted, irritable, suspicious, ready to raise hell over a barrel of cabbage, a sack of flour.

From such rounds he returns in the evening completely worn out, with figures in his notebook representing his day's booty, and behind his eyes the image of the *Ghetto*. At night, he thinks and writes. He writes in the sickroom where lie several of the weakest children and a dying man, father of one of the pupils, approaching the end of a long, serious illness.

In such surroundings, in that state of health, after such a day, he no longer has strength or will to write for publication: he can only talk to himself on paper, making notes in haphazard abbreviations, almost a cypher; something of his chance thoughts, some memories, a fleeting impression. ... The *Memoirs* have become no more than a register of psychological moments. This is neither the legendary Korczak nor the real Korczak. This is a man fragmented into moments, impulses, fibers — a third being, uncoordinated; the writing is more mysterious in its trembling close-up, in its burning sincerity. It long continues to torment with its suffering — and it is astonishing how a great testament and work of art brings home to one human calamities, makes one more human.

In July 1942, when it was becoming obvious that the *Ghetto* was marked for liquidation, Maryna Falska made a last attempt to save Korczak. I repeat ... a last attempt ... because earlier his friends outside the walls had frequently urged him to leave the *Ghetto* and find asylum with them. This time, everything was scrupulously organized — a German identity card in an assumed name, a safe room prepared by Falska near Our Home on the periphery of Warsaw. I went to the *Ghetto* on a pass for a water and sewage system inspector who, on his way back, was to take with him a locksmith working on the *Ghetto* territory.

It is difficult to describe the psychological shock experienced by any normal man in

this sinister quarter of people under sentence of death, the sense of personal humiliation and shame at being a so-called Arian. Only in the Children's Home was it possible to recover, to regain self-control. There it was like an oasis. Everything running according to the normal, long established routine, everything exuding order, calm, good management. Yet the children were quieter, slower in their movements, and "Pandoktor" looked ill, wasted, stooping. At sixty four, his organism was wrecked: at the expense of stupendous daily effort he was finding food, medicines and clothes, was tottering under this terrible responsibility and care for the fate of two hundred children and youngsters from seven to seventeen or eighteen years old — including quite a few former pupils who had sought shelter with him.

I explained that now there was only a single chance to save a few from perishing, that there could be no postponement. If the Doctor would break up the boarding school, some of the children and teachers would perhaps have a chance to escape beyond the walls. Let him order that, and come away at once with me.

He looked at me as though disappointed in me, as though I had proposed a betrayal or an embezzlement. I wilted under his gaze and he turned away, saying quietly but not without reproach in his voice:

"You know, of course, why Zalewski was beaten up...."

Piotr Zalewski, a former grenadier in the Tsarist army, was for twenty years caretaker and in charge of central heating in the Children's Home. When the order for removal came, Zalewski wanted to go to the Ghetto, too. Wolańska, who for many years had run the laundry in the Home, went with a similar application to the Nazi police. Her they merely kicked out, but to Zalewski they administered a bestial reminder that he was an Arian. (During the Warsaw Uprising in 1944, Zalewski met his death in the courtyard of the Children's Home.)

So Korczak recalled Zalewski with an obvious though unformulated reproach — you see, a caretaker would not leave the children because he was attached to them, and you propose that I, their tutor, their father.... Is it thinkable that I should leave the children alone to suffocate in a gas chamber? How could I live after that? He could not. He did not.

By way of farewell, and as a sort of absolution, he said he would send me his Memoirs, which he was writing day by day in the Ghetto. He kept his word — as always. Shortly after 5th of August, I received the Memoirs.¹ On 5th of August, 1942, began the

¹ Envisaging the possibility of arrest and search in my flat, I took the MS to Our Home and Maryna Falska told one of the staff, Mr. Cichosz, to wall it up in the attic. Shortly afterward I was arrested ... Majdanek Oswiecim ... other concentration camps. After the war, I learned that Maryna Falska had died

march of the children and teachers of the Children's Home, led by Janusz Korczak and Stefania Wilczyńska. Neatly clad in their best clothes they marched in fours, steadily, under their flag — the golden four-leaf clover on a field of green, as dreamed by King Macius because green is the symbol of everything that grows — fluttering above their heads. They marched through the hushed streets of Warsaw to the Umschlag-Platz, near the Gdansk Railway Station. Here they were all loaded into chlorinated freight cars. The train set out for the Treblinka extermination camp.

In our country, great numbers deliberately chose death, giving their lives for their motherland, for the people, in executing this or that order. As elsewhere. And the Nazis have on their record more horrible crimes than the murder of a tutor and his two hundred charges. Why is it, then, that this event is etched so sharply in the memories of all, and has become a tormenting legend of humanity?

In man's history on the earth one can find more appalling crimes — but it would be difficult to trace a more dramatic confrontation of the human with the inhuman. It is not the dimension of this crime — but its significance. With the predicament it expresses, it faces the world like an onslaught; it cries out: "*Ecce Homo Sapiens* — and *Homo Rapax!* Beware! Upon this — upon which of them, the human or the inhuman, will triumph — will depend the fate of you and your children."

Pedagogics and literature, elaborating the heritage of Korczak, will divide it into what is outworn, what is valuable still, or valuable at last, and into impractical although fascinating Utopias. Culture has adopted Korczak whole. For culture not what one can learn from Korczak is important not the question as to what one can take from him and what is open to discussion. What is important is the climate of his works and his life, the regenerating power of thinking in the categories of humanism. It is because of that regenerating power that from a conversation with Korczak one may emerge to put it at its simplest — a slightly better man, slightly more complete.

Igor Newerly

Translated by

Anna and George Bidwell

on 7th of October, 1944, the day on which, on the orders of the Nazis, she was to have led the children out of Warsaw, cutting herself off forever from Our Home. But Mr. Cichosz survived and unbricked the Memoirs. I have published them in Vol. 4 of Janusz Korczak's Selected Works.

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* * *

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THE APPLICATION²

Kind friends urge me to write my last will. I am doing it now in my curriculum *vitae*, to go with the application for a job as teacher in the institution at 39 Dzielna St.³

I am sixty-four. As to health, I received my certificate in jail last year. In spite of the exacting conditions there, not once did I report sick, not once did I go to the doctor, not once did I absent myself from gymnastics, dreaded even by my younger colleagues. I eat like a horse, sleep soundly; recently, after drinking ten shots of strong vodka, I returned home at a brisk pace from Rymarska St. to Sienna St. — late at night. I get up twice in the night, fill my chamber pot.

I smoke, do not overindulge in liquor, mental faculties for everyday purposes — passable.

I am a master in the economy of effort; like Harpagus, I measure out every unit of energy to be expended.

I consider myself initiated into medicine, education, eugenics, politics.

Having established a routine, I possess an appreciable ability for coexisting and collaborating even with criminal characters and with born imbeciles. Ambitious, obstinate fools cut me off their visiting list — though I do not return the compliment. The last examination I passed: toleration of a screwball directress in my institution for well over a year, and acting contrary to the interests of my own convenience and peace, I sought to persuade her to stay; she soon left of her own volition (a principle of mine: better the devil you know...).

I anticipate that the criminal characters among the personnel of the institution at Dzielna St. will — of their own volition — leave the hated place to which they are tied by cowardice and inertia.

I graduated from secondary school and university in Warsaw. My education was complemented in the clinics of Berlin (one year) and Paris (six months). A month's excursion to London helped me to understand on the spot the quintessence of charity work (high earnings).

² OFERTA." Vol. 4, p. 495.

³ A street in Warsaw inhabited mostly by the Jewish population

My masters in medicine were: Professor Przeworski (anatomy and bacteriology), Nasonov (zoologist), Shcherbakov (psychiatry) and pediatricians Finkelsztein, Baginski, Marfan, Hutinel (Berlin, Paris).

(Recreation — visiting orphanages, reformatories, places of detention for juvenile delinquents).

One month in a school for backward children, one month in Ziehan's neurologic clinic.

My masters in the hospital at Sliska St.: the ironist and nihilist Koral, the jovial Kramsztyk, the serious Gantz, the fine diagnostician Eliasberg, and also assistant surgeon Sliiewski and a selfless nurse, Laja.

I expect to meet more of the kind of Laja in the children's slaughter house (and morgue) at 39 Dzielna St.

Hospital revealed to me how dignified, mature and sensible a child is face to face with death.

Books on statistics deepened my understanding of the medical art (statistics taught me the inexorability of logical thinking and unbiased judgement of fact). Having weighed and measured children for a quarter of a century, I became the owner of a priceless collection of graphs — growth profiles of children at school age and puberty.

With the Jewish child I came in touch for the first time as overseer in the Markiewicz summer vacation camp at MichalOwek.

Several years of unpaid work in a reading library afforded me rich observation material.

I have never been a member of any political party.

My teachers in civic work: Nalkowski, Straszewicz, Dawid, Dygasinski, Prus, Asnyk, Konopnicka.

The initiation into the world of insects and plants, I owe to Maeterlinck, into the life of minerals — Ruskin.

As for writers, I owe most to Chekhov — a great social diagnostician and clinician.

I visited Palestine twice, learned to appreciate its "bitter beauty"; I familiarized myself with the dynamics and technique of life of the Halutz and the settlers from Moshav (Symkhoni, Gurarie, Brawerman).

I became familiar for the second time with the marvelous machinery of a live system in an effort to adjust to a strange climate: first — Manchuria; now — Palestine.

I familiarized myself with the recipe of wars and revolutions — I took direct part in the Japanese and the European wars, and in the civil war (Kiev); now as a civilian — I read the words with great care and then between the lines. Otherwise, I should have persisted in my resentment for and disdain of the civilian.

Jobs so far:

1. Seven years, with intervals, as sole house surgeon in the Sliska St. hospital.
2. Nearly a quarter of a century in the Children's Home.
3. Fifteen years in Our Home PruszkOw, Pola
4. About six months in institutions for destitute Ukrainian children.
5. I have served as expert at the District Court for juvenile delinquents.
6. I was a correspondent of German and French periodicals in the field of National Insurance for four years.
7. Wars:
8. Evacuation points at Kharbin and Taoy-jou.
9. A sanitary train (carrying V.D. patients from the revolutionary army from Kharbin to Khabarovsk).
10. Junior ward-head in a divisional field hospital.
11. Epidemic hospital in Led2 (dysentery epidemic).
12. Epidemic hospital at Kamionek.

As citizen and employee, **I** am obedient but not disciplined. I have cheerfully accepted punishment for disobedience (for an unlawful release from hospital of the family of a lieutenant personally unknown to me — result for myself typhus).

I am not ambitious. I have been asked to write my childhood memoirs — and refused.

As an organizer — **I** cannot play the big boss. A handicap here and elsewhere — short sight and complete lack of visual memory. The far-sightedness that comes with increasing age has compensated for the first defect; the second has grown in intensity. There is a good side to this: being unable to recognize men, I concentrate on the problem — do not become prejudiced, do not remember wrongs done to me.

Clumsy, therefore impetuous if upset; tediously developed self-control — has made me able to engage in team work.

The trial period I suggest should be four weeks from my starting — in view of the

urgency, that should be on Wednesday, at the latest on Thursday.

Kindly provide a room and two meals daily.

I make no other conditions, having learned not to do so by unpleasant and painful not for me — experience. By a room, I understand a place to sleep; meals as they come, and if it comes to that — I can do without.

Goldszmit

February 9, 1942.

EDUCATIONAL FACTORS

Introductory Remarks

I. Priority in medicine goes to the science concerned with identification of disease. A student examines an infinite number of individuals, learns to observe and, on recognizing symptoms, to explain their meaning and confront them, and then draw conclusions.

If the science of teaching is to follow the road paved by medicine, it must work out on educational diagnostic based on the understanding of symptoms.

What a fever, a cough or nausea is for a physician, so a smile, a tear, or a blush should be for an educator. Not a single symptom lacks significance. It is essential to record and think over every detail, discard all that is incidental, bring together all that is akin, and seek out the guiding laws. It is not a question of how and what to demand from a child, not of bidding and forbidding, but of what he lacks, what he has in excess, what he desires, and how much he can afford to give of himself.

The boarding school and the day school — a research center and an educational clinic.

Why will one pupil, when he comes to the classroom, look into all the corners, say a word to everyone and be driven to his bench by the sound of the school bell only with difficulty? Why does another take his seat at once, reluctant to leave it even during the break? What sort of individuals are these, what can the school offer them and what can it demand in exchange?

Why does one pupil, when called to the blackboard go willingly, his head raised high, a self-assured smile on his face, to wipe the blackboard energetically with the pad, write in large letters, the piece of chalk firmly held in his hand? Why does another get up reluctantly, clear his throat, straighten his suit and move to the blackboard as if in a dream with eyes fixed on the floor, applying the pad to the blackboard only when told to do so, and writing in small letters scarcely visible?

Who is the first and who the last to run out for the break? Who frequently raises his hand to answer—knows everything and speaks up freely; who does so rarely, who — never?

If the lesson proceeds without interruptions, who is the first to start an uproar, and who keeps silent amid the general tumult?

Who has occupied that particular seat (and why) rather than some other, picked the first or the last bench, next to this or that classmate? Which are those who go home alone and which go in pairs or in a crowd? Who frequently changes friends, and who is constant?

Why is there no smile at a point where it is expected, why an outburst of happiness when we anticipated concern? How many times did the class yawn during the first lesson — and the last? Lack of interest — why?

To replace grumbling that things fall short of our expectations, let us introduce an unbiased and probing "why," in the absence of which we are in no position to gain experience, to be creative and go forward; in the absence of which there can be no real knowledge. This pamphlet is not a formula according to which such studies should be conducted; it is a document to show how difficult it is to portray in words what stands before one's eyes, how fruitful any comment can be—even an erroneous one—concerning what has been noticed and fixed in the mind as if in a "flash"; a symptom of individuality—of a pupil, or a general view of a group.

II. The more conscientious educators have now taken to keeping diaries but they soon give it up because they have no knowledge of the note-taking technique; they leave the teachers' training college without an addiction to keeping a record of what they do. Demanding too much from themselves, they lose confidence in their own ability; demanding too much of their notes, they lose faith in the value of such notes.

Some things make man happy, others — sad, puzzled, anxious, angry or discouraged. What should be taken down, and how?

It is a fact—the teacher has not been taught. While he has already grown out of the stage of keeping a youthful diary hidden from father under the mattress, he has not grown into keeping a record to share with a colleague, discuss at meetings and conferences. He may have been taught to take notes of someone else's lectures and ideas but never of his own endeavors.

What sort of difficulties and surprises have you come across, and what sort of mistakes have you made, how did you correct them? Take stock of what were your defeats and what triumphs. Let every failure be consciously instructive to yourself and of help to others.

III. What do you do with the hours of your life and on what do you spend the store of your youthful energy? If at one time you were filled with enthusiasm and it withered away as years went by -- has this fact cleared up anything for you, has it proved constructive? Experience? What are its constituent parts? The time has come when you no longer need it for the sake of knowledge as such, not for others, but for your very own self.

You are not working for your homeland, the community or the future unless you are working toward enriching your own soul. Only by getting can one give, only by growing in one's own spirit can one collaborate in the development of others. In notes lie the seeds from which forest and cornfield grow, they contain drops which become springs—this is what I offer to sustain, to quench the thirst, to please the heart and to fight weariness.

Notes are the entries you use to draw up the balance sheet of your life. They constitute documented evidence that it has not been wasted. Life never gives more than partial liberation, achievement is fragmentary. I was young -- ignorant; my hair is gray -- and I know: now it is strength that is lacking. Notes will soothe the sting of conscience; why so much, not that much, as you ought...

I. Public School - First Grade

Note: He hasn't a pen...

Comment What now? Should the teacher keep spare pens to lend? Who are the constant forgetters? Note how many times but don't exaggerate — "You always forget." Perhaps first thing in the morning before class: what has who forgotten?

Note: Five minutes of observation during the last quarter of the lesson (arithmetic).

Bolek rubs his chin, pulls his ear, shakes his head, looks out of the window, bounces up and down the bench, folds his arms, wriggles his hips, assesses the desk width with a copybook, then with the palm of his hand, turns over a page of the copybook, raises himself on the edge of the bench, leans forward as if about to leap, waves his arm, pats the bench, shakes his head, looks out of the window (it's snowing), bites his nails, sits on his hands, handles a shoe, fans himself with the copybook, puts his hands in his pockets, stretches himself, wriggles his hips, rubs his hands... "Please, miss, I'll go to the board." You say "Write this down!" — He grabs his pen, waves it in the air,

puffs and stabs the pen into the inkpot. You say: "What's 332 and 332?" Be reckons quickly—looks round him, "Got it?" and then in a subdued voice to himself: "Slick — aren't we, like the win-nd..." — he clicks his tongue and sighs...

Comment: So a child looks after himself; in this way he lets off the mounting steam which has no outlet; in this way he wrestles with himself so as not to disturb the class, thus, he sniffs action, expresses frustration, takes hold of the instrument of labor and lastly, in a poetic parallel, unconsciously expresses the yearning "like the win-nd."

Observe the torment of the lively and sensitive—wise in managing its energy by venting it bit by bit without annoying the teacher; how great the struggle before it bursts out with what will provoke the warning: "Don't fidget." "Lucky" to be an apathetic, drowsy, child.

Note: "Quiet!" How many times in an hour?

Comment: Three possibilities: (a) the teacher's admonition "quiet" is unnecessary — because punishment (read: physical) ensures silence; (b) he may repeat "quiet" without much confidence or effect; (c) he may allow noise — which means no lesson; (d) he may come to an understanding with the children. Result — complete silence, relative silence. What breaks the silence: a question, a request, a remark, an unsought answer, laughter, talk with a neighbor? When and to what extent are you permissive? Does it depend on your mood, and do you know it? If so, you must help the children to understand that.

Note: Hesitant answers to the simplest questions, reserved answers.

Comment: The teacher will rarely refrain from intervening even on a correct answer: "Quicker — slower — speak up — once more — alright — go on."

"Them three boys."

"Not them three — those three."

The child is not always sure whether he has made a mistake in reckoning as between two or three boys or has used the wrong expression. He develops a sense of unexplained error, of something wrong.

How little possible is any work, and altogether

impossible is mental work if someone "stands over you" and keeps "nagging" -- disturbing. It often happens: *Teacher*: "Well, how many pounds has he left?" *Pupil*: "Five."

Teacher: "Answer in full."

Pupil: "Six" (guessing now).

Better perhaps to let him finish and then correct. An important point.

Note: "Witches don't exist" — the teacher says. Zbyszek (silent) — after thinking it over, he whispers to himself: And I think there are witches somewhere."

Comment: How often the authority of the home clashes with that of the school! Occasionally adult authority must yield to that of a slightly older school friend.

Note: What increase in hullabaloo is there during breaks following the first, second, third lessons: how many fights, quarrels, accusations? In what way does restlessness in class increase? Judge by the number of warnings given to the class as a whole or to individual children.

N. B. To confine a child to an uncomfortable, ill-fitting bench for *four* hours -- the same torture as walking for *as* many hours in uncomfortable, tight, shoes.

Note: "Wait, don't start writing yet. Hurry up, come on, we're waiting."

Comment: "Hurry up, not so fast" — thus, the teacher tries to bring the class to a common denominator. Unfortunately — neither "hurry up" nor not so fast" do any good, they demoralize children, who feel suspended in mid-air.

Note: Teacher: -Well, how much?" Pupil stumped.

The class prompts: "fruity eight."

Teacher: "Well, how much?" The child stays mum.

Comment: This is an extremely interesting phenomenon. Why does the teacher insist on a now worthless answer, why does the pupil reasonably refuse that answer? What is the nature of pupil's reluctance to take advantage of prompting?

Note: Teacher: "What sort of a book is that?" (He expects an adjective.)

Pupil: "With pictures."

What should the teacher do in such a case?

Note: The others have started drawing, Adam is still making his preparations. The bell. They have finished but he goes on, reluctant to tear himself away.

Note: "Show me your drawings." A harassed smile — the child dawdles, appears reluctant.

Comment: Has it been noticed how serious a child becomes when he draws, how hard he

tries, how dispirited he may become?

"Why did you draw it precisely like that?" "Because it's pretty, because it seems to me like that."

Janinka has drawn something reminiscent of a broadly spreading cactus—with a little bird sitting on each spine.

"What is that?"

"One of the girls here (in the boarding school) drew something like it."

Note: It's cold for those sitting near the French window (draft).

Comment: Their attention is distracted. If it is cold in the classroom and the children lightly dressed: one sits immobile, frozen in a single position, another defends himself against the cold with frequent movements — he fidgets.

Note: Some trouble with his mouth, he keeps poking in it, maybe a tooth loose.

Common t: A factor distracting attention.

Note: A pupil's pocket treasures - the pen case.

Comment: The schoolmaster has stopped them from bringing balls, dolls, magnets, magnifying glasses to school. But the pen case is allowed. Its contents are also a distraction. But does playing with the pen case make the child inattentive, or is it rather that, being inattentive he plays with the pen case? Relaxed, fooling around, desiring not to listen to what the teacher is saying, will the child return sooner to proper behavior or will he remain inattentive for longer? Or just the opposite—without a pen case, will the child fall into unthinking apathy for still longer?

II. Kindergarten and First Grade In A Private School For Girls

Note: Today's monitor wipes the blackboard, Malgosia deliberately smears it with chalk. (Spite?) Odd.

Comment: We are occasionally flabbergasted by the action of some child. If A had done it, it would have been understandable — but that one? ... Consequently, we begin to reconsider our opinion of the child. When reproaching him, we shall say: "Well, well, so that's it. And I thought ... I was wrong ... but now ...," and so forth. We feel of fended and hurt, having been deceived. But in fact in that particular case it may simply be that B is mimicking someone: for once, he or she has followed the example of "ethers" Yesterday or a week ago, Malgosia saw someone annoying the class monitor, someone who impresses her and whom she wants to be like.

Note: Girls, please no talking.

Comment: Why are such admonishments effective in a school for the "well-bred?" As punishment — a mild reproof, an impatient gesture, look of surprise or a shrug of the shoulders ... As punishment -- irony instead of the cane; a word that lacerates ambition. "You should know better." A "sharp" reprimand — sharp because it hurts. Perhaps by chance, I have touched the roots of an important problem? Whence that dreadful dependence of man on the opinion of others, why the dead stop under the threat of the ridicule, to the point of canine watchfulness of what others think of us—the waiter or the hotel commissionaire?

Note: She has not learned it — should she be exposed?

Comment: The child has not learned it — the German words. If one could only photograph her behavior) Surely eyes, mortification, a forced smile or indignation on the face, mutiny in the frown or a deceptive clearing of the throat and wordless movements of the lips (she knows but she doesn't remember — she knows and any moment now will speak up — no, she doesn't know: why doesn't she?). The schoolmistress keeps on asking the question. It recalls torture, a pitiable sight.

Note: Not only children late for school, but some who come early -- both equally inconvenient for the school.

Note: Who prefers to sit on the first bench and who on the last?

Note: "Olek, give me back my erased" Olek gives it back, not putting it on the bench but on his head. No fun — putting the eraser on the table.

Note: "You don't know it again? I've repeated it so many times. You should be ashamed....!"

Comment: Well, what can one do - he doesn't know. Instead of a reprimand, a question: Why? Suppose a doctor were to say to his patient: "A shame, you've taken a whole bottle of medicine and still you cough, your pulse is weak, and you haven't moved your bowels."

Note: Wladzia comes into the classroom, puts her books down and wanders around: to the blackboard, to the pictures on the wall, the teacher's table and again to the blackboard, then to the bench where she sits at the very end of the room, starts swinging between the desks, and finally sits down and energetically swings her legs. Janka comes in, she goes straight to the window and looks out. There is some commotion, the benches are shifted,

she turns around with an impatient frown, no reaction, and then rushes suddenly to her desk. (N. B. Some children become as attached to their seat as a prisoner to his cell.)

Note: Stasia--an eight-minute observation. (1) Leaves her desk and stops by another one. (2) Kneels on her bench. (3) Makes for another desk again (some whispers). (4) Back to her desk. (5) She speaks to her neighbor, who gets out of her desk and Stasia takes her seat. (6) She is by the teacher's table. (7) She comes back and swings herself up in between the desks, bending sharply forward. (8) Leaning against her seat, she is talking quietly with two girls. (9) Laughter — gossip for five. (10) Goes rapidly to the fourth desk to share with a friend an interesting piece of news. (11) Going back to her seat. (12) Back again, glances at her neighbor's book.

Note: "You don't care to think, you don't concentrate" (in a tone of despair).

Common t: Closed in that classroom with the children the schoolmistress not only constrains but is herself constrained; wearying others, she wearies herself. Perhaps at one time she experimented, probed. Otherwise, her want of control, of capacity, must have been due to circumstances. Perhaps she chose the wrong profession. Whose fault?

Note: Władzia raises her hand (I am tempted not to record this, it upsets my earlier diagnosis).

Comment: I have unwillingly recorded that Władzia a trifler and a fidget — has volunteered an answer. Why? Because it seems contrary to my view of her as a poor pupil — but that is just why I should have been pleased and eagerly recorded the occasion. Władzia as I have seen her is not one to put her hand up, is happy to be left alone, not to have to answer. And I err in wanting her to be as I have seen her. But my duty is to probe her as she really is, to be intent on observing every indication, and comprehensively. I am just too lazy. I want Władzia to be easy to read. I have affixed a label — that's the end. The upraised hand now calls for reexamination, for a fresh mental effort, a deeper insight. I am impatient — I am in a hurry. Having written her off as transparent, I move on hurriedly to others. I attend superficially to a patient, make a plausible diagnosis — others are waiting. I am ambitious— I feel anxious about my diagnosis, perhaps because it was carelessly performed and muddled. I can never be sure, and then fear comes over me that some new feature may

blur the label which I have heedlessly affixed. I hate to admit that I am not good at this, I must read over and over again the "letters" of symptoms intently and long before I can dribble out the components more or less crudely. There is a pompous authority in me, which perceives at a glance what is inside "such a little tot," which can X-ray it. A demoralized bungler thrives inside me, trained even at school how to wangle out of what is involved in honest cognition. Little Władzia's upraised hand is the protest of a vital being not content with such treatment, not accepting a label; she says: "You don't know me." What do I know about Władzia? That she is a fidget? That once a teacher flung at her: "You are idle" — and it suited me and I appropriated it. Perhaps Władzia is no idler after all. Perhaps it would be wiser to drop the routine diagnosis and to admit the error to be rewarded with a few self-critical remarks. Perhaps Władzia, a highly-strung child, is capable of keen interest; perhaps she is fighting against the teacher's prejudice. That upraised hand may mean: (a) "that is just to show you, I'm not what you think," or (b) "if I'm interested, I know what to say and I want to answer." Perhaps only this morning the "idler" has decided to mend her ways and make a fresh start? Perhaps she has had a serious talk with her mother or a friend? Should Władzia be helped or, having recorded the fact, should one wait and see what happens next, tomorrow, in a week?

Of course, what matters here is not the inky hand of a girl in the first grade but a problem to which I can find no answer.

Note: A chat — about mice, say (in a moment — rats — bees and what have you).

Comment: No books tell us how to conduct a conversation, a chat (not a formal discussion with children). Maybe we are at a loss with it because it seems so easy. How well I remember the splendid chats at summer camps, at evening get-togethers in the boarding school—who doesn't remember them, how could any educator fail to? Might they not be tried out in the classroom?

A mouse—they borrowed a cat to catch mice — a story of a dog and cat fight — a rat on auntie's pillow — a mouse on a plate with fried fish—rats can swim—fish in the bath—there are golden fishes -- from a ship, one can see fish — there are poisonous flowers—dad was bitten by a bee — grandma keeps bees.

Another problem — several want to speak at once. One to me, another to his neighbor — others gather in groups. Someone starts a row — general uproar -chat spoiled. And only ten minutes to the bell—what is to be done?

Tell them to speak in turn and they feel constrained, they're not used to being listened to, and they haven't much to say. How can we save from oblivion the

interesting, and entirely unexplored language of a child's narrations.

An example—not from the school but from the Kindergarten—as told by five-year old Victor. "Where did you see apples?"

"Apples --I saw apples — teeny weeny ones but such big trees—you can lie on a branch, or swing — a dog—an apple falls — a man lies asleep—mummy comes — I want to walk by myself—there a chair —there a dog—some dog—the man's been bitten — oh, shar-r-rp teeth— and so when he slept, it bit him—the dog must be thrashed because it bit—there is a lady—such big teeth — can't remember what it's called — I know, Fox, that's what it's called—it bit and there was blo-o-od — it was eating a bone -- clear off, Fox, it glared at him and bit, dropped the bone and bit - - I threw an apple to the dog — and when he picked an apple from the tree and threw it far, far—such a crisp, sweet apple—it only sniffed at it—and then a soldier came along and hit the dog—hit it again -- such a nice -- so nice -- nice."

I took down as much as I could without shorthand. Compare Victor's "shar-r-rp" and "blo-o-od" with Bolek's "win-nd".

III. Helcia

Observation site—the Kindergarten. A large room with a piano in the corner. Small wicker armchairs by the walls and little tables for one. In the middle of the room—six tables with four chairs at each. A chest with toys and Montessori equipment stands near the door. The main characters under observation are: Helcia-3'/s; Jurek and Krysia—both 3; Haneczka —5; Nini — 6. Duration of observation—two to three hours daily for two days.

Helcia — an ambitious child, accustomed to being admired, trying to impress others with her intelligence and allure; she and her older brother are a charming pair of healthy lively children enchanting the eye and the heart.

Jurek - I know from his home; even if he is not a little tyrant, with the best will in the world I cannot help regarding him "with a touch of professional prejudice"; he has a "bad reputation." He once tried to take a whip to his mother and started a row — a game cock.

Krysia—here medicine rears its ugly head. In such children I can't stand measles and whooping cough. Slight, serious and unruffled — fragile, something dreamy, pensive and premonitory about them; they stir affectionate esteem and regard. I gladly prescribe cod liver oil for them and kiss their hands.

Haneczka — how can I describe her? "She's got her head screwed on alright" -
- "She knows the answers"—"She won't be driven into a corner — you can't
lead her up the garden" — "Roguish" -- She knows exactly how far she can
go; one might say that she has no charm but that does not quite hit it off,
she may prove to be made of the right stuff.

Nini - defies characterization. She has a touch of the typical child
intriguer, a bit disquieting. She prefers the company of her one-year-old
brother and children younger than herself.

I have launched into my observations without a program — a plan --
offhand: "What are they up to?" My first note—in pencil:

Helcia (pictures): "He has a red tongue (dog). Why?" "Because it's a dog" (*Nini*).

"Do dogs have red tongues —sometime s?"

(She tells Helcia a story about a dog that barked "even though no one did
anything to him".)

Kryisia is playing with a ball.

Nini: "Oh, Kryisia is playing (with one hand), too"

That the child looking at the picture should have considered separately the
tail, ears, tongue and teeth—details adults pass over — that I could
understand. We look at such pictures a bit aloof—they are only for
children—but in an art gallery we give similarly detailed attention. If we
are constantly astonished at the children's perceptiveness—which means
that we do not take them seriously—we are in fact astonished that they are
human beings and not puppets.

Helcia's question as to why dogs have red tongues — I take to mean that she
wants to converse on any subject with Nini, who is higher in the social scale
(she is talking on an equal footing with a seven-year-old), and the clue for
me was the word "sometimes" inserted at random. Similarly, a simpleton
meeting an educated 19 person, or a parvenu an aristocrat, will add in con-
versation, an unrelated or farfetched word or expression, just to show that he
knows a thing or two, too, is no fool.

Nini's remark that Kryisia is playing, with the addition "too," is evidence of
surprise: she has seen Kryisia playing for the first time.

Nini (with a ball): "I can do it with one hand, can you?" "No." (Helcia says it
quickly.)

"I can even throw it up."

Kryisia swaps a good ball for a bad one.

"Ha! ha! No more swapping— eh?"

Kryisia is squeezing the bad ball which "has lost its air" (Nini).

Two moments have been noted by me here. I have the chance to repeatedly observe Helcia's generous truthfulness. If she lies she does so, being very ambitious, to protect her own dignity. She finds it difficult to admit that she does not know something, so she says quickly that she can't do it with one hand, and is clearly anxious to change the subject.

The second moment concerns Nini. Kryisia has changed a good ball for a bad one. Nini eagerly grasps the good one and laughs -- probably any moment now she will be saying: "Stupid, that ball is going flat — it's no good— it doesn't bounce." But suddenly she reflects: best not to draw attention to her satisfactory deal. So she says quickly: "No more swapping." Superfluous cautiousness: Kryisia is satisfied with the exchange, is experimenting with the damaged ball, doesn't want to play any more. Just as Helcia did not lie when she said quickly and in something of a low voice that she could not catch the ball with one hand, so Nini has not actually cheated Kryisia. Thus blurred are the boundary lines of many human failings — virtues, action, and offense.

There are building blocks on the floor.

Nini: "I'll build a ship for you -- a furnace — yes, furnace — that's it, a furnace on a ship."

Helcia: "And do you know how to build such a ship?" *Nini* (not looking at her): "Sure."

Kryisia—Helcia--are making a train.

The six-year-old Nini, though she plays with the smaller children, treats them condescendingly. She is not building for herself but for them. Nelda will not have that, she refuses to acknowledge Nini's authority — she asks an impertinent question and receives an off-hand reply. Can Nini build the things that Helcia can? Nini has not so much as looked up, obviously she can.

Nini tells a tale about snakes

"Does it end funnily?"

Helcia: "No."

I am adding the rest from memory. Nini is fighting to maintain her authority: she is going to tell a story- about snakes. Helcia does not know what a snake is, she is not interested in the tale. Nini sniffs a flop. She puts a thoughtless question and gets a terse reply. At this point I interfered, unnecessarily as it happened, by putting a few questions about snakes to Nini. "A snake is like a string and can devour two hundred people." Helcia is looking at Nini like a thundercloud: relations are strained, the atmosphere is tense. Individuals of different kinds have met by chance: after a feigned conversation, an uneasy contact, they will part holding a grudge against one another.

Building blocks -- a long time — a palace.

"Can you build like that?" (Helcia). "Nice, isn't it?" Nini —22.

Kryisia -- 0.

Helcia.— 14.

They go back to building. Within a short time, Nini uttered twenty-two words, Helcia fourteen, and Kryisia — none. At this point, I made a note that during a dozen minutes or so of undirected play, there were: (1) Pictures. (2) A ball. (3) Building blocks. (4) A story. (5) Building blocks.

Envy — emulation.

Helcia (increasingly insistent). "Nice isn't it, can you do it like that?"

She upsets the little house Nini has built.

"I'm going to build it myself."

Nini: "I'm going to build one for Kryisia."

(Whispering in Kryisia's ear.)

Kryisia turns round and upsets Helcia's house.

(Blank space.)

I have forgotten to mention that while building they were sitting on the floor. The struggle is over Kryisia, over that small but self-possessed, silent and serious person who surprises everybody if ever she takes a ball to play with. I hold my breath as I watch the dramatic developments. Helcia is clearly stung, the rancor is festering inside her, she is angry with Nini, and struggles to win Kryisia over, but she senses that it is all in vain; Kryisia is looking at Nini's construction. Vengeance. Helcia knocks over Nini's house. But even that Nini accepts with icy contempt: she is above such a thing as

starting a fight with a weaker opponent. She contents herself with making it only clear that Kryisia belongs to her. I left out a lot here! I am filling in the gaps from memory: after Helcia's provocative outburst, Kryisia moves slightly closer to Nini; her steady gaze meets Helcia's rebellious eyes, she turns to Nini. This takes but a tenth, perhaps even a hundredth of a second: Nini says what to do, Kryisia promptly "flattens" Helcia's construction with her hand. Helcia is silent: she feels guilty, and defenseless against Kryisia.

The blank space in my notes shows how moved I must have been just then by the whirlpool of emotions the situation evoked. What is lacking here -- that is known to man? I cannot recall an equally tense moment throughout my study of infants.

Helcia has got on terms with Nini again (how?)

I don't know, I don't remember. A number of interesting moments have slipped my memory. But I should not put much faith in notes where there are no "blank spaces," no frank confession that the note-taker cannot recall, has failed to notice or has forgotten.

Haneczka approaches Nini.

Jurek seats himself on Helcia's chair. Helcia stares *a long time* (I am waiting) — nothing happens! Haneczka takes a cube from Helcia's house. Helcia stares again for a long time.

"Please, Haneczka, don't take my blocks!"

Haneczka starts removing them one by one. Helcia hits her on the head with a block.

Grabbing the last block, she gives it to Jurek.

"Take it — take -- take it!"

Jurek (to me) "That girl hasn't anything to build with — nothing."

Myself: "What?" (in a thick and hoarse voice).

"She's taken everything away from her."

Helcia looks at Jurek (Jurek at her).

"She is good, that girl."

Haneczka counts out eight cubes. Jurek adds his one to make nine; Haneczka, at random—adds more.

"I've given them all back to her, Jurek, all of them, I've given." (My eyes are moist.)

Let me begin from that hoarse "what?" of mine—that single word that I managed to utter, alien both in spirit and sound to all that had taken place. The children had understood one another perfectly—as for me, I was feigning ignorance; my brain cells, my vocal cords, all of me including my past which involves so much—all that was a personification of baseness and falsehood in relation to that marvelous mystery of sounds, of allusive silvery tones. There is no place here for scientific reasoning, there is only mood, the rite of emotions, which science has no right even to touch. Yet reason I shall, though to my own detriment

Jurek has settled down on Helcia's chair by her table. Helcia looks at him. It cannot be that she is thinking—she is just feeling. She is regretting the long moments now past when she would sit by that table remote from the other children, watching them aloof. Gone—not to return. She has left her quiet little roost—with how much heartache—but she won't go back. Now Jurek has sat himself there, the same who pushed her over only a few days back. Helcia has forgiven him, she turns over her haven of rest, her solitary abode, to him. She yearns after that which will not come back.

They are grabbing the blocks from her, she pleads timidly because she knows life is cruel, and that she will not get through unscathed, and yet she does not want to run away. It is not the words that matter here but the calm and utterly sad voice, the expression on her face, the posture. No actress could plead so convincingly for help, indulgence and pity. How ingenious must be nature, to enable a three-year-old to personify entreaty so expressively. And the words? So straightforward: "Please, Haneczka, don't take my blocks."

Haneczka-- life knows nothing of compassion --grabs. Helcia hits her on the head with the last block left to her; she fears retaliation—note the dramatic force in her treble "take it" as she presses the last block into Jurek's hand! In the same way, a dying standard bearer passes the colors to the nearest man, that they may not fall into the hands of the enemy. Jurek, a passive witness of the scene, turns to me in a voice thick with emotion. He pleads for the girl deprived of her "all," wronged, while he himself, holding the last block, is at a loss. In turning to me, he communicates to Helcia his understanding, his support, he condemns Haneczka.

Haneczka understood. Hit on the head with a block, she only rubs the spot

gently—no thought of retaliation. A sense of guilt—she gives back, more than she took, and asks Jurek's pardon.

I thought it best to omit from my notes the movements and gestures (you try recording them); I take down only the words, wonderful in their simplicity, gathering force by repetition. Helcia said three times: "take it" when she handed the block to Jurek; twice he said that Helcia had nothing to build with, and Haneczka also repeated that she had returned the blocks. It seems to me that in highly dramatic situations, a writer or actor might achieve a more powerful effect by repetition than by a lengthy tirade. "Mother —Mother" —"I have no daughter, I have no daughter anymore."— "Not my fault, not mine"— that might sound quite moving. Mote children's repetitions in particular. They are certain to be very frequent.

This scene sparks off many thoughts in my mind:

(1) In the world of feeling, children are much richer, they think with their emotions.

(2) H it went against the grain with me merely to describe the scene, what good would have been any interference? "Haneczka you're a naughty girl to take what belongs to someone else—give it back; Helcia, fighting is not ladylike -- apologize."

(3) What a broad school of life for children is this kindergarten!

Helcia: "Can you build so?"

Nini: "We are not speaking to you."

Jurek wants to take one, Helcia pushes him aside, Jurek does not protest.

Helcia: "I'll give you" (the blocks).

Nini: "Nat necessary, not at all."

Haneczka: "I've built a beautiful palace"

Helcia: "Ugly— it's ugly."

(Blank space.)

Helcia: "Can you build like that?"

No answer.

(?) You're not wanted.

Helcia (to me): "Did I build it well?"

Myself: "Yes, very well."

Wide: "Can you do it?"

Myself: Yes, I can."

Only now — thrust out and humbled — she notices me, turns to me, Poor mite!

Haneczka in part feels respect for Nini, in part is tired of her loquacity.

Helcia is trying to mend the hall.

"You see how it's done?"

Helcia (to Jurek): "Give me that box."

Jurek—makes a defensive gesture.

She strokes his face. He won't give it — he takes off. Helcia grabs it, thieflike, runs away, sits near me.

(Blank space.)

Helcia: "Can you build like that?"

Jurek: "No-bz-wzz-wzz-wzz-biz"

At last -- but in what a warped way—it would not have been surprising if she had sighed.

These are the notes of a weary man. I don't give up making the notes because they are invaluable, but I'm tired, dead tired, I'm making a mess of it. I provide the final scene with a commentary because I cannot trust my memory any more: Helcia, so anxious to hear someone say that she could do what others could not, at last managed it. Jurek could not, but admitted grudgingly; hence his "bz-wzz-wzz" — the matter not worth discussion, let's change the subject. Helcia had previously done the same,

Teacher: "There are squares..."

Helcia (to Nini): "What are squares?"

Helcia asks Nini, not me.

A prayer: Haneczka and Krysia join in. Helcia is downcast— after the prayer, she declares to Jurek:

"That's my place, mine."

Jurek gets up and moves to his seat.

After the routine marching to music, Haneczka drives Jurek out of his seat, he timidly moves on to another.

Helcia at her desk she bumps against it with her legs—shifts the desk about noisily —bangs on it with her hand.

(Blank space.)

Helcia has the blocks—she takes one out—taps the table with it — lethargically - her head against her hand.

She begins to build — a gate copied from Haneczka's castle—she tries, it doesn't work; the triangle falls away from the base, three or four times. Helcia returns the blocks to the box.

The blank space is evidence of my shortcoming. My attention was distracted for just an instant I left her disturbed, alone. I find her depressed and unhappy—but a box with the blocks is now lying on her desk. When did she manage to take them out of the chest -- how? I have no idea. Weary, I missed it.

I am reading back what I have written, It is poor stuff. I know what it is all about but the reader won't grasp it without carefully rereading it several times. Few will bother. One must write easily—one must communicate. For the second day's observations, I'll use a different method. First, the notes taken down will be put in order, then the course of events will be processed into a coherent narrative, and finally. — commentary.

For students of teachers' training colleges this is the plan:

(1) Characterization of the child under observation.

(2) Conditions of observation:

(a) the site and its layout;

(b) concerning the student: how does he know the child, what does he know about him? What has he overheard, noticed or registered prior to the observation;

(c) own mental state — is the observation voluntarily and deliberately undertaken, or by chance; is he fit, in a good mood, etc.

(3) Raw notes with the addition: "blank space" (break in observations). A question mark in brackets denotes a place where the student finds the note illegible. Important: telegraphese should be preserved.

(4) The course of events in concise form.

(5) A commentary to the notes.

(6) Personal experiences and reflections.

It seems to me that throughout I have half consciously had this scheme in its main outlines in my mind. It is something in the nature of a report on a play or a composition on a well-known drama. The lack of clarity in my work arises because when reading a composition on a play by Shakespeare or Sophocles, I do know Hamlet or Antigone. Here the reader knows neither the leading lady — Helcia - nor the actual play. The form in which I have presented the first day's observations is purely with a view to giving an example of unsatisfactory work, such as it should not be. I am far from certain that the second day will be any better. •

(MB. It is a pity that I cannot process the notes on the precise day of observation but only four days later: observations made on Tuesday are elaborated on Saturday.)

Second day of observations Notes:

Helcia has not so much as looked at her desk.

Kryisia is playing with Mania.

Helcia addresses Stasia —nothing.

Helcia addresses Jane's — a longer time.

Helcia yawns.

Helcia with Wika:

"I'm eight."

"Wladek is eight, too."

Wika goes to check it, Helcia is not sure.

"Wladek, how old are you?"

Wladek: "Seven and a half."

Kryisia by the older children's desk. Helcia watches her. The prayer — marching.

Helcia (shouting, challengingly): "Oh, an apron—mummy told me to wear an apron." (She runs, and turns over a bench.) Loudly to the teacher:

"It's got turned over."

To me:

"The sleeves got turned inside out."

She is ugly.

A moment later -- she's pretty; unself-conscious, she struggles to button up the apron at the back.

"Please, help me."

When I make a move toward her:

"No, I'll manage by myself."

She comes up — a finger in the buttonhole.

"Please, button it up."

I advance my hand, she withdraws — tries hard again. (It's the final effort—the same with adults — perhaps after all, at the very last moment — the last hope.)

(Blank space.)

I button it up: "Try to undo it, that's easier."

She does not want to — moves to the table with the letters — to Krysia.

She learns to respect real service.

Helcia, letters—dreams of power -- I'm by the table, she turns to Miss N.

She fiddles with the letters — Is that right?"

"No!"

(How utterly the flattery of adults demoralizes children.) To me: "That's the way to put it together, isn't it?"

"But look, Please."

"No."

She rearranges one letter.

"Please, look" (to Miss N), "Is that right?"

"No."

She won't be shown to do it.

I shoot an insult at her: "You're still too small" (she annoys me).

She goes away -- shows Miss N. a broken table, a doll: "Is she badly dressed?"

She itemizes all the doll is wearing.

"And I've got something in my pocket. What is it?"

"I don't know, how should I— and you, do you know what I've got?"

"Yes, I do" (she peeps in).

Back to the letters:

"Please, look" (to Miss N.), "is that right?"

"No."

(Struggling — she won't give up)

Miss N. shows her how to do it—she doesn't look; she wants to charm, to rule, not to work.

She asks me: "And now?"

Back to the broken table, points it out to Janek. A talk with Miss N.

A picture book — she turns over its pages, humming Punch, one of the Kindergarten songs.

"Can you draw a cat?" (to the teacher) "I can."

(At home, she can do whatever the grownups cannot)

She talks to Tadzio, tries to prevent him from doing something. She is bored.

"Take the blocks, and make houses, like Haneczka." "Like Krysia-a-a?"

"No, like Haneczka."

"I don't want to. It's easy. And you, can you make an apron?"

"No."

"And I can."

"You can't even button it up."

"Yes, I can."

"No, you can't."

"Yes, I can" (she is irritated). "Can you draw a little cart?"

"No."

"And I can. And a cat?"

"Yes."

I give her a pencil and paper: —"Come on, draw." "I can draw a pencil."

She is drawing a duck (as a three-year-old would). Coolly, without enthusiasm, I admit that it's not bad.

"Can you draw?"

"Yes."

She looks at me with surprise, starts drawing. "Well, what this time?"

"I don't know."

"Now what has all those legs?"

"I draw a duck."

"Please give me some paper, I'll draw a little bowl." "Draw on the same piece of paper."

"No"— but she starts drawing.

Not a bowl--a girl with a basket.

"You were supposed to draw a bowl."

"Is a bowl nice?"

"Ask Krysia."

A talk between Helcia and Krysia—very short. "What did Krysia say?"

"Is that basket good?"

"Poor."

I draw one: "Which is better, yours or mine?" With her finger: "That one" (points at mine). I feel sorry for her:

1. Praise.
2. Dislike, anger.
3. Commiseration,

I ally myself with Helcia against Krysia. Helcia is admired, Krysia is lauded. Krysia tries to keep in front during the marching. Helcia wants to force things to come to her. Krysia waits for them to come to her.

Krysia:

1. Inactive, spend no energy.
2. Quiet— can steal into anywhere, and easily grasp what others are best at— simply by patient watching.
3. They win without struggle— by a sudden outburst, by a single attack.

So I want to help Helcia; to teach her.

"Give me the chalk."

She doesn't know where it is, but Krysia does — and brings it. I draw a little house on the blackboard. Helcia is trying, too— no good. So she adds some windows to my house. Lala comes by.

Helcia: "Look, pretty, isn't it?"

Lala: "You draw nicely."

Helcia: "Oh, the windows, look."

Helcia realizes that there has been some misunderstanding—she is embarrassed.

She draws trees, she doesn't want to use the wiper on the blackboard, prefers bits of paper. She wipes it with her hand, looks at me with a challenging smile.

Helcia: "Please, draw something."

I draw a man— she adds the fingers, gives the finishing touch.

She asks for another drawing. I have drawn a bird. Helcia: "That's a bird or lark" (She waits for applause for having used a new word.)

I've left Helcia for a moment to go to Krysia who is pasting. Helcia soon comes up--tried to pull me away (jealous). She loses her piece of chalk, searches long for it, finds it.

The piece of chalk has fallen and is broken. She looks surprised, tries one of the pieces, she deliberately throws it on the floor and keenly watches what happens (experimenting). She asks me to draw something else. I draw a

flower. She touches it up.

"What's that?"

"My spectacles."

"What for?"

"To see better."

"And that what's that far?"

"To join the lenses."

"And nails?"

"Nails would hurt."

I take off my glasses to show her. She smears chalk on me.

"You'll make me dirty, Helcia."

"Is it a new suit?"

"No, it's old."

"I've got a new one. Zosia made it for me."

"Who's Zosia?"

"A man with a head, forehead ..."

"Why a moustache on the face?"

"Daddy shaves. I can't, I've no money to buy things." She advises me to make money out of gold or paper. I cut some out of paper, as she says. There remains a piece with two holes in it. She puts it over her face, to scare me. (She's waiting for; "Oh, I'm afraid, oh, I'm going to hide!") I do nothing.

"Is it frightening?"

"No."

I give her a mirror to see whether it is frightening. I ask Krysia whether it is.

"No."

She draws something on the mask to make it more terrifying.

"Now, is it frightening?"

"No"

She makes a face.

"And now?"

I: "Has something like that frightened someone before?" She doesn't answer, puts the mask over my face, then tries it on Kryisia.

Breakfast.

Helcia (in a loud voice): already know where my bottle (milk) is."

(N. B. Kryisia says "t" for "k" - this defect in speech may make her taciturn, unsociable. Educational hygiene should bear such things in mind and eliminate them.)

(It wasn't Helcia that I observed for two days but the laws of nature and man.)

There are only two tiny tots in the Kindergarten: Helcia and Kryisia. The rule says: "you two should play together" — under pressure they would do so, left alone they are attracted rather to older children — among whom they may find more than mere amusement. Mania is particularly keen on talking to the little ones and looking after them; Kryisia has noticed this, and Mania must have been attracted in some way to a taciturn, calm and serious person like Kryisia. Helcia is still feeling for someone. She approaches Stasia but finds her a bad choice; then along comes Janek — he's alright: he has been in the Kindergarten only a week, has not yet "settled down," feels uneasy, knows hardly anyone; this makes up for the difference in age—they talk. But Helcia is impatient. She tries to make friends with Wika clumsily: she has spoken of her brother's age, but not sure whether she is right (eight years), feels ill at ease. Helcia's fear of appearing ridiculous fetters and checks all her forthright feelings, her every action. That is why she takes no part in the prayer, in the marching and gymnastics. She suffers but is afraid — she can't force herself to do these things. When the children march to the piano music, she tries to draw attention to herself by speaking unduly loudly about the apron ... and she turned over the bench: she announces the fact in a surprised voice and with a forced smile, and, having promptly changed the subject, tells me that her sleeves have gotten turned inside out. She straightens them and puts on the apron: she can't button it up. I offer my help — - she turns it down. She thinks the buttonhole is too narrow. Then she asks spontaneously for my help, but withdraws at the

very last moment and makes another attempt. Asking for the second time, she still holds on to the button, she still strives. This is a most frequent occurrence and not among small children only—also among older ones and adults. While still a student I worked in a hospital, and on one occasion I witnessed the following scene: H., a fellow student, was trying to extract a patient's tooth—he couldn't manage. Finally, he summoned the doctor who immediately came up. But the student instead of handing over the forceps to him, had another go and broke the tooth.

The interchangeable letters of the alphabet are placed in a partitioned box, much like types in a printer's case. They are taken out of the box in the morning and children unfamiliar with letters arrange them like with like. Krysia can do it but Helcia tries to bluff instead of doing the work. I can guess why: at home she scribbles on paper and declares that she has written something, and since the adults confirm it, she believes it to be true. If a three-year-old child is led to believe that it is easy to read (indistinct muttering), draw and write, it is not surprising that she should be unwilling to make a real effort when she is six. Helcia insists angrily that others agree she has put the letters together in the right way; she does not want to be instructed and helped. She wants to do it all by herself I One can easily divine from her incessant questioning of her ciders and other children. "Can you do it?" — that at home, the adults pretend that they can't do what she can do. How often and in how many forms, we observe that. A three-year-old jumps down a step: "I've done it." A jolly uncle pretends that he can't or is afraid to do it, slips, and plays the fool; the child laughs, pushes him, gets all worked up in the spiteful and vicious game, in the taunting and pretending. A three-year-old has scrawled something on a strip of paper: "That's horse." His uncle registers surprise: what a fine horse, he couldn't draw one like that; he tries, takes the pencil by the wrong end, then lets it fall to the floor. The child tries to explain, grows impatient and sometimes even violent. Had the jolly uncle known that one child laughs in excitement because he knows in advance that the game is going to end with swinging up, hugging and kissing, and another gets angry and impatient for precisely the same reason; had he noticed that the sparkling gaiety and unchecked laughter of the former and the half astonished and half angry gaze of the latter have in them something of the depravity of a private room in a restaurant, and of the atmosphere of the bedroom, he would probably be more careful in the future. If the same sort of game is played by nannies, maybe they have acquired it from those jolly uncles

because obviously they did not pick it up in the village they come from, in the peasant's hut; for, as far as I have been able to observe, the attitude to children there is serious and dignified.

My anger expressed in the insult flung at Helcia: "You'd better leave it, you're too small," was most likely addressed to the jolly uncles (and aunties) who cannot help semiconsciously or unconsciously seeing in a lovely two-year-old the adorable person, he or she will one day become. That is how the contagion enters the nursery, how it warps the minds of infants who later on, in kindergartens, straighten out in torment their deformed spirits but at the same time lose confidence in the grownups and their feeling of attachment to the home.

"No," I say, "it isn't." "But I know," "I can do it" —all that comes also from the jolly uncle repertory. The uncle says: Well I'm going to buy you from Mummy." "You have such unattractive eyes" — indeed his inventiveness is colossal! The child says: "Mo — it's not true — it isn't — Mummy, say it isn't." This is called teasing. Some children hate it, and some like that kind of joking in which anger, aversion and fear arouse strong sensations.

Helcia has announced her intention to draw a little bowl, but she understands that there is no trace of resemblance to a bowl in what she has done; so let it be a girl with a basket—the grownups are so simple that they will believe anything. Twice she changed the subject in a conversation when she found it inconvenient. She honestly admits that the basket drawn by me is better than hers, but when Lala takes the house drawn on the blackboard for her work, Helcia has not enough courage to clear up the misunderstanding.

The episode with the piece of chalk is interesting. She did not expect the chalk to break when it fell. When a glass falls it becomes useless, a broken pencil too. The piece of chalk has broken in two. Helcia cautiously tries it: well, it works just as well as before. She drops it once more, what will happen? Now she knows—and she will know it as long as she lives. A few days back, Brzydula dipped a piece of chalk in water and tried to write. Each of us has gone through the stage of asking himself what happened to the sugar put in a cup of tea; if he was told that it "dissolves," this amounted to an incomprehensible word added to an incomprehensible phenomenon. It was first cleared up by experimenting with sugar or salt. I remember how myself I used to keep salty water in the sun in order to find out whether dry salt would show in the bottle again; but I never did find it—and the

solution of the problem remained in the air. A child likes to stir sugar in the tea himself, but the mother does not like it because the usual result is that the cup is upset.

The conversation about spectacles. These are not merely pieces of glass through which one can see better but also pieces of metal what for? If the pieces of glass don't hold together, they can be secured with nails. I answered that it could not be done but I showed no sign of amusement. Securing the tense through which one can see better, has been variously solved: the monocle, binoculars, spectacles (lorgnette); it is not so simple as it now seems to realize that thin lengths of wire can be attached to the hinge. That three-year-old Helcia should not know that it took the collective effort of specialists many centuries to devise— is no subject for laughter. But the fact that I, a man of forty, have grasped this for the first time following Helcia's question—that is compromising. By jeering at a child for not knowing, you kill the desire to learn, to know. Who will admit that he has not read Faustus or seen a Rubens, or heard of Pestalozzi? So we read books haphazardly and look around us haphazardly and know everything — haphazardly; civilization is made by individuals, and politics by cliques, while the rest — simply led by the nose—accept their fate, ashamed to admit that they do not know what it's all about, and are laughed at. Whoever laughs at a three-year-old child because she wants to fix the lenses to the eyes with nails—he is a traitor, perverted.

Helcia does not know how glasses stay on the nose but she has a new frock. Well, that finally gives us common ground.

A chat about money—gold and paper—some scraps of recent conversations incidently overheard. I have cut, following Helcia's instructions, two holes (the money) in a sheet of paper. To Helcia the piece of paper resembles the mask which a kind uncle has used to scare children. Involved in a conversation on the subject of finances, she is anxious to extricate herself so as not to reveal her ignorance. She puts on the "mask" and tries to scare me and Krysia. It doesn't work. Probably the mask is not terrifying enough —so she makes a face. It does not help.

Helcia, it seems to me, is beginning to understand that at home they just make fun of her, play, pretend, and fib; that things are far from what she has thought they were. She is at the same time afraid of and attracted to the new life which involves effort and struggle, where genuine value and merit count more than personal charm, where one finds more indifference

than smiles, where there is more trickery than helpful hands. Home does not help, but hinders her.

This has not come out as I wanted it. I intended to provide a teachers' training college student with a formula for his record of observations and commentary. In fact I have produced a formula for myself, a formula for passing from a minor detail observed a child's question—to diversified and general problems. This exemplifies the extent to which frameworks, plans and directives obstruct independent thinking.

IV. Stefan

It has always seemed to me that a major difficulty in the rational upbringing of a single child is the thought, ever present though not always realized, that "the game is not worth the candle." Being an educator of many scores of children, I have an enhanced sense of responsibility, every word of mine enters a hundred minds, every step is watched by a hundred pairs of vigilant eyes; if I am successful in rousing them, convincing them, stirring them to action, then my zeal, faith and act is multiplied by a hundred; invariably, even when almost all have failed me, there is always one child, perhaps two, who will give proof, if not today then tomorrow, that he has understood, reacted and goes along with me. Educating a hundred, I do not know the meaning of loneliness, I never fear utter defeat. If I were to offer the hours, days and months of my life to one child—what would that amount to? At the expense of that one life - - mine I should build only one life, too. My every renunciation would nourish only one I find it easier to overcome disinclination, weariness and dejection, and I can begin to tell a story when I know I am to be listened to by a hundred.

Whenever I have come across a schoolmistress who had given up a group for one or two children, preferred private work to a kindergarten or a boarding school, I have thought that she had no liking for her profession, that what interested her was money, better conditions, less work.

I spent two weeks with Stefan, a boy of eleven—and I found that observing one child provides material as ample, a sum total of harassments and satisfactions as great as the observation of a large number. One sees in a single child much more, one feels it more subtly, considers every fact more thoroughly,

A weary educator of a group, it seems to me, has the right, perhaps even the duty, to apply that kind of "crop rotation" in his work: to withdraw from the crowd, to be a recluse for a while, and then to go back to work with the crowd. To the best of my knowledge it has not been so up to now — there have been specialists on individual teaching and on general teaching and upbringing.

I took the notes in diary form—and I have left them as they were. They may prove of some value as a document in spite of the unusual time, place and conditions.

M. B. I was in charge of a field hospital then. During one of the lulls in hostilities, I took a boy from an institution for destitute children; he wanted to learn a craft, and there was a carpentry shop in the hospital. I spent only two weeks with him; I fell sick and had to leave, and the boy still stayed on for some time; then the battle front began to move — my orderly sent him back to the institution.

Thursday, March 8th, 1917

He's been four days with me. I intended to start taking notes from the very first day. That's how it is with notes— whenever a lot of writing has piled up, there is no time for it. This is discouraging to many people. I regret it, for a number of characteristic feelings have been lost. I've already gotten used to his presence.

His name is Stefan. His mother died when he was seven — he doesn't remember her name. His father is either somewhere at the front or in a POW camp, or has been killed in action. He has a brother of seventeen who lives at Tarnopol. He used to live with him, then he stayed with soldiers for a time, and for the past six months—in the institution. Institutions for the destitute have been set up by municipal authorities and they are run by individuals picked at random. The government chops and changes, now allowing, now banning school instruction. They are in fact not boarding schools but dustbins into which children are cast as refuse of war, the waste products of the dysentery, typhoid fever or cholera that has liquidated their parents— or rather the mothers, the fathers are fighting for a new arrangement of the world. War—it is not a crime, it is a triumphant procession, an orgy of devils intoxicated with a malign elation.

As soon as I had asked him whether he would like to come along with me, I regretted it.

"Not today. I'll come to fetch you on Monday. Ask your brother about it tomorrow. Discuss it, think it over."

We are on our way. What is he thinking about? The moon— snow. He is looking keenly round: the church, the railway station, the carriages and trucks, the bridge. An ordinary face. He is supposed to be keen on work—the hospital has a carpentry shop I'll turn him over to Duduk as an apprentice.

An examination: He has not forgotten how to read. An arithmetic problem.

"At present, how old are you?"

I feel, he doesn't understand what I mean by "at present."

"At present? That sounds like giving something to someone."

I don't correct myself.

He got 50 copecks from his brother, bought some jam cakes, and candies, and on arrival had cold sausage — Płasek's speciality -- a tummy ache in the evening. A pain in the region of the appendix. That's bad; I wanted him to have meals from the soldier's pot until it was settled whether he would stay for good. I planned a strict daily routine for him to start at once. Walenty sighs deeply.

"What did you do it for?"

Stefan has an innate sense of order: on finishing the lesson, he puts the books neatly together on the table, pen by the inkpot. He has hung up his towel; the ends were uneven so he promptly straightened them out.

Why did he spend the whole 50 copecks only on sweets?

"Well, why should I keep money?"

That's not his idea; he got it from someone he looks up to: Nazarek or Klimowicz (Klim can draw well).

"Your father will come back — I'll tell him about you."

"If he comes back, O.K., and if he doesn't — that's O.K., too."

He must also have heard that somewhere. I might have talked a lot of rubbish about it: "How can you say such things ... about your father ..." and so on. He is now preoccupied with other things.

"What are those straps for, by the looking glass?" "This one is for soap, that one for the comb, and the other for toothbrushes."

That cigarette case, was the leather cracked when it was new?"

"Yes, that's an imitation crocodile skin!"

Note for teachers. When you arrive at the house where you are to work as tutor, have the children in your room when you unpack, let them help you with the luggage, take out and arrange your small possessions. This cannot fail to start up a talk about watch, penknife or dressing case. It will quickly, and in a natural way, bring you closer to the child. That is just how a child strikes up acquaintance with his peers. Here is a point worth further consideration: how often do adults get to know one another through children, as a result of talking about children (in a park or in the country in summer). Boys get acquainted through the intermediary of a ball, girls through dolls. If you say, it's not polite to touch everything or ask about everything, they are bewildered and begin to dislike you. They may be told in a month or more not to do this or that in relation to someone else, not to yourself. You are friends.

"What did that cigarette case cost?"

"Two or three rubles, I suppose, I don't know, well, I don't remember, I've had it for such a long time. See, the catch is out of order, it won't shut properly."

"Couldn't it be mended?"

"Of course, it could but it suits me as it is, the cigarettes don't fall out anyway."

I have not so far been instructing but simply watching him and trying to refrain from any remarks so as not to put him off. And yet, I simply had to caution him twice during the past four days.

The first time: the assistant surgeon came in during my lesson with Stefan. It was just duty day in the hospital: some new patients were brought in.

"They bother you all day" — he said irritated in a raised voice.

Both the sound of his voice and the expression on his face showed that the words were not his own. Either Miss Lonia or the cook in the institution must have talked like that.

"You mustn't say such things" —I reproved him gently after the assistant surgeon had left.

"Well, I'm reading and he just butts in."

He can't grasp the fact that there are two hundred and seventeen sick and casualties in the hospital.

"So being the house surgeon on duty you must take care of all of them."

"Certainly not—only the new arrivals, so that a patient with a contagious disease won't get put next to the ordinary sick."

"Is it true that you can catch measles from others? When I had measles, I was choking, I couldn't speak, father gave me paraffin to drink, and it made me feel better. My dad would never go to a doctor, he knew himself how to cure people."

"Your dad was a clever man, I'm sure of that" — I said.

"Sure, he was clever"—he nods his head decidedly.

There is a question on the tip of my tongue and I can hardly refrain from asking him what he meant by saying if his father did not come back, that would be O.K., too. No, it is still too early for that. The second reproof: "Listen Stefan, when you address Mr. Walenty, don't call him 'Walenty,' say 'Mr. Walenty.' "

"I do say 'Mr. Walenty.'"

An echo from the institution: the art of wriggling, My fault—now when I speak with Stefan, I always say 'Mr. Walenty.'

This is important, especially in a boarding school for orphans. The porter, the charwoman, or the washerwomen resent it when children don't give them a handle to their names. When speaking with children, one should always say: "Mr. Wojciech," "Miss Rozia," "Mrs. Skorupska."

I confirm the truth of something I have said before about boarding schools: sickness in the family draws the child nearer. There is something about such times that parents and children alike refer to with warmth, or at least remember well. In a boarding school sickness means extra trouble and is frequently a source of estrangement.

What a lot of trouble I had to make it possible for him to write in bed. I had to empty a large box of its contents, place the inkpot in an old can which

Walenty had made into an ashtray for me. A pillow had to be put under the box on one side, and some books under the other. He thanked me with a smile. A boarding school could not afford such luxury.

"Are you comfortable?"

"Yes" — and a smile.

He spread all his things on this improvised table: books on one side, the pencil in a crack between the boards of the box—that sense of order is integral to him. A new situation, no precedents to follow—he acts on his own.

Now he sits, copying a little verse from the primer. He mutters to himself.

"White — white — white ..."

And he ends with an evident mental effort:

"A white ro ... a white robe."

A deep sigh.

"A white robe I will give her a white robe for her way.

But despite the effort he has made has written "wite."

"You see, instead of 'white,' you've An embarrassed smile.

"I'll write it again."

"You'd better leave it now, it's later."

"No, now."

Silence again, broken only by his tense muttering. He frowns at the mistakes pointed out to him in the second attempt. I ignored some mistakes in the first one, just to encourage him; this time — no. The day before yesterday, he read a text very badly in the evening, he' could not tell why.

"It's because you are hungry" - I remarked then.

I wonder whether he remembers that remark of mine. "What do you think, why has it come out worse than before?"

"'Cause if once you get it wrong, it gets even worse later."

And with exasperation:

"I'll do it once more."

He has blushed and clenched his hands, I kiss him on the head—fatuous gesture, he moves away slightly.

"Orp-orphan as poor as she ..."

Walenty comes in with the tea just at a critical point where he had previously left out a whole line. For her way — I will give her for her way— for her way I will give her."

"The knife's been found" — Walenty announces.

Stefan looks up: knife—what knife? — his chin is on the palm of his hand — in a moment he will fire the question, no, he has resisted the temptation he is self-possessed again. Walenty smiles, I am making notes, as rapidly as I can; an interesting moment--the boy has not noticed anything. In a few moments, he announces in a voice of triumph mingled with hope:

"I've done it" - and a smile.

"It is alright but you've missed one letter; do you know which one?"

He is drinking tea, frowning — looking for the missing letter.

A pity I didn't keep an eye on my watch how long the writing took him.

The watch—the watch—how many times I told myself about it — I always forget.

Two thoughts: during many months spent with a crowd of children, not once did I take notice of a smile — it was too subtle a signal, too small, below the threshold of consciousness. Only now I can see that it is an important signal, certainly deserving study.

When he asked with seeming casualness: "Could I go for a ride on the horse?" - - This also with a disarming smile.

I wriggled out of it by saying:

"It's slippery now, the horses are not suitably shod — perhaps in summer."

Children must realize that to smile is obligatory. The second thought.
Copying is not an unthinking action for a child-on the contrary, it calls for a great effort: to be careful not to miss a letter, a word or a whole line; not to repeat the same word; not to make a spelling mistake, to manage

to write a word without having to carry it over to the next line; to write the letters neatly and regularly spaced. Perhaps it is precisely through copying that a child comes to a full understanding of the text he reads? Naturally, creative minds will tire sooner of passive work like copying. Stefan, when writing, recalled a painter copying a masterpiece. A schoolmaster when going over the scrawl of some forty copybooks must feel miserable, indeed, unless he has actually seen, so that he can appreciate, the collective effort put into that work.

Reading involves for a child not only the difficult task of putting letters together but also a number of incomprehensible words: grammatical surprises. So he reads like that:

"Ap-app-les, app-l-les" (a pause during which he gets the meaning of the word) — and then promptly and fluently he reads the word "apples."

The same goes for a few lines of poetry:

"It-was-the-larks-that-taught-me a Po-lish mel-ody melo-dy (incredulous), melo-dy, melody" (muttering to himself) "what's a melo-dy" (and aloud) — "it was the larks that taught a Polish melody."

We fluent reading acrobats who from two letters can guess the word, and from two words can make out the whole sentence—we can't visualize the difficulties a child has to cope with nor the artifices he uses to make things easier for himself.

The other day, reading a story, he said "Franek" instead of "Felek" four times. I didn't correct him. When he finished reading, I asked him:

"What was that boy's name?"

"Franek."

"Perhaps it will be tomorrow, but not today." "Franck, I'm sure"

"And I'll bet you it's not Franek."

He takes the book:

"Fra-Fre-Felek."

"You see, just as well you didn't take the bet, isn't

"Sure."

You know someone named Franek?"

"Sure, I do."

And Felek?"

"Don't know one."

The same thing happened in arithmetic. Instead of "peaches" he said "pears" twice.

"Five pears," he announced the result.

Mot on your life!"

"And I say it is five."

"Five, but not pears."

"What, then?"

"Sec for yourself."

"Pea pear ... peaches."

"Mow you know. Perhaps you are a wizard or something—you can turn Felek into Franek and peaches into pears?"

He was so disarming in his surprise, in his exclamations -- what's come over me, how could I do such a thing? — that I couldn't help taking him in my arms and kissing him. (Absolutely unnecessary—am I never going to get out of that habit?)

He gets annoyed at any expression he can't understand. He is reading:

"A peddleress has nine apples. H four boys take two apples each, how many apples will she have left?" He mutters to himself:

Some for each, or something." (And aloud): "One apple."

"Two coins... Coins, I know that, but I've forgotten."

This statement seemingly illogical, is founded, all the same, on a sensible premise; if he does not know because he has forgotten, he may still be able to recall.

When we had gotten as far as having solved about twenty problems in arithmetic he suggested:

"I'll read it to myself first, and then I'll write what it comes to."

"Alright, and I'll nod my head if you get it right."

He is by no means the first to make such a suggestion. I haven't yet discovered

whether in this way a child seeks to break the monotony of the work or whether the reason goes deeper than that: the necessity of silence for a concentrated effort.

Evening

He said his prayers, pecked a kiss on my hand (harking back to home, of the family broken up by war—one of a hundred, a thousand, many thousands). I am writing. He lies quietly --his eyes wide open.

"Tell me, please, is it true that if you shave, hair won't grow again?"

He is afraid to make a direct reference to my bald head, so as not to offend me.

"It's not true, one shaves the chin and hair still grows."

"Some soldiers have beards reaching right down to their waist—like the Jews. Why?"

"It's a custom. On the contrary, Englishmen are clean shaven, even no moustaches."

"Is it true that there are a lot of Jews among Germans?"

"There are some among the Germans, there are Russian Jews and there are Jews who are Poles."

"You say 'Jewish Poles.' Are the Poles Jews?"

"No, the Poles are Catholics. But if anyone speaks Polish, desires the well-being of the Polish people, wishes them well, then he is also a Pole."

"My mum was Ruthenian and dad was Polish. And boys take after the father. Do you know where a place called Podgajce is? My dad comes from there."

"How old is your dad?"

"He was forty-two, and now he's forty-five."

"So now your father wouldn't know you, you've grown since."

"I don't even know if I would know my dad." "Haven't you a photograph?"

"Where could I get one from? And there are lots of soldiers very much like my dad."

Silence. The evening. An important part of the day for a child. Most often — reminiscences, frequently— quiet reflections and soft-whispered conversations. It's just like in the Orphanage or at summer camps.

"Are you writing a book?"

"Yes."

"Did you write my primer yourself?"

"Mo."

"You bought it then, did you?"

"Yes."

You must have paid half a rouble for it?" "Mo, only twenty-five copecks."

Silence again. I light a cigarette.

"Is it true that you can get poisoned with sulfur?" "Yes, you can, why do you ask?"

I don't understand what is behind the question. "'Cause they had matches, and when they were going on maneuvers..."

A reminiscence of some vaguely remembered story told by his father concerning the superiority of some sorts of matches -- something heard a long time back: when his father was still a bachelor and served in the army—there was some sulfur in the soup and the men were poisoned.

I didn't get the point. Stefan speaks dreamily, fades away — he has dropped off to sleep.

how anxious I was as a child to see my guardian angel. I pretended to be asleep and then would open my eyes suddenly. No wonder he was hiding. It was just the same in Saski Park: you were sure there was no guardian anywhere near, but as soon as you ran after your ball over the grass there he was, cautioning you from afar. I grieved over the fact that my angel was also called guardian.

Fifth day

Duduk praises Stefan: he is hard working. When I came to the workshop he was just sawing at a plank. It was painful to see: the board was jumping all over the place, the blunt saw was getting no grip — he might easily injure his fingers. But I kept quiet. It would have been a mistake to tell him to be careful. All the time he hears:

"Don't go out barefoot." "Don't drink unboiled water." "Aren't you cold,

sure you haven't got a tummy ache?"

Precisely such things make "our" children self-centered and spoiled and stupefy them.

He returned from the workshop at six.

He does not want to go to Tarnopol on Sunday.

"What for? It's only a week, we must go there again? Is Mr. Walenty coming? How long shall we stay there?"

He did not want to write a letter to his brother. "I'll be seeing him anyway."

"And if he is not at home?"

"Well, let it be so."

"Well, and how would you start a letter?" "Praise the Lord."

"And then?"

"I don't know."

"Perhaps you should tell him that you were ill?" "Mo!"

I could hardly swallow back a sarcastic question: "How about telling him about the jam, cakes and sausage." Result -- a brief note: "I work in a carpenter's workshop, I like the work, the master teaches me how to write and do sums, you need not worry about me."

"How will you sign it?"

"Stefan Zagrodnik."

"Perhaps you should add: 'lots of kisses'?" No need for that?

"Why?"

He whispers:

"B'cause I feel shy."

I suggested:

"Would you like now to make your own neat copy or shall I write it out for you on a piece of paper for you to copy."

I handed him a sheet of note paper and an envelope. He tried twice—it didn't come out. A lot of paper spoiled. Alright, tomorrow he will copy it from my draft.

We have been doing arithmetic problems for an hour and a half without a break.

"Had enough?"

"Mo. Let's get to the bottom of the page."

Who knows whether a collection of arithmetic problems is not the best textbook to practice reading. Problems, puzzles, crossword puzzles or joke questions— the child not only must but also wants to understand. I am not sure: perhaps any splitting of attention is undesirable. Suffice it that during today's lesson, arithmetic problems have ousted and replaced reading.

"How many cigarettes do you smoke, must be fifty?"

"Mo, twenty."

"Smoking isn't good for you; a boy I know blew on a piece of paper, and it turned all yellow. H the cigarette has cotton at the end, that stops the smoke."

"Have you ever smoked?"

"Of course."

"In the institution?"

"Mo, when I was with my brother."

"Where did you get the cigarettes from?"

"They used to lie on the table or in the cupboard... Does it make you feel dizzy?"

"Certainly, I feel just a bit dizzy"

"It made me dizzy ... I don't want to get used to smoking."

A pause.

"You weren't kidding when you said, we would go riding when it gets warm?" (Tie's keen on it—he remembers the promise.)

"It would be better for us not to move about, to stay put."

"Oh, no, I thought of going to Tarnopol."

"Horses get scared of motorcars."

"So what, if they get a bit excited...?"

"And if your horse jumps the ditch?"

I told him a story about a horse which nearly rolled down a high hill near Lomza.

He gets into bed. I'm winding my watch.

"Is it true that there are watches that can be wound both ways?"

I show him that my watch, too, can be wound "both ways."

I start writing — putting my notes in order. "You know, I put a new pen in the penholder because the old one tore the paper."

"It got spoiled quickly because you had been writing with the pen right over the table; the point gets blunt on wood."

Too late, incidently, I realized the folly of my remark; I have observed many a time that remarks like that have more in them than meets the eye.

Silence.

"Why did you tear up so many sheets of paper?" I explain to him about jotting down notes quickly on the spot and about processing them.

For instance, I put down something about a patient: cough, high temperature... And then in spare time, I rewrite it properly.

"Mum used to cough, spit blood—the doctor came — he said nothing could be done. Mum went to the hospital until she died. (A sigh, then a yawn. The sigh is camouflage, usual when referring to the dead.)

Sixth day

As soon as he had finished his morning tea, he ran out to the workshop. He put in only a brief appearance at lunch time—came back at six.

I have started a most interesting experiment: I keep my eye on the watch to see how long it takes him to read a piece aloud and I record how many mistakes he has made; I don't correct him while he is reading — afterward. He has read the piece twice, the first time it took him four minutes thirty-five seconds with eight mistakes, the second time—three minutes fifty-five seconds with only six mistakes.

There was trouble over the horse. We were playing checkers. In the institution — boys who were good players would not play with him. "Who would want to play with me when I'm no good?" All the same, he has acquired the mannerisms of an experienced player: before making a move, his fingers soar above the board to drop like a hawk on the opponent's pieces, then he makes sounds with his mouth, moves a piece with a casual

gesture, a flick of the fingernail, a scathing expression on his face and a grunt indicating contempt for his opponent. Bad manners even in a good player, the more so in a bungler whom I let off with a draw now and again just to encourage him.

So we go on playing. Suddenly:

"You go tomorrow by train, and I and Mr. Walenty will come on the horses."

"Don't be silly. Do you think the horses are for you to ride? Anyhow, ask the colonel."

"Will he give me one?"

"You work that out."

"Come on, your move."

He has been speaking in an irritated tone. He begins to cheat, determined to win at any cost — to get his own back.

"Eh, what sort of a move is that... Come on ... Wise going, eh?"

I pretend not to see, but I am playing carefully, to win in spite of him — to punish him.

"You're going to lose" he says.

"You'll lose because you're cheating" — I say, calmly but firmly.

If I let the child get the better of me, then an attitude of disdain is bound to creep in. One must fight back, work toward maintaining authority, by demonstration, without scolding of any kind.

He has not many pieces left now — I strike a serious blow: he has lost a crown.

"I don't know how to use the crowns" — he says, disconsolate.

"You don't play well even with the other pieces, but you'll learn."

When I wash my hands he pours water for me from a jug to rinse them, brings me the towel, and tells me to drink my tea—it will get cold.

Without a word, I have let him know that I am offended; he has apologized in a subtle way for what he felt toward me.

In addition to anger, there was also disrespect in that argument over the horse.

Where did it come from, what was the source of it? Perhaps in my words: "Do you want to know how to do sums — read — write?" Perhaps this makes him impatient. Children like a certain amount of coercion: it helps them to fight their own inner resistance, it spares them the intellectual effort of having to make a choice. A decision involves the pain of voluntary renunciation, with increased responsibility for the effect. A command is binding on a man only from without, a free choice—from within. If you let children have the last word, you are either foolish, and therefore don't know your own mind, or lazy, and therefore yourself unwilling.

Where does that lingering air of lack of respect come from? I give him the buns, while I eat black bread. Twice already he has urged me to have some buns, but then himself picked the better, crisp ones: no one has taught him the pretence of those little sacrifices arising from good manners, which are meant to manifest readiness for significant sacrifices.

The little occurrence, a mere nothing, that I have described—the trouble over the horse—is proof that the time for overcoming his bashfulness is over; now I can gradually proceed with his education. I am collecting material for a talk with him...

I examine his dirty shirt in the evening; of course — a louse.

"What was there?" (anxiety in his voice). "Louse."

"They never changed the sheets in the institution. The blankets were dirty."

"Never mind, I'm sure, it won't happen again. Why

didn't they change the sheets in the institution?" "No idea, I suppose washing was too much trouble." The first chat about the institution.

They are not afraid of the sanitary office, but they sure are of the guard. No, the guard doesn't beat anyone, 'cause it's not allowed and the matron would be very angry. Only sometimes he kicks up a rumpus, guardlike, and waves his strap, but as for beating, he never beats.

And did you ever get it?"

"You bet."

So that's how it is: no beating, but they beat. And yet Stefan is right. They don't beat, not allowed, the guard kicks up a rumpus, probably threatens, and rarely, exceptionally, on the quiet, uses the strap.

I once used to laugh, at this apparent lack of logic. But I gave that up some three years ago when Lejbus said:

"I love driving in a boat."

Have you ever driven a boat?"

"Mo, never."

At most, an error in expression. Mo lack of logic: He is certain that it is very pleasant.

I was filled with unbounded gratitude to this lad. There is nothing special about him, nothing to attract attention, nothing stirring. An ordinary face, graceless stature, average mind, little imagination, absolute lack of tenderness — nothing that makes children adorable. But it is nature, its eternal laws, God, speaking through this unspectacular child just as through any scrubby bush growing by the roadside. Thank you, for being just as you are — just ordinary...

"My son" — I thought with tenderness.

How should I thank him?

"Look, Stefan, if you want to ask about anything, or have some trouble, or want something, speak up." "I don't like to be a nuisance."

I explain that he won't be.

"If you ask the impossible, I'll tell you straight, I'll explain. Take, for example, this business with the horses; they must draw wood, bread, the patients..."

"I'd like you to get me some buns."

"Alright, you shall have buns."

Today we have exhausted our store of food for the current rationing period.

Seventh day

A few friends at Czekow's place — cards. Supper late. Walenty on duty in the dining room this evening. I left the company, in a rather bad mood, about midnight. Back at my place I switched on the light; Stefan not there. What the hell? Going out, I ran into Stefan by the door.

"Where have you been?"

"In the kitchen. Every now and again I went out and looked through the window, and you were still there. And suddenly, I look, and you're not there. I ran

fast to catch up with you."

Were you afraid?"

"What have I got to be afraid of?"

No, he was not afraid. He was waiting and looking out, and he ran to come home with me. I haven't seen any of my family for the past two years, but six months ago — a short letter, all creased, somehow got through the tight ring of bayonets, censors, spies. So I'm no longer alone.

We took the sledges to Tarnopol. Stefan is somewhat downcast. None of those childish remarks, the things which make us cast our minds back to things no longer noticed, and recall things that once we used to see very—very clearly.

Stefan was to go to church with Walenty and then to see his brother while Walenty went shopping. I was planning to go to the oculist said to be working in some military hospital. We were to meet in the institution. lie has changed the plans several times on our way: first, he would go to the institution, he said; no, first to his brother; no, he wanted to go with Walenty.

In the institution, he was summoned by the matron; he stood in front of her feeling a sort of empty colorlessness; he answered questions in a low, apathetic voice. Only after we left, I realized why he was so reluctant to go to Tarnopol, why he was so downcast on the way, why he said quickly: "Let's go" when I left the matron's office.

Stefan was afraid I would leave him there. We have to buy a kettle.

"I'll go with Mr. Walenty, I know where to buy it." I take out my purse.

"Oh, Walek (not Mr. Walenty) will get ten rubles, and we'll buy some cookies..."

The tone of his voice, challenging, is meant to show: "I wasn't afraid at all, I knew, you wouldn't leave me there ..."

lie is strangely unwilling to talk about his brother. I don't know why. The lad does not want me to meet him: what is at the back of it?

He is reading aloud -- has finished.

"Well, how many mistakes did I make?"

"Guess."

"Five."

"No, only four."

"That's halt what it was the first time."

He has misspelled a word and immediately corrected himself.

"Are you checking the time?"

He has read a verse in twenty five seconds, first time, in fifteen, the second time, and fifteen again, the third:

"Could you read it any faster?"

He tries to read faster.

"A vry, vry, a very old lady ..."

He turns the page quickly to save time.

Yesterday, he read a verse "The Vistula" three times, today — four times; the result is most interesting:

Yesterday: 20 seconds, 15 seconds, 11 seconds. Today: 11 seconds, 10 seconds, 7 seconds, 6 seconds. A verse "The Little Orphan":

Yesterday: 20 seconds, 15 seconds, 15 seconds. Today: 15 seconds, 12 seconds, 10 seconds.

The proficiency attained at yesterday's third reading has been maintained in full.

I have recorded it in the form of a fraction: numerator — number of seconds, denominator—number of mistakes. Thus $24"/3$ = twenty four seconds, three mistakes. Setting out from that, I estimate the time and quality of the work— thus I can dispense with making notes concerning the reading practice.

When reading, he has gotten tied up with the word "crooning" — he has wasted a lot of time — and given Up:

"Eh, it's going to be too long."

Walenty remarks:

"Just like a horse, it gets stuck and can't get going." I have let Stefan make a fresh start.

Eighth day

I wrote yesterday: the remarks of children compel us to see things which already pass us by. Here are a few examples:

"Look, there is a badge on the tea packet." (When he puts in the sugar, air

bubbles move up to the surface.)

"How many lumps of sugar did you put in?" "One."

"Look, there are two now."

(The beaker is made of cut glass...)

"What is poppy seed made of?"

"It grows."

"And why is it black?"

I: "Because it's ripe."

"Is it true that it's got such tiny partitions inside, and there is a little bit of seed in between each wall?" I: "Hm, yes."

"Can you get enough poppy seed for a plateful from one garden?"

His conception of a garden covers four, perhaps five, ideas — mine a hundred, even a thousand. It is obvious, and yet it was his question which launched my mind on the problem for the first time. The roots of many seemingly illogical questions asked by children are to be found here. Why we find it so difficult to find a common language with children is that, though they use the same words as we do, they fill them with an entirely different content. "Garden, father, death" my words are not his "garden, father, death."

A father, a surgeon produces at home a bullet, he has removed from a patient's body:

"Dad, will you be killed with a bullet like that?" —asks his eight-year-old daughter.

Neither can town and country understand each other, the same goes for the master and the slave, the well-fed and the hungry, the young and the old, and perhaps—man and woman. We only pretend to understand each other.

Stefan had watched indifferently for a whole week as all other children of his age in the neighborhood were tobogganing down the hills and any sort of slope. What a temptation: and he working in the carpenter's shop. Still up to lunch-time he made beds for patients, with Duduk; in the evening—he came back with a toboggan.

"I'll only go down twice."

"Only twice, and not three times?" I sounded incredulous.

He smiled and was off, was away a long time. The room seemed empty and it was

very quiet. It is a mystery to me why Walenty, who keeps grumbling about all the trouble no good to come of it, has gone out twice to call him back: perhaps my evening lessons with Stefan have become a part of his routine, too.

Stefan came back, sat down — waiting.

"Is the toboggan O.K.?"

"It's not yet run in."

I asked no leading question, nothing to betray how with all my soul I side with him, how completely I have forgiven him for being late — perhaps not so much him as the flushed face, the breathlessness and the cheerful, hearty excitement. He understood and wanted to take advantage of it: he reached for the checkers with a questioning glance.

"Mo, my son."

Without a word of protest—on the contrary, with some satisfaction—he reached for the book. I had a feeling that if I had yielded he would have resented it.

"But without the watch" — he said quickly. "Why?"

"'Cause with the watch it's like someone standing over you, like a slave driver."

He started reading. He never read like that before. He was simply inspired. I was astounded — I couldn't believe my own ears. He didn't read but glided over the book as if on the toboggan, negotiating obstacles with a determination that seemed to be enhanced a hundredfold. He had transferred in full the hazard of the sport to learning. Now I am sure that it would be absurd to correct his mistakes in reading, he does not see me any more and should not see me—all on his own with his all conquering determination.

I reached for the pen—and started making notes.

Errors arising from the desire to master the text, to understand its content:

He reads the children was going, was talking." He reads: "bread is baked" instead of "made." He reads: "he gave the sign" instead of "to give the sign." He reads: "Hanusia" instead of "Anusia" (compare: "Felek" and "Franek").

He reads: "The doctor beckoned to grandma to take those (children) away" instead of "take them away ..."

The struggle for content: "In a gib book" — not "in a big boot" "When the teacher

gets verses" -- oh, no — "when he teaches verses."

Errors due to a confusing thought.

Text: "The children knelt down around granny ... weeping, they prayed aloud: 'Oh Lord, oh Lord, spare our mummy. Holy Virgin Mary, intercede with us for our mother! Make her well.' Then granny knelt the children to bed (should be: laid to bed ...)." Text: "At this time of the day, mother used to be busy cooking the dinner. The whole family would gather at the table. Sitting at the head of the table were grandpa and grandma Joan, both bowed with age. Grandpa was oncely" (should be: once ...).

The peculiarities of written language: we say — fife, ruff, the troff, rite—why do we write: knife, rough, the trough, right?

Even though a child does not say so explicitly, one can surmise from his voice, the look on the face, a pause in reading, or the way in which he accents a strange combination of letters, that he is puzzled, and occasionally irritated ...

If we refrain from interfering in the child's reading effort with constant corrections and explanations, we can make extremely interesting observations:

Stefan is reading: "ba-bak-baking," I correct him —"bathing." He says "baking" again and goes on reading, he hasn't heard what I said, intent upon his work, engulfed in the pains of reading ...

They do not like to be interrupted because it throws them off. Stefan reads: "against the cornice." He has sensed that I am about to explain what the word means, because to forestall me he says quickly: "I know what cornice means" and goes on reading

Difficulties: combination of words, incomprehensible words, peculiarities of written language, unfamiliar grammatical forms.

Stefan reads: "he gave the boys," and then mutters to himself: "them boys," and then again reads aloud: "the boys some cherries." When he has finished reading, I want to check whether he understands what he has just read and I ask him:

"What was it all about?"

"About a careless boy."

An echo of a passing thought concerning a new grammatical form: he probably wanted to say: it was about a boy— but he vaguely remembered that it was a bit different in the book from what it seemed to him that it should

be ...

How extremely interesting it is that precisely today, after tobogganing, he felt the constraining pressure of the watch. I did not take notice of that at first.

I am standing by the stove and thinking of today's lesson. Suddenly Stefan who is already in bed says: "You promised me something."

"What was it?"

"A fairy tale."

It is the first time he has asked of his own volition for a story.

"Should I tell you a new one?"

"No, I want the one about Aladdin But sit down." "Where do you want me to sit?"

"Here, closer — on the chair."

"What for?"

"Oh, tell it sitting by the stove if you like."

There seems to be nothing to it, but in fact there is a great deal.

Of the three fairy tales, "Cinderella," "Puss in boots" and "Aladdin" — he has chosen the one closest to him: a wizard comes to a poor boy and changes his fortunes by means of a wonderful lamp. Here, an unknown doctor (officer) suddenly appears and takes him away from the institution. In the tale, slaves carry delicious dishes on golden plates, here — Walenty brings the buns.

"But do sit down" — Stefan whispers intimately. That explains why children are serious and collected when listening to a story, they want to be near the teller: I should sit by his side. My question: "Where — what for" -- annoys him. A feeling of embarrassment won't let him confide in me. It is only the result of our depriving a child that makes him shamelessly declare: "I like you so much, I want to be near you, I feel so lonely, you're so good to me." Stefan was too shy to end the letter to his brother with: "Lots of kisses, Your loving ..."

Stefan says to me at breakfast:

"Instead of eating the buns yourself, you give them to me."

My answer is: "hm, hm" and he says no more.

After the fairy tale, I explain to him that the clock should not bother him while he is reading.

"Supposing it took you three minutes to read the first time, and five seconds short of three minutes the second time — it's quite alright either way. Further: supposing it did take you longer to read today than it did yesterday, then think why that is: either you didn't sleep well last night, or you got more tired in the workshop, or the toboggan came into the picture."

"And today, did I read badly?"

"What do you think?"

"Don't know." (After a moment of hesitation.) "It seems to me, it was O.K."

"Yes, you read quite well today..."

Now for a change my right eye has become painful, it is watering. I can hardly write — I must rest. A pity about the notes—such an inexhaustible treasure.

Ninth day

Stefan has the itch. He had it twice in the institution — the first time he was under treatment for three weeks, and the second time for six weeks. No wonder he was afraid to tell me about it, trying childlike to put off the dreaded moment. Only now do I realize why he inquired several times whether and when there would be a vapor bath. I took no notice of these questions — a mistake. I ought to have been struck by the extraordinary concern of a war destitute child for personal hygiene. Having failed to pay any attention to it I probably explained the whole thing to myself as arising from the boy's desire to see and try out a strange kind of bath (he has heard of a vapor bath made for the patients).

The discovery has been a shock to Walenty — what are we to do with the linen and meals?

"I've never had such a thing," the boy says reproachfully, believing, for some incomprehensible reason, that now he is sure to be infected.

A short lecture on the itch, its etiology, contagiousness and methods of cure—within three days.

"Go to the workshop now, my son, and I'll put some ointment on at lunch time."

Yes, a tender word, a kiss, was absolutely essential at this moment.

"I never had pimples at home" he whispers.

Before going to the workshop, goes tobogganing for a long time. When I enter the workshop, he throws an anxious glance at me: might I not tell Duduk about him?

What a nuisance, how upsetting, is all this. Just today, I wanted to have a serious talk with him — I have already gathered enough material: he has torn out a page from his copybook, taken a cannon shell to the workshop without asking my permission, made a toboggan for himself not being sure whether I would agree; he has told lies — he did not want me to see his brother and therefore must be hiding something from me; he said that there was no beating in the institution and only afterward admitted that he used to get it with a strap now and then. I wanted him to know that I was satisfied with him but that there were some little matters for us to talk about, just by the way, because he ought to know that my silence does not mean that I did not notice them. Now I must add this matter of the itch which he has tried to hide but I'll do it all in a few days when his skin and my eyes are better.

It is extremely important to admonish a child wholesale though this should be done on rare occasions, in the form of a friendly chat. We fear as a rule that the child will forget but it is not so, he remembers everything very well — it is we who are rather apt to forget and thus we prefer to settle the matter there and then—in other words, at the wrong time — brutally.

He has been reading rather badly this evening. Yesterday — twenty seven lines in six and a half minutes; today—sixteen lines in seven minutes.

I ask him to tell me what he has just been reading about. Recently, he has been telling me, briefly, in his own words, the story read starting in the usual childish manner from: "Well, it was like this ..." Today, for no apparent reason, after narrating the first story, he remarked:

"Not good—was it?"

So he has decided to tell the second story using the words of the book—as at school. He immediately falls into that dreadful, monotonous, careless and slavish tone of a classroom answer — peeping into the book for random clauses and getting all mixed up.

He plays checkers much better now. The mannerisms have gone—he plays with

care and seriously. I can understand that: formerly he tended to mimic an experienced player, some authority at the game; now he has already begun to think for himself.

I try to help him by calling attention to the errors he makes in the games.

"Please, don't talk. When you talk, I stop taking things seriously."

To correct every mistake in reading or writing —does it not produce the same effect: that the pupil loses interest in his work?

The table is shaky. He has spilled some tea over it. He marks out with his finger a course for the liquid to the table's edge and the tea runs down.

"Oh, look how I am directing the tea."

"Hm. Hm."

"It runs down."

Undoubtedly, a child is endowed with a quality which I should call a grammatical (orthographical) conscience. I have observed on many occasions how a child, having listened intently to a clause he has constructed ungrammatically, changes it, without knowing how to put it right. Is it not possible that systematic instruction kills that conscience? Is it not that the work is made rather more difficult for the child by our incomprehensible, beyond his ken, explanation?

The child's mind — a forest in which the tops of trees gently sway, the branches mingle, and the shivering leaves touch. Sometimes a tree contacts its neighbor with a delicate touch and through that neighbor receives the vibration of a hundred or a thousand trees — of the whole forest. Whenever any one of us says "right — wrong — pay attention — do it again" that is like a gust of wind which plays havoc with the child. I remember how once I was chasing a minute seed of bitter lettuce as it traveled through the air, suspended on its white crest. I followed it for a long time: it was soaring lightly from one blade of grass to another stopping here and there for longer and briefer moments, until finally it was entrapped into where it would start germinating. Man's thought! — we know nothing of your guiding laws—we thirst—we are ignorant—the evil spirit of humanity is the beneficiary.

Instead of "hungry" he reads "angry."

In the arithmetic problem, he is annoyed at the word "received."

"Received means really he got. (To himself.) Must be - three ... He received six plums..."

He is reading aloud: "Distrustfully (reads it once more carefully) — distrustfully (for the third time— now resigned) distrustfully ..."

And goes on reading ...

He is reading: "Boor ... boor ... Perhaps it's poor? ... Mo, it's book here ..."

He is puzzled by the grammar "keep quiet, child."

Having read and made sure that he has got it right, he ponders over it.

Is the hand of your watch made of gold?"

"Mo, it's an ordinary one."

"'Cause there are gold ones."

"Have you seen one?"

"Yes, Miss Lonia had it."

On another occasion:

"You should buy yourself a nail file."

"What for?"

"One like Miss Lonia had."

Evidently he is bewildered by the fact that la man, an officer and his present guardian fall short of Miss Lonia, no gold hand to my watch and no nail file.

Before he goes to bed, I put ointment on his skin. "In three days it will be over?" he asks diffidently. "Why didn't you tell me about it?"

"I was ashamed" (subdued voice).

"What of? That you are unwell?"

"I never had any pimples at home" — he gives an evasive answer: he is unwilling to admit that in the institution they make fun of anyone having

the itch, and abhor it.

"You've got your hands smeared."

"It will wash off."

From his bed he asks me:

"I wasn't tobogganing for long, was I?"

Confronted with my kidness, he feels ill at ease at having done wrong. The question, apparently asked neither here nor there, I explain by his thinking thus: "He doesn't get angry with me whatever I do. Why doesn't he get angry — perhaps he doesn't know? And I was tobogganing. But he wants me to study. I was tobogganing for a long time, or perhaps it wasn't as long as all that?"

Tenth day

An argument and a reconciliation.

Walenty is on duty today. I am pouring out tea for Stefan.

"Why only half the glass?"

"So that you can't spill it on the table."

"I'm going to fill it up."

I keep silent. He adds tea to the glass, puts it down, and while trying to squeeze between the bench and the table, knocks the table and spills some tea on it. He blushes. He goes out — comes back with a rag.

I say in a calm but firm voice:

"Now see here, Stefan, don't take any of Mr. Walenty's things because he doesn't like it."

"I only wanted to wipe it."

"How do you know that it is a rag and not a dish cloth?"

Confounded, he takes the rag back. I lift the table on one side and wipe off the rest with blotting paper. Stefan keeps silent; after some time he asks tentatively — putting out a feeler:

"What do the letters H.S. on the glass (the oil lamp) stand for?"

"Probably they are the initials of the maker."

He asks a number of questions — and at the back of all of them is:

"A chat. That matter is forgotten. Who would remember such a nothing?"
Yet he remembered. In the evening:

"I'll pour the tea -- O.K.?"

"O.K."

He pours a glassful for me and just a little more than half a glass for himself.

"Would you hold it please," he says squeezing through to sit down at the table.
"I didn't spill it this time."

If not for the trouble with my eyes, I would have described all that more minutely — I've left out a number of details. In the morning, after breakfast, he says "thank you" — passes me the towel. He apologizes not in so many words but by deeds.

A child keeps himself constantly under observation and analyzes his own actions but we, being incapable of getting behind his casual remarks, fail to notice this effort. We should like the child to confide in us --- all his thoughts and feelings. Being ourselves not particularly keen on confiding, we do not want to understand, or cannot, that the child is even more shy and touchy, more sensitive to a brutal invasion of the privacy of his spiritual vacillations.

"I didn't say the prayer this morning," Stefan says. "Why?"

"I forgot." (A pause.) "When I wash in the morning, I pray immediately afterward, and when one doesn't wash, one forgets about praying."

He has not been washing because of the itch.

During the showdown with him I intend to raise the question of the toboggan. Probably, the snow will soon be gone. A good thing I have not admonished him on this score. Here is the secret of his neglect of duty:

"I was so afraid that the boss in the workshop would smell the ointment. When I saw him coming my way, off I scrambled to the other end of the workshop. And in the morning, I went tobogganing to get 'aired.' "

Two habits derived from the institution:

Stefan always laughs quietly and covers his mouth. "Why don't you laugh aloud?"

"'Cause its not nice, matron says so."

"Perhaps that was because there were a lot of children and they would make too much noise..."

The second habit: he always leaves a tiny piece of the bun and some tea at the bottom of his glass. There must be a reason for it.

"Tell me, Stefan, why do you always leave some?" "But I eat it all."

"Look, my son, if you don't want to tell me, you needn't. Sometimes, one doesn't want to confide (the right to a secret). But you do leave it."

"You see, they say that if you eat to the last bit, it looks as if you haven't had anything to eat for a year."

I could see that he found it difficult to say even that much, and I have stopped insisting. I hurt him unintentionally. I also would feel hurt if I did something to show that I knew good manners, and suddenly found out that it was not a sign of good breeding at all.

Mimicry.

"Sir, I'd like to write the capital 'K' like you do."

Many children in the Orphanage used to follow my way of writing letters. The letters as used by grownups are apparently better, more valuable. I remember, how long it took me to learn to write a capital "W" in the way my father did when addressing envelopes. At school I felt sure that the teacher would be impressed; but instead I was brushed aside.

"When you are a father, you can write as you please."

Why? What has she against it? What harm will it do? — I was surprised and hurt ...

Today, the assistant surgeon came in with some papers during dictation. Stefan watched me carefully as I was writing. I'm sure he did, because as soon as the assistant surgeon left, he began to write so fast as to be quite illegible.

As an instructor I am presented with three lines of culpable negligence in writing, as an educationist — I experience a subtle feeling of rebellion against my own imperfection: "I'd like to write like you do, I want to be like you".

Well — let's try and see.

"Look, my boy, what you have scribbled here. Blame. drum... trum... — Why

did those three lines come out so badly?"

"Don't know" (embarrassed smile).

"Perhaps you were tired?"

"No, I wasn't."

He does not want to lie but cannot tell the truth.

We have been checking together all the progress he has made in reading. Since we are now reading a book printed in smaller type, we have had to count the letters.

"Previously there were thirty-seven lines, each of seventeen letters—that makes six hundred and twenty nine letters. You used to read it through in two hundred and ten seconds. And here we have sixty-five lines, each of twenty-seven letters, and you've read them in six and a half minutes. So you can read nearly five letters per second."

He is not impressed, though he watched my calculations with keen interest.

Before going to sleep:

"Should I kiss you goodnight?" "Why, am I a saint?"

"Do you think, only ..."

"Or a priest—or what?"

When reading, I like to find words running easily together: "She called out, a happy woman, she lit the lamp." I get annoyed with: "Exasperating experiences ..."

An easy arithmetic problem; he has already solved the more difficult one of the two - - and now he is confused — makes mistakes. What the ...?

"Please, look —a little pimple."

"Where?"

"Here," he points to his neck. "'Is it the itch?"

"No, it isn't. You'll have a bath in the morning and you'll be alright."

And now the arithmetic proceeds smoothly.

Eleventh day

When I put on the spectacles with blue lenses, Stefan asks me in a hushed voice:

"Does it hurt much?"

A hushed voice and a smile —I owe it to Stefan that I have paid attention to this — I would never have noticed it in the boarding school.

"I'm well and you're ill," he said in the evening.

That is an honest way of showing compassion. We adults say it more diplomatically— but feel less. I'm grateful to him for saying that.

I have no idea why he said:

"I never think of my brother, now."

"A pity, you should think of your father and your brother."

This wicked war.

He wept when I was being taken to the hospital. I assume that this was a reminder of the family ... when someone goes to the hospital, dies.

He visited me with Walenty in the hospital. "Tell me, please, are those officers ill too?"

"Yes."

"Eyes?"

"No, various complaints."

"And are they playing cards for money?"

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.*

ANHELLI⁴

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,

⁴ 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 up 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 dunghheap" 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 $\frac{1}{6}$ to $\frac{1}{7}$ 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 wand 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 the 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 occupies 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^our 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 Krakus⁵ 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

⁵ 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 Mickiewicz⁶ 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?

⁶ 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 pose, 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 Kuprin⁷ 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

⁷ 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 Jellenta⁸:

"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."

⁸ Cezary Jellenta (1861-1935) — nom de plume of Napoleon Hirsztband, 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 ore 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 Farys⁹ 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?

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.

⁹ The Arabian horseman. Title of Mickiewicz's poem.

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 School¹⁰

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.

¹⁰ 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' cites, 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.¹¹ 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

¹¹ 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 ruble¹² 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.

¹² 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 orthophrenics¹³. 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.

¹³ 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.¹⁴

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.

¹⁴ 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"¹⁵.

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."

¹⁵ 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 Sobieski¹⁶ 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.

¹⁶ 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 Niedola¹⁷ 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.

¹⁷ 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

* 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,"¹⁸ 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

¹⁸ 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.

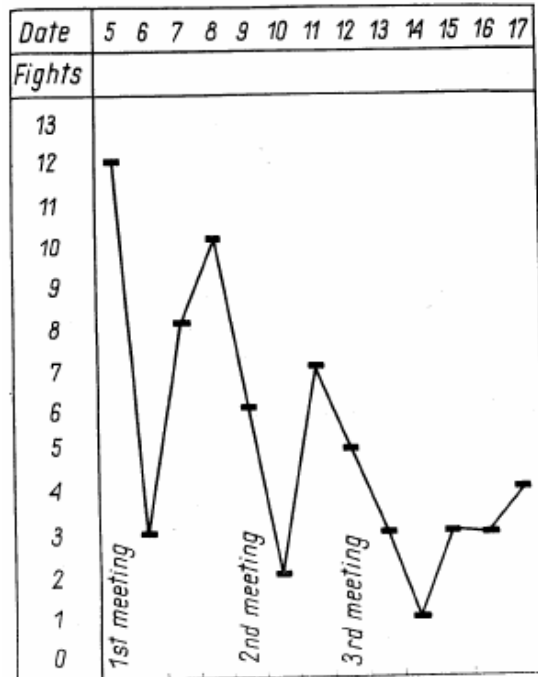
If out of the hundred-fifty there is one who can swim so well that he surely will not get into any danger — his home is on the Vistula, he spends half the day in the water, can easily swim from bank to bank in such a case, if the children agree, you may even allow him to swim all by himself. You must 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 Home¹⁹ 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

¹⁹ 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,²⁰ 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.²¹

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

²⁰ Stefania Wilczyńska was one of Korczak's main coworkers in child care for a period of some thirty years.

²¹ 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.²²

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.

²² 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.²³

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

²³ 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. 1²⁴

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.

²⁴ 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." ²⁵

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

²⁵ 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.²⁶ § 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

²⁶ 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.²⁷

What can be the result when the teacher does not whip or at most administers an

²⁷ 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.

THE CHILD'S RIGHT TO RESPECT

Disdain — Distrust

From earliest infancy the mind is trained to regard size as value.

"I'm big now," a child put on the table exclaims joyfully. "I'm bigger than you are," another proudly announces, comparing his size with that of a peer.

It is annoying to have to stand on tiptoe and still be unable to reach. It is hard to keep up with the grownups when one's steps are small. A glass will easily slip out of a little hand. Awkwardly, with difficulty, a child climbs on a chair, into a vehicle, up the stairs. He can't reach the door knob, look out of the window, take down or hang up anything because it is too high. In a crowd, he can't see anything, he gets in the way and is buffeted. It is uncomfortable and annoying to be small.

Respect and admiration goes to what is big, what takes up more room. Small stands for common and uninteresting. Little people — little wants, little joys, little sorrows.

Impressive — a big city, high mountains, a tall tree. We say:

"A great deed, a great man."

A small child is light, there is less of him. We must bend down, reach down to him. Even worse — he is weak.

We can lift him, toss him in the air, make him sit when he doesn't want to, force him to stop running, foil his effort.

If he doesn't listen to me, I have a reserve of power. I say: "Don't go ... , don't move ... , get out of the way ... give it back." He knows he must. How often he fruitlessly tries to resist before he understands, gives in, gives up.

Who and when, under what extraordinary conditions, will dare to push, pull, strike an adult? And how commonplace and harmless is a smack, a sharp tug at an arm, a painful squeeze of a child!

The sense of his powerlessness creates a respect for power. Anyone older and stronger, not necessarily an adult, may brutally express his displeasure, back up demand with force, exact obedience, injure with impunity.

By our own example, we teach disdain for the weaker. Bad training, a bad sign.

The world has changed. It is no longer muscle power that achieves, defends against an

enemy. No longer does that power wrest command, prosperity and security from land, forests and seas. A subjugated slave — the machine. Muscles have lost their exclusive right and their singular value. Now intellect and learning are to be respected.

A once suspect hovel, the thinker's cave has developed into the halls and laboratories of the researcher. Library buildings rise higher and higher, the shelves groan under the weight of books. The temples of proud reason have been populated. Learned man creates and commands. The hieroglyphs of figures and scores add progressively to the achievements of the masses, bear witness to the might of man. All this must be borne in mind and comprehended.

The years of tedious study grow longer and longer — more and more schools, examinations, printed words.

And the child, small, weak, who has lived but briefly, has not read, does not know....

It is a tough problem to divide the conquered areas, assign work and pay for each, husband the globe mastered by man. How many plants, and how should they be distributed to provide work to hungry hands and brains? How to impose on the human swarm discipline and order? How to guard against the ill will and fury of the individual? How to allocate the hours of life to action, rest and leisure, to root out apathy, satiety and boredom? How to weld men into disciplined communities and facilitate understanding, when to scatter and divide? Here push ahead... there brake ... here to inflame ... there to dampen the fire.

Politicians and lawgivers make tentative efforts, and time and again they blunder.

They deliberate and decide on the child, too. But who asks the child for his opinion and consent? What can a child possibly have to say?

Along with reason and learning, craftiness helps in the struggle for existence and influence. A sharp operator will have his nose on the trail and will be paid far above his worth. Without reference to fair calculation, he will achieve promptly and smoothly. Cunning is needed to know man who is no longer the altar but the pigsty of life.

And the child plods clumsily on with school book, ball and doll. He senses that without his participation something important and mighty is going on over his head, something decisive for good or ill, something that punishes, rewards or breaks.

The flower is forerunner of the fruit, the chick will become an egg-laying hen, the calf will in due time yield milk. In the meantime — care, expense and worry. Will it live, will it not fall by the wayside?

The young one causes anxiety, prolonged waiting Perhaps he will become the prop of

our old age, pay back with interest. But life is not unfamiliar 'with droughts, frosts and hailstorms, which mow down and destroy the crops.

We seek some indication of the future, we wish to foresee, make sure. This anxious looking to what might be distorts our view of what is.

The market value of the very young is small Only in the sight of God and the Law is the apple blossom worth as much as the apple, green shoots as much as a field of ripe corn.

We rear, shield, feed, educate. Without having to worry, the child gets all he needs. What would he be without us to whom he owes everything?

Everything, only and exclusively — us.

We know the roads to prosperity, give directions and advice. We develop virtues, suppress faults Guide, correct, train. The child — nothing. We — everything.

We order about and demand obedience.

Morally and legally responsible, wise and far-seeing, we are the sole judges of the child's actions, movements, thoughts and plans.

We give instructions and supervise the execution. Depending on will and understanding — our children^ our property — hands off!

(True, things have changed a little. No longer the exclusive will and authority of the family. Cautiously, gently, imperceptibly some social control has already entered.)

A beggar can do as he will with the alms he receives but a child owns nothing and must account for every object received for free use.

It is forbidden to tear, break, soil. Forbidden to give a gift. Forbidden to reject in distaste. The child must accept and be satisfied. Everything in the right place and at the right time, sensibly and to good purpose.

(Perhaps that is why a child values worthless little things which in us arouse only a surprised pity: odds and ends, his sole real property and wealth — a piece of string, a box, some beads.)

In return, the child is expected to be submissive and behave. Let him beg or cheat — as long as he does not demand. Nothing is his due, we give of our own goodwill. (A painful analogy comes to mind: a rich man's mistress.)

The child's poverty and the favor of material dependence have depraved the attitude of adults to children.

We look down upon the child because he is ignorant, unsuspecting and simple, does not

know, guess, sense.

He knows nothing of the difficulties and complications of adult life, nothing of the origins of our excitements, disappointments and fatigues, what deprives us of peace of mind and turns us bitter. He knows nothing of adult struggles and failures. Artless, he can be easily lulled into complacency, deceived and kept in the dark.

The child believes life to be straightforward and easy. There are daddy and mummy — one earns money, the other goes shopping. He knows nothing of failure to discharge obligations or the methods of man's struggle for his own — and more.

The child, having no material worries, no strong temptations or shocks, knows little and cannot judge. We can guess what he is driving at in an instant. We can see through him at a glance. Without having to investigate, we detect his simple subterfuges.

But perhaps we deceive ourselves that the child is no more than we want him to be? Perhaps he holds out on us, suffers in secret?

We level, mountains, fell trees, kill animals. Ever new settlements where previously there were wilderness and swamps. Progressively we establish man in new territories. The world has been subdued. Metal and animal are servants. We have subjugated the colored races, roughly arranged the various relationships between peoples, tamed the masses. A just order in the world is in the future — distrust and evil are still predominant.

Childish doubts and reservations seem to be of little importance.

The shining egalitarianism of a child knows nothing of hierarchy. Only momentarily does he feel pain at a laborer's sweat, the hunger pangs of a playmate, the fate of an ill-treated horse and a slaughtered hen. A dog and a bird are close to his heart, a butterfly and a flower his equals, he finds a brother in a pebble and a little shell. Finding no kinship with the haughtiness of the upstart, he is unaware that only man has a soul.

We do not treat a child seriously because he has a long life ahead.

We are conscious of the effort of our own steps, the burden of self-interest, the limitations of perceptions and sensations. A child runs and jumps, sees without desiring, is puzzled, asks questions. Lightly he sheds tears and generously he enjoys himself.

A fine day in the fall, when the sun has lost power, has its own kind of charm, as has a day in spring when everything is green. Take it as it comes, so little is needed to make us happy — effort is unnecessary. Hastily, carelessly, we dismiss a child. We ignore

the multiplicity of his life and the joy which we can so easily bring him.

Valuable quarter-hours and years are lost. He has plenty of time. He can wait.

A child is not a soldier, he does not defend his homeland, though he suffers together with it.

Why trouble to make him think well of you when he has no vote, does not threaten, demand, argue.

Weak, small, poor, dependent — a citizen in embryo.

Indulgence, roughness, brutality — and always disdain.

A brat, a kid. A man in the future, but not today. Will be.

To be watched, never out of sight. Watched, never left alone. Watched at every step.

He may fall, bump himself, cut, dirty, spill, tear, break, mislay, lose, set fire, let burglars in. He will harm himself, us; cripple himself, us, a friend.

Ours to maintain a vigil, deny independence. Ours to control and criticize.

The child does not know how much and what he should eat, how much and when to drink. He does not know what will overtire. So supervise his diet, his sleep, his rest.

For how long? As of when? Always. Distrust changes with age, but does not diminish, even tends to increase.

He cannot distinguish the important from the unimportant. Order and systematic work are alien to him. Absent-minded, he will forget, ignore, neglect. He does not know about future responsibilities.

We must instruct, guide, break in, slow down, suppress, straighten out, warn, prevent, impose and combat.

Combat whim, fancy, and obstinacy.

We aim to impose a program of caution, circumspection, fears and anxieties, premonitions of evil, and sinister anticipations.

By experience, we know how many dangers lie in wait — ambushes, traps, unfortunate adventures and accidents.

We know that the utmost caution is no complete safeguard and that makes us the more suspicious. We want to have a clear conscience, nothing with which to reproach ourselves in the event of a misfortune.

He revels in the hazard of mischief making, is peculiarly inclined to trouble. Gladly listens to evil whisperings, follows the worst examples.

Easily spoiled, corrected with difficulty.

We want to benefit him, to help. We offer all our experience without reservation, sufficient — ready. We know what is harmful to children, we remember what harmed us. Let him avoid, prevent, escape.

"Remember, realize, understand."

"You will find out, see for yourself."

He does not listen. As though deliberately, out of spite. One must see that he has obeyed, has done his work. Alone, he openly chooses trouble, a worse and riskier road.

How can one tolerate thoughtless mischief, senseless escapades, irresponsible outbursts.

Deceptively incalculable is primitive man. Apparently subservient, innocent — in fact, cunning, treacherous.

He can slip out of control, lull vigilance, deceive.

An excuse, a twist is always at the tip of his tongue. He conceals or tells an outright lie.

Uncertainty undermines confidence.

Disdain and distrust, suspicions and accusations.

A painful analogy: a bully, a drunk, a rebel, a madman. How can one live under the same roof with him?

Resentment

Nothing really matters. We love children In spite of everything, they are our delight, consolation and hope, our joy and relaxation, our sunshine. We do not terrify, burden, harry, and they feel free and happy. ...

Why, all the same, that sense of a heavy load an obstruction, an awkward appendage? From where the feeling of resentment toward the beloved child?

Even before he greeted the inhospitable world confusion and limitations crept into the domestic scene Into the past, irrevocably, recede the brief months of long-awaited, sanctioned joy.

The long period of oppressive indisposition culminates in incapacity and pain, restless nights and extra expense. Disturbed peace, disorder, unbalanced budget.

To the acid odor of diapers and the piercing yell of the newborn is added the clanking of the chain of nuptial slavery.

The burden of being unable to communicate, the necessity to imagine, to guess. We wait, perhaps even with much patience.

When at long last he talks and walks, gets in the way, touches everything, explores every corner, he is no less obstructive and upsetting. The little sloven — the despot.

He causes damage, opposes our reasonable will. He demands and understands only what he finds convenient to understand.

Trifles are not to be dismissed lightly. Our grudge against children is cumulative: their waking with the lark, the crumpled newspaper, a spot on a dress and on the wallpaper, the wet carpet, the broken eyeglasses and treasured flowerpot, the spilled milk and perfume, and the doctor's fee.

He falls asleep just when we would like him to be awake, messes his food, cries with fear when we thought we would make him laugh. And delicate. The slightest omission involves the danger of disease, foreshadows fresh difficulties.

If one forgives, the other accuses and nags the more. An opinion of the child is formed by the father, the nurse, the maid, the woman next door, and not just by the mother. Against the mother's wish or secretly each may punish.

The little schemer is often the cause of friction and misunderstandings between adults. There is always somebody resentful and hurt. For the indulgence of one, the child is held responsible by another. Frequently seeming kindness amounts to stupid negligence and the responsibility for the misdemeanors of others falls upon the child.

(Boys and girls do not like to be called children. Sharing that word with the youngest burdens them with responsibility for the past, imposes on them the bad reputation of the little ones, while equally numerous charges continue to be leveled against their own age group.)

How rarely this satisfies our aspirations, how often his growth is accompanied by a feeling of disappointment.

"He ought to by now...."

The child should reciprocate our goodwill by trying his best. He should understand, concede and control his urges; and, above all, he should feel grateful

The duties imposed and the demands laid down increase with the years, for the most part differently from what we should wish and less than we expected. Part of the time, we hand over the requirements and authority to the school. Vigilance is doubled; responsibility increased; divergent jurisdictions come into collision. Shortcomings make their appearance.

The parents will forgive whole-heartedly their indulgence stemming from a clear sense of guilt at having given life — of a wrong done in the case of an infirm child. Occasionally, a mother of a supposedly ill child seeks to defend herself against the accusations of others and against her own doubts.

As a rule, the mother's opinion is not trusted. It is judged to be biased and incompetent. Better to rely on the opinions of teachers, experts, experienced people as to a particular child's need for special kindness.

A tutor in a private home rarely finds conditions conducive to coexistence with the children.

Fettered by a distrustful control, he must follow a path between someone else's directives and his own outlook, between an external requirement and his own peace and convenience. While bearing responsibility for the child, he bears also the consequences of the dubious decisions of the legitimate guardians — his employers.

Driven to conceal and to avoid difficulties, he may easily become corrupted by hypocrisy, embittered and apathetic.

As the years of work go by, the gap between adult demands and the child's desires becomes progressively wider, familiarity with repulsive means of subjugation becomes ever greater.

Dissatisfaction is felt with the ungrateful job: whom God wants to punish he makes a teacher.

We grow weary of the vital, noisy, interesting life full of puzzles. We tire of questions and surprises, of discoveries, of attempts which frequently end in failure.

Rarely are we advisers and comforters, more often stern judges. Summary judgment and punishment produce only one result — less frequent but more violent and spiteful outbursts of boredom and rebellion. Consequently there is closer supervision since resistance must be broken, and safeguards provided against any contingency.

This is the teacher's downfall.

He disdains, distrusts, suspects, spies, catches, scolds, charges and punishes, seeking the line of least resistance to prevention. More and more prohibitions and more

intolerant compulsion. He fails to understand the effort required of a child in neatly filling a page or in simply living for an hour, and declares aridly — hopeless.

Infrequent is the blue sky of pardons, frequent the purple of anger and indignation.

How much more understanding is needed in educational work with a group, how much easier it is to shift into habits of accusation and grudge bearing.

One child alone, small and weak, is wearing. His isolated infractions enrage. How much more annoying, obtrusive, exacting and incalculable is a crowd.

Understand at last — not children but a crowd. A bunch, a gang, a mob — not children.

You have grown accustomed to the notion that you are strong; suddenly you feel small and weak. The mob, the giant, with its vast collective weight and sum total of experience, now pools its forces in combined resistance, on another occasion splits into dozens of pairs of legs and arms — heads, each concealing different thoughts and unspoken demands.

How difficult it is for a new teacher to take charge of a class or an institution where the children have been kept under fierce discipline, where, riotous and dispirited, they have organized themselves on the principle of criminal coercion. When they strike collectively at your will and try to break it, how powerful and menacing they are — not children but a primordial force.

How many revolutions about which the Teacher keeps quiet, ashamed to admit himself weaker than a child.

Once taught a lesson, the teacher will resort to any means to overcome and prevail. No familiarity, no passing joke, no sulky reply permitted, no shrug or gesture of resentment, no obstinate silence or angry look. He will do all to uproot, to exorcise the disdain and negativism. The ringleaders will be bribed with privileges, informers will be recruited. The teacher is no longer concerned that punishment be just so long as it is severe. He is determined to make an example so that the first spark of rebellion will be extinguished in time, so that the all-powerful crowd may not be tempted, not even in thought, to dictate demands or to run amok.

The child's weakness may evoke tenderness. Group power revolts and offends.

It is not true that kindness turns children defiant, and that the response to gentleness is lack of discipline and order.

Beware that by kindness you do not understand laxity, inefficiency and clumsy stupidity. We find among teachers not only crafty brutes and misanthropes but also

rejects from every possible kind of work, incapable of sustaining any responsible position.

Occasionally, a teacher tries to win the children's confidence at one stroke, promptly, at little cost, without effort. He wants to play the fool with them when in a good mood and not tediously organize community life. Sometimes his lordly indulgence is shot through with sudden outbursts of bad temper. He makes himself ridiculous in the children's eyes.

Occasionally, one who is ambitious believes that it is easy to reform a man by persuasion and fiery moral teaching, that it suffices to stir the emotions and coax a promise of improvement. He is an irritating bore.

Occasionally, seeming friendly teachers, allied in insincere grandiloquence, are all the more treacherous enemies and oppressors. They arouse aversion.

The response to humiliation will be disdain, to kindness — resentment and rebellion, to distrust — conspiracy.

Years of work made it increasingly obvious [to me] that children deserve respect, confidence and kindness, that good is derived from them in the cheerful atmosphere of mild sensations, merry laughter, strenuous first efforts and surprises, pure, clear, lovable joys. Such work is lively, fruitful and attractive.

There was one thing that always caused me doubt and anxiety.

How was it that occasionally a child whom I considered absolutely trustworthy failed? What lay behind a sudden explosion by the group into unruly action such as does, though rarely, occur? Perhaps adults are no better, only more self-controlled, more stable; one could more safely rely upon them.

Persistently I sought the answer, and gradually it began to dawn on me.

1. If a teacher is intent upon seeking out the traits and values which to his mind appear to be exception ally precious, if he tries to force all into one mold to set one course for all - he will be led into error. Some will pretend to adopt his tenets, others will sincerely yield to his suggestions — for a time. When the real face of the child appears, the defeat will be painful not only to the teacher but to the child as well The greater the effort in pretending or yielding to influence, the more violent will be the reaction His real character laid bare, a child has nothing more to lose An important lesson can be learned from that.

2. The teacher's criteria are one thing, the group's another. Both parties are conscious of the richness of the spirit. He waits for them to develop, they wait to see

what immediate good will come of those riches, whether he will share what he has or keep it to himself as an exclusive privilege — the stuck-up, jealous, egoist and niggard. He will not tell a story, will not play, make a drawing, help out— "he does favors," "waits to be begged." Isolated, the child makes deliberate attempts to recover the friendship of his community, which gladly accepts his conversion. He did not become spoiled suddenly. On the contrary, he has understood and mended his ways.

3. They failed collectively, the community hurt. I found an explanation in a book on taming animals and make no secret of it. A lion is not dangerous when angry but when playful and eager to let itself go a bit; and a crowd is as strong as a lion....Not only in psychology should solutions be sought but also in medical books, in sociology, ethnology, history, poetry, criminology, the prayer book and the handbook of animal training. *Ars longa*.²⁸

4. The most illuminating, but not the final, explanation emerged. A child can become intoxicated with oxygen as an adult is with liquor. Excitement, loosening of self-control, thrills, a rush of blood to the head: the reaction — embarrassment, chagrin, a feeling of disgust and guilt. My observation is absolutely accurate — clinical. The most respectable may find that alcohol goes easily to his head.

Don't scold. This obvious childish intoxication should arouse warm feeling and respect. It should not estrange and set apart but draw closer and link.

We hide our own faults and dubious actions. Children are not supposed to criticize, to notice our bad habits, addictions and laughable peculiarities. We assume the pose of perfection. Under penalty of being deeply offended, we guard the secrets of the ruling clan, the caste of the initiated — those ordained to sublime duties. Only a child may be shamelessly degraded, put in the pillory.

We play with the children using phony cards. The weaknesses of tender years we pierce with the trumps of adult virtues. Cheats, we so shuffle the cards as to juxtapose the worst of theirs with the best and most valuable of ours.

What about the careless and frivolous among us, the gluttons, fools, idlers, knaves, brawlers, confidence-tricksters, frauds, drunks, thieves? How about our outrages and crimes - public and secret? How much dissension, treachery, envy, slander and blackmail, mutilating words, disgraceful deeds? How many family tragedies kept quiet, in which children are the sufferers, the first martyrs?

And we dare to censure and accuse!

²⁸ The study of an art requires time. *Vita brevis ars longa*.

And clearly, adult society has been carefully sifted and filtered. How many have been swallowed by the grave, the prison and the lunatic asylum, how much scum has gone down the gutter!

We urge respect for elders and the experienced, not for reason. Children have experienced elders among them, much closer at hand, the adolescents with their obtrusive prompting and pressure.

Felonious and reckless adults wander at large, knock about, push and harm — and infect. And children as such bear joint responsibility for them, for at times, they drive us to distraction, too. It is those few who shock the respectable public, stain with conspicuous blots the surface of childish life. They dictate the routine methods: keep a tight rein though it oppresses, be rough though it hurts, be stern even brutal.

We do not allow children to organize themselves. Disdainful, distrustful, resentful, we do not care. Yet without the participation of experts we shall never succeed, and the expert is the child.

Are we so blindly uncritical as to consider the caresses which we impose upon children as kindness? Can we not understand that hugging a child we do the clinging? Feeling helpless, we hide in his arms, seek protection and escape in the hour of pain; in the homeless desolation of not belonging, we burden him with our sufferings and yearnings.

Any caress which is not an escape to the child and plea for hope is a culpable search for and awakening in him of sensual pleasure.

"I hold you in my arms because I feel sad. Kiss and I'll give it you."

Selfishness, not kindness.

The Right To Respect

There are as it were two lives, one serious, respectable, the other indulgently tolerated, of less value We say: man of the future, worker of the future citizen of the future. Such they will be, there will be a beginning, seriously, but in the future. We kindly permit them to stick around but we find it more to our taste when they are not at hand.

No, they were and they will be. They have not caught us on the run and briefly. Children are not a casual encounter to be hurriedly passed by with a smile and a light word of greeting.

Children account for a considerable portion of mankind, of the population, of nationals, residents, citizens and constant companions. They were, they will be and they are.

Is there such a thing as a make-believe existence? No. Childhood means long and important years of a man's life.

A cruel though sincere law in Greece and Rome permitted the killing of a child. In the Middle Ages, fishermen used to catch in their nets the bodies of drowned infants. In 18th-century Paris, older children were sold to beggars, younger were given away in front of Notre Dame. Not so long ago. And to this day parents farm a child out if he is in the way.

The number of illegitimate, deserted, neglected, exploited, deprived, maltreated children increases steadily. They are protected by law, but is the protection adequate? Much has changed. Old laws require revision.

We have become rich. We no longer depend on the fruits of our own effort. We are heirs to a great fortune, shareholders, co proprietors. Cities, large buildings, factories, mines, hotels, theaters — all ours. What an abundance of goods on the market, how many ships ply to and fro with them — their suppliers thrust themselves upon the consumer, entreat us to make use of them.

Let us strike a balance and calculate how much of the grand total is due the child, determine his share, not as a favor, not as charity. Let us examine honestly how much we allocate to the child population, the underage nation, the subjugated class. What does the inheritance amount to, how should it be divided? Have we not — the unjust stewards — by any chance disinherited, expropriated?

They are cramped, impoverished, bored and grim.

We have introduced education for all, compulsory mental work. We have school registration and mobilization. We have shifted onto the shoulders of the child the burden of reconciling the differences between the interests of two simultaneous authorities.

The school demands, the parents are reluctant to give. The conflicts between the family and the school must be paid for by the child. The parents associate themselves with the not always just complaints made by the school against the child, thus thrusting on the school the duty to take care of him.

The efforts of a military conscript are also a preparation for the day when he will be called upon to go into action, and the state provides him with board and lodging, a uniform, a rifle and pay. These are his due, not charity.

The child, though subject to compulsory education has to beg from the parents and local authority

The Geneva lawgivers have confused duties with rights. The tone of the declaration is not insistence but persuasion: an appeal to goodwill, a plea for kindness.²⁹

The school creates the rhythm of hours, days and years. The school staff is supposed to satisfy the current needs of young citizens. The child is a rational being. He appreciates the needs, difficulties and impediments in his life. Not a despotic order, stern discipline and distrustful control, but tactful understanding, faith in experience, collaboration and coexistence are the guidelines for child care.

The child is not foolish. There are no more fools among children than among adults. Draped in the judicial robes of age, how often we impose thoughtless, uncritical, impractical regulations. The wise child sometimes stops short in amazement when confronted with the aggressive, senile, offensive stupidity.

The child has a future but also a past consisting of events, memories, long hours of highly significant solitary reflections. He remembers and forgets in a manner no different from our own, appreciates and condemns, reasons logically and makes mistakes born of ignorance. Thoughtfully, he trusts and doubts.

The child is a foreigner who does not understand the language or the street plan, who is ignorant of the laws and customs. Occasionally, he likes to go sightseeing on his own; and, when up against some difficulty, he asks for information and advice. Wanted — a guide to answer questions politely.

Respect the ignorance of a child!

A cad, a cheat and a crook will take advantage of a foreigner's ignorance, answer in gibberish, deliberately mislead. A boor will grudgingly mutter something. We are constantly at odds with the children — nag, admonish, scold, punish — but we don't inform kindly.

How impoverished would be the child's knowledge if not for his peers, for eavesdropping, if he did not pick up words and scraps of conversation from adults.

Respect the labor of developing knowledge!

Respect for failure and tears!

Not only a torn stocking but a scratched knee, not only a broken tumbler but also a cut finger and a bruise, and a bump and pain.

An inkblot in a copybook is an accident, an unpleasant disaster. "When dad spills the tea, mother says: 'never mind'; but she always makes a fuss when it's me."

²⁹ Reference here is to the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, 1923.

Unaccustomed to pain, wrongs, injustice, they suffer acutely, frequently burst into tears. But even the tears of a child are treated as a joke, made to seem less important, irksome.

"Whines, cries, moans, squeaks."

(A brace of words invented by adults to be applied to children.)

Obstinate and capricious — in fact, tears of frustration and rebellion, a despairing effort of protest, a cry for help, a complaint against negligence, evidence that insensibly they restrain and coerce, a symptom of indisposition, and always of suffering.

Respect the child's belongings and budget. The child shares the painful material worries of the family, feels the pinch of shortage and compares his own poverty with the affluence of a classmate. The few pennies which mark his poverty hurt bitterly. He does not want to be a burden.

But it is difficult if one needs a new cap and book, and a movie ticket, and to replace a copybook a pencil lost or stolen. It would be nice to make a small gift to someone dear, to buy a cake, and to lend a few pennies to a friend. So many essential needs, wishes and temptations and no means to finance them!

Can we learn nothing from the fact that in courts for juvenile delinquents thefts account for a considerable percentage of the cases? Retribution for a disregard of the child's budget which no punishment will help. ,

A child's property — not useless junk but beggar's possessions and instruments of labor — hopes and souvenirs.

The worries and anxieties of today, the bitterness and disappointments of the years of youth are not illusory but significant.

He grows. Lives more vigorously — quickened breathing, livelier pulse — he builds himself up, he is bigger and bigger, and dives deeper into life. He grows night and day, sleeping and waking, gay and gloomy, when he gets into mischief and when he stands penitent before you.

There are the sunny springs of redoubled development effort and the limpid falls of standstill. Now, bone growth races ahead, the heart does not keep up. At another time, too little or too much, a different chemical reaction of the sluggish or burgeoning glands, a new anxiety, a new surprise.

Now, running about is as essential as breathing, an urge to fight and conquer. At another time the mood is to hide, daydream, spin melancholy memories.

Alternately, endeavor or need of peace, tenderness and comfort. Alternately, strong and ardent desires or depression.

Fatigue, painful indisposition, a cold, too hot, too chilly, drowsiness, hunger, thirst, excess, lack, feeling low — these are not just whim, school excuses.

Respect for the mysteries and fluctuations of the toil of growth!

Respect for the present moment, for today. How will he manage tomorrow, if we do not allow him a conscious, responsible life today.

Not to trample upon, humiliate, handle as a mere slave to tomorrow; not to repress, hurry, drive on.

Respect for every single instant, for it passes never to return, and always take it seriously; hurt, it will bleed, slain, it will haunt with harsh memories.

Let him eagerly drink in the joy of the morning and look ahead with confidence. That is just how the child wants it to be. A fable, a chat with the dog, catching a ball, an intense study of a picture, the copying of a single letter — nothing is for a child a waste of time. Everything kindly. Right is on the side of the child.

Naively, we are afraid of death, forgetful that life is a procession of dying and reborn moments. A year is no more than an attempt to understand eternity for everyday use. An instant is but the duration of a smile or a sigh. A mother is anxious to rear her child. She will not succeed. Every time it is a different woman who bids farewell to a different person and welcomes a different one upon his return.

Unintelligently we divide years into less or more mature ones. There is no such thing as present immaturity, no hierarchy of age, no higher and lower grades of pain and joy, hopes and disappointments.

When I play or talk with a child, two equally mature moments — mine and the child's — have intermingled. When I am with a crowd of children, I always manage a passing greeting and take *leave* with just one glance and smile. When I am annoyed with a child — again togetherness, only that my evil hateful instant breaks into and poisons this mature' important instant of his life.

Remuneration in the interests of tomorrow? What sort of an idea is that? We paint in excessively sombre colors. And prediction is fulfilled: the roof falls in for want of care in laying the foundations.

The Child's Right To Be Himself

How will he turn out when he's grown up? — we ask anxiously.¹

We desire our children to improve on ourselves. We dream of a perfect man of the future.

We must swiftly denounce our own lie, pin down selfishness decked out in lofty phrases. Apparent self-denial is, in fact, a common swindle.

We have come to terms with ourselves, been reconciled, forgiven ourselves and set aside the duty to improve. We were badly brought up. Too late now. The defects and bad habits have too strong a hold. We neither let the children criticize us nor do we watch our own behavior.

Absolved, we have capitulated, shifting the burden of all that onto the children.

A teacher eagerly adopts the adult prerogative. To watch the children, not himself, to register the children's faults, not his own.

A child's fault will be whatever threatens our peace, ambition, comfort, that which endangers and angers, which runs counter to our ways, that which impinges on our time and thought. We do not accept that there can be fault without bad intention.

The child does not know, has not heard well, has misunderstood, misheard, made a mistake, failed, cannot—everything is his fault. A child is unfortunate, does not feel well — every difficult hour comes of his guilt and ill will.

Not fast enough or too fast; any operation performed imperfectly we see as the result of negligence, laziness absent-mindedness, unwillingness.

The failure to comply with a mischievous unpracticable demand - guilty. A clumsy, malicious suspicion - guilty too. Our suspicions are confirmed. Even the child's efforts to mend his ways show him to be guilty:

"See, when you try, you can do it.

We always find something as grounds for reproach-greedily we always demand more. '

Do we tactfully meet the child halfway, do we avoid unnecessary grievances, facilitate mutual relations? Are we not rather stubborn, capricious, offensive and annoying?

A child attracts our attention whenever he disturbs and makes trouble. Only these are the moments we notice and remember. We do not notice when he is quiet, serious and concentrating. We ignore those sacred moments of communication with himself, the world and God. A child obliged to hide his yearnings and impulses against derision and

caustic remarks will conceal his desire to come to terms, will not disclose his willingness to meet us halfway.

He dutifully hides his penetrating glances, surprises, anxieties, grievances, also his anger and rebelliousness. We want him to jump and clap hands, so he shows us the smiling face of the fool.

Loud are the voices of bad actions and bad children, they drown out the whispers of the good — yet there are a thousand times more good than bad. The good is strong and unflagging. It is easier to spoil than to correct.

We exert our attention and ingenuity in prying into mischief, searching, and sniffing — eager to catch red-handed, looking for portents of evil, building damaging suspicions.

(Do we ever keep an eye on old men so that they do not play soccer? What a horror is the incessant sniffing for masturbation among children.)

One banged the door, one did not make his bed properly, one mislaid his overcoat, one made a blot on his copybook. If we do not actually scold, we must at least grumble instead of rejoicing that it is only one.

We hear complaints and quarrels. True, but how infinitely more there is of forgiveness, forbearance, assistance, solicitude, goodwill, instruction, beneficial influences, deep and fine. Even the bullies and the spiteful cause not tears only but also smiles.

We foolishly desire that no one should ever be out of place, that not one of the ten thousand seconds of the school hour (count them) should raise difficulties.

Why does one teacher see a child as bad and another as good? We demand uniformity of virtues and moments, and in addition that they all suit our tastes and patterns.

Can a case of similar tyranny be found in history? A generation of Neros has proliferated.

Alongside good health stands illness, alongside virtues and values there exist faults and vices.

Alongside a few children to whom joy and festivity are the norm, for whom life is a fable and an inspiring legend, confident and kindly, stand the mass of children to whom, from the earliest days, the world speaks in terms of crude, harsh, sinister truths. They are corrupted by the contemptuous degradation of vulgarity and poverty, or spoiled by the sensual, dallying heedlessness of indulgence and sophistication.

Dirty, distrustful, disappointed with mankind — not so bad.

Not only the home, but the hallway, the courtyard and the street provide models for a child. He talks in the language of his surroundings, expresses views, imitates gestures, follows examples. There is no such thing as a pure child — everyone is contaminated to a lesser or greater extent.

But how quickly he shakes loose and cleanses himself! No cure is necessary, just a good wash. The child helps eagerly, happy to have rediscovered himself. He has been longing for a bath and now he smiles at you and to himself.

These artless triumphs, as it were taken from a tale about poor orphans, are celebrated by every teacher. Such cases deceive uncritical moralists into believing that it all comes easily. A bungler delights in them, an ambitious man attributes the virtues to himself. Some strive to obtain similar results in every case by increasing the dose of persuasion, others by increasing pressure.

Together with the merely grimy, we come across children who are crippled, injured. There are wounds that leave no scars, healing by themselves under a clean dressing. The healing of lacerated wounds takes a little longer; they leave painful scars and care must be taken to avoid reopening. Skin eruptions and ulcers call for greater attention and patience.

Simple folk say: "The healing body." One is tempted to add: "And soul."

How many slight abrasions, how much slight contagion in every school and institution for children, how many temptations and intrusive whispers, and how transient and innocent the effect. We need not be afraid of dangerous epidemics if the atmosphere of the institution is sweet, its environment full of light and fresh air.

How wisely, gradually, and wonderfully the process of recovery proceeds. How many honorable secrets are hidden in the blood, the secretions and tissues! How every function disturbed and organ damaged strives to revert to normal and get on with its job! How many marvels in the growth of plant and man, in the heart, brain, respiration! The slightest emotion or effort, and at once the heart beats faster, the pulse throbs.

The same applies to the power and endurance of the child's spirit. There is such a thing as moral equilibrium and a keen conscience. It is not true that children are particularly susceptible to contagion.

Correctly, though unfortunately belatedly, pedology found its way into the programs of schools. Without understanding the harmony of the body, it is impossible to acquire respect for the mysteries of healing.

An inexpert diagnosis dumps together all kinds and conditions of children. The agile, ambitious, critical, disturbing, healthy and clean are grouped with the resentful, sulky,

and distrustful. The debased, enticed with evil, frivolous and those meekly following bad examples are equated with those who inherited a load of evil.

(We, adults, have succeeded not only in rendering harmless the stepsons of fate but in skillfully taking advantage of the work of the disinherited.)

Healthy children compelled to live side by side with such suffer doubly. They are harmed and also become entangled in offenses.

As for us, do we not accuse one and all frivolously, impose collective responsibility?

"That's what they are like, all they can do".

This is probably the worst of the wrongs we commit.

The offspring of drunkenness, rape and madness. The offenses are an echo of imperative voices not from without but from within. A dark moment when he realized that he is not as others are, that nothing can be done about it, that being disabled he will suffer ostracism and baiting. The first decisions are to fight the force dictating evil. What others have received free, so easily, what is commonplace and insignificant to the rest, he receives only as the fruit of sweat and blood. He seeks help. If he comes to trust he will approach, plead, demand: "Save me." He has divined the secret, wants to remake himself, once and for all, right away, in a single effort.

Instead of resolutely slowing down the incautious impetus, putting off the decision to remake himself we clumsily encourage and urge on. He is anxious to set himself free, we lay a trap for him. He tries to break out, we deceitfully prepare an ambush. When he desires to be open and frank, we only teach to conceal. He offers us one long day without a blemish, we complain of a single instant of error. Should one do so?

He used to wet the bed day after day, now not so often. It was better, then deteriorated again — never mind. Longer periods between the fits of an epileptic. He does not cough so much and the temperature of this TB case is down. No improvement yet, but no deterioration. This is recorded by the doctor, justifying the treatment. No cheating or constraint here.

Desperate, mutinous, contemptuous of sycophants, of the virtuous mob of apple polishers, a group of children confront the teacher. They have retained one virtue, perhaps the last — aversion to hypocrisy. That one we seek to cast down and trample upon. We commit a bloody crime. By hunger and torture, we make powerless and suppress brutally, not the mutiny but its open manifestation. Foolishly we fan to a white heat the malignancy of insidiousness and hypocrisy.

They do not renounce their plan of revenge, but put it off, wait for an opportune

moment. If they believe in the good, they will bury their yearning for it with the profoundest secrecy.

"Why did you let me be born, did I ask for such a dog's life?"

I am reaching for the most secret ways, the most difficult enlightenment. Patience and sympathetic understanding will suffice to deal with infractions and offenses, the culpable need love. Their angry rebellion is just. Learn to resent easy virtue and stand beside the lone, cursed transgression. When, if not now, will he be offered the flower of a smile?

In reformatories, inquisition still holds sway, medieval penal torture, united inveterate hatred, the vengefulness of contempt. Can't you see that the best children feel for the worst. Where lies their guilt?

Not so long ago, the humble physician used to administer to patients sweet tonics and bitter mixtures, constrain the fevered, let blood, starve in the gloomy anterooms to the graveyard. He was servile to the mighty, heartless to the poor.

Finally he began to demand and was granted.³⁰

The physician has won space and sun for children, like — to our shame — a general he offers the child movement, adventure, delight in rendering service to a friend, a possibility for a decision to lead a decent life, chatting by the campfire under a starlit sky.

What is the role of our educators, what is their work?

They are supervisors of walls and furniture, of quiet in the playground, of clean ears and floors. They are cowhands watching that the cattle do no harm, that they do not disturb adults at their occupations and pleasures. They act as custodians of worn-out pants and boots and as stingy dispensers of cereal. They are guardians of adult privilege and careless executors of their inexpert caprices.

An apple cart of fears and warnings, as peddler's stall with second-hand moral ware, a bar of denatured knowledge which baffles, confuses and lulls instead of awakening, invigorating and gratifying. Dealers in cheap virtue, it is our business to thrust upon children worship and humiliations, and evoke in adults tender emotions, flatter their cherished feelings. For a pittance, we are to build a secure future, cheat, and conceal the facts that children are numbers, willpower, might and law.

³⁰ In this section Korczak appears to refer to himself and to pediatrics in general. (Ed.)

The doctor has saved the child from the grips of death, the teacher's assignment is to let him live, win for him the right to be a child.

Researchers have asserted that an adult is guided by motives, a child by urges; an adult is logical, a child reckless in its illusory imagination; an adult has character, a definite moral make-up, a child is enmeshed in chaos of instincts and desires. They examine the child not as a different psychological structure but as a weaker and poorer one. All adults, of course, are saintly professors.

And the adult mess, the backwater of outlooks and convictions, the herd psychology, the prejudices and habits, the frivolity of fathers and mothers, the whole shooting match of irresponsible adult life. Negligence, slothfulness, dull obstinacy, thoughtlessness, adult absurdities, follies and drinking bouts. And the seriousness, sensibility and self-composure of children, their dependable undertakings, experience within their own sphere, a capital of equitable judgments and appraisals, tactful reticence in demands, subtle feelings, infallible sense of right.

Does everybody win when playing chess with a child?

Let us demand respect for the clear eyes, smooth foreheads, youthful effort and confidence. Why should dulled eyes, a furrowed brow, untidy gray hair, or bent resignation command greater respect?

There is sun in the east and in the west. There is morning and evening prayer alike. Every inhalation has its exhalation and every systole its diastole.

A soldier when he goes out to fight, and when he returns battle stained.

A new generation is growing up, a new wave is gathering. They appear with their vices and virtues. Give them conditions for better development. We shall not win a suit against a casket containing diseased heredity; we cannot tell a cornflower to be grain.

We are no performers of miracles — we do not want to be quacks. We renounce the deceptive longing for perfect children.

We demand: do away with hunger, cold, dampness, stench, overcrowding, overpopulation.

It is you who beget the sick and the crippled, you who create the conditions for rebellion and contagion. Yours is the levity, the frivolousness, the insensibility, and the disorder.

Listen. Contemporary life is shaped by a powerful brute, *homo rapax*. He dictates the mode of living. His concessions to the weak are a lie, his respect for the aged, for the emancipation of women, for kindness to children - falsehoods, Aimlessly wanders the

homeless sentiment - a Cinderella. And it is precisely the children who are the princes of feeling, the poets and thinkers. Respect, if not humility, before the white, translucent, immaculate, holy childhood.

ON THE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

1. In a great many schools, the older children began to publish newspapers. The names and origins varied. Unfortunately, the end was the same — after the first few issues, the newspaper ceased publication. I watched the zeal at the beginning and the dejection of failure. I regretted the wasted effort and eagerness. It seems to me, however, that these unsuccessful endeavors have left their mark. They provided experience, something must have been learned from them. But it would have been much better, of course, if the school newspaper could have gained a foothold.

I firmly believe in the need for newspapers for children and youth, meaning papers in which they themselves are the contributors, and which tackle subjects salient and interesting to them — not just weeklies printing fables and pretty verses. And the children and youth must themselves say in their school newspapers what they find important. So I intend to offer in this pamphlet a few hints and warnings likely to prove useful to those with an urge to publish school newspapers some time in the future.

2. The class. Forty boys or girls. The first pitfall into which the young editors trip, it seems to me, is that they rely not on all classmates but only upon a definite, rather small group. They say: "We three are going to produce a paper for the remaining thirty-seven." They count on a few others joining in later, and that will do. Who are those whom they recruit into their midst? The capable, with a facility for writing, and also those who immediately express readiness to collaborate, promise God knows what, and are full of wonderful ideas right from the start.

If there are three to begin with, one or two of those three must drop out before someone new comes in. Of the three, one may become sick, leave, take offense, get discouraged or prove unsuitable for the job. It is a big mistake to commence with the most capable and with those who easily fall in line. For these are precisely the least persevering or the most ambitious and, therefore, the least reliable. No paper in the world bases its existence upon outstanding contributors but rather upon conscientious, punctual, accurate workers. A capable demagogue, a capricious top pupil, a conceited "poet" should be welcomed as occasional collaborators, but the editorial board must consist first and foremost of men who do not fall ill, do not cut classes, who are never late, who keep their word and are not conceited.

3. Roughly half the class should be on the editorial board. The work should be so spread that no one can give the excuse of lack of time. Each must be given only as much work as will leave him in position to double for another who may turn capricious or be unable for this or that reason to discharge his commitments. There can be nothing worse than to be dependent on an individual. It is inherent in human nature that if someone knows that he is indispensable he begins to take liberties, and if he knows that he is replaceable he is the more ready to make concessions.

Too many collaborators also involves dangers. Some of them may hatch a plot. One who has taken offense will not only himself desert but will also conspire, persuade others to rally around him, try to foment trouble. Bear this in mind, too. Never say: "Please yourself; you don't do much, we'll get along without you."

Every enemy is dangerous. A school newspaper must have ten friends, twenty sympathizers — then among the remaining ten standing aloof it can afford two resentful or offended. Two, but no more. Two, though not at the very start, but only when the paper is already firmly on its feet.

4. There is a current phrase among young people: "You have to beg him, go to him hat in hand"; and again: "I don't want favors, it's all the same to me." I must warn that even if in private life such an attitude may be praiseworthy, in public work it is immature and stupid. If you are in no position to order, then you must bow and scrape. You are dependent on a favor, and it is not all the same to you. Not only your private concerns are involved, it is also public business. You get everybody worked up, appear to have plans, and then you back out and make a fool of everybody, but above all of yourself. You blame others for the failure but it is you who are to blame because by your rough manner of acting, a rash word, ruthlessness, want of tact, you have caused bad blood. People are of all kinds, it is difficult to change a man. Therefore, reason dictates that we take everyone for what he is and make use of him, not reject, pick and choose, and, in the end, remain all alone sulking with a grievance.

This is serious work and not an organizational pastime. If anyone organizes a newspaper, he should be prepared to face difficulties, troubles, and short-term setbacks, meet with unpleasant people, bear responsibility not only for his own but also for their actions. It can't be helped. If anyone is seeking a pastime, let him go to the theater but not tackle a job which calls for effort and conscientiousness, and promises nothing but the inner satisfaction of being useful.

5. What is the benefit from a school newspaper? Immense! It teaches a conscientious

discharge of voluntary commitments, work in a planned manner, based on the combined effort of various people. It teaches courage in voicing one's opinion and how to conduct a decorous controversy on the basis of argumentation rather than bickering. It gives honest publicity in place of rumor and gossip. It emboldens the meek, pricks the bubble of excessive cockiness, calms and guides public opinion. It is the conscience of the community. You have a grievance — write to the paper. You are upset — write. You charge me with deceit or ignorance — alright, let's discuss it openly, in the presence of witnesses, in writing, and create a document that we cannot repudiate.

The newspaper is a link which binds the class or school. Through it complete strangers come to know each other. It puts a spotlight on those quiet and thoughtful ones who in solitary silence can express themselves on paper but whose voice is lost in a vocal dispute.

6. How should the work be divided? Well, the paper must have sections, present features and brief current news items. Every contributor and member of the editorial board should have a notebook to record whatever concerns his section. One should take down the names of absentees, latecomers. Another — -he name days and birthdays of classmates. A third — information on class tests. A fourth — information about the short breaks. A fifth — the main break. One should collect information relating to mathematics, another to language. And so forth. Someone may take charge of the book column describing books read during the week, and by whom; who went to the theater. Another may collect information concerning the teaching staff. Someone else — discipline. Yet another — Quarrels and Fights. Or merely: who forgets his school books, exercise books and pens. Finally: Miscellaneous News. Though I have specified some twenty sections, this does not mean that there should be precisely those, no less and no more. That is just an example to demonstrate how the work can be split up, and that even one who has no great taste for writing can take charge of a section. Probably new sections will emerge, others will die a natural death. It may happen that a participant will hand the editor-in-chief his notebook marked: "Nothing of interest." If this happens often you will soon see who falls short of honest informing by failing to take down information which may be of some value. You will also find those who spend themselves excessively on questions of lesser interest to the public. A pledge may be inscribed on the flyleaf of the notebook:

"I undertake to hand this notebook to the editor-in-chief every Saturday during the first trial month, even if nothing is recorded during the week."
Signature, date.

After the first trial month, the undertaking may be extended to cover a period of three months.

A footnote: "In case of sickness, I undertake to send in the notebook."

7. The editorial board should discuss at its meetings the ways and means of most attractive presentation of current news and improvement of every individual section. The thing to be avoided at meetings is unconstructive criticism. Criticism is unconstructive when it merely states what is wrong without showing how to correct or improve it. No newspaper is so good that there is no room for improvement. But: "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." Time was when men used to light their homes with resin-smearred wooden torches, then came candles, oil, gas and electricity. The old was retained until they devised something better. The school itself is not perfect, though many persistently deliberate on how to make it better. But what would happen if all the schools were closed down because they are imperfect? Nor are the teachers ideal, but we have to put up with them until better ones are found. To tell a contributor who is not particularly conscientious: "If that's how you're going to work, better not do it at all," is very easy but not very wise. To say: "This section is uninteresting," is easy, but something must be found to put in its place or there will be a void. Even if one whole issue of the paper has turned out badly, the next one may always be better. Perhaps things will improve in three months.

Let no one get upset at criticism, because, in the first place, what one may find not to his liking, another may like. Secondly, criticism does not discourage the wise, on the contrary, it is an incentive to greater efforts. Let no one be ruled by anger at meetings. Someone may stand up and say cruel and unpleasant things. Maybe he is simply like that, not his fault that he was born so. Perhaps he has some secret reason why he does not want the paper to appear— it may disturb him and he wants to break it up. Publicity is not to everybody's liking. He prefers to prowl on the quiet. It would be, therefore, unwise to let him get the upper hand.

*Concordia res parvae crescunt, discordia maximae dilabuntur*³¹ — so says an ancient Roman proverb.

So think, weigh, build one, thought on another, seek the right course, and do not despair that both man and his works are flawed.

³¹ Agreement enhances small matters, disagreement destroys the greatest.

8. In addition to what are called current topics, the paper must keep a reserve. The value of the paper lies in the content of the editorial file. And it is precisely here that young people blunder. An experienced editor puts away some of the articles, does not put all the best into a single issue. He is like a good housewife who takes care always to have the pantry full, puts on the table a tasty snack every day but at the same time keeps an emergency stock against someone's dropping in, has something saved for the time when stores are shut. Young people tend to move heaven and earth to have the first issues interesting and broad. Moreover, they are in too much of a rush to get the first issue out. There I said: "Don't argue." Here I say: "Don't rush."

That's right, don't rush. Supposing we have decided that current topics will take up half the issue; there is plenty of time to prepare the other half. I should say that four issues should be prepared in advance (except for current topics), before the first is published. Of course, expectant readers will grow impatient, perhaps even joke. More than one will say: "Talk, talk, and no paper." The French say: "He laughs best who laughs last." Let them joke and laugh now, while you go on with the job slowly and thoroughly. This one or that may get discouraged — never mind: "Straw fires don't burn long." And the wiser will learn to wait. I know from my own experience that the most impatient contributors, if they write a piece and do not find it in the next issue, think immediately that they are being ill treated. It is not so. The paper must strive for variety — longer articles must be interwoven with shorter ones, serious with light, more difficult with easier. Say there is a performance or an excursion arranged by the school.

As many as four have reported on this subject. What is better, to give all four articles in one issue or produce them one by one? If anyone says: "Until you publish that other thing, I wouldn't write any more," he should be told that he is wrong. We have all read one time or another advertisements of novels and articles which are printed months later. Adults understand this, young people must learn it.

It is even possible to announce that the first issue will not appear until those who have already submitted one article send in another — "for the file." Even more stringent rules may be drawn up — every contributor must have two articles permanently in reserve.

A newspaper is like a bouquet made up of various flowers. The greater the variety to choose from, the better the bouquet.

9. Must the editor of the paper himself be a contributor? Not necessarily. It is good

if the editor can write, in case of an emergency when no one else can be induced to do the job in time. But there is a danger that a writing editor will reject a contribution in the belief that his own is better. Even a bad article is not worthless — it may serve to encourage someone. If I were the editor of a school newspaper, and if someone in the class were considered to have but little ability, I would approach precisely him. And if anyone started making jokes and wisecracks, I would write in the next issue that he had no right to act this way, that it was wrong and stupid. Perhaps I would write in even stronger terms, without mentioning the name. Generally speaking, great care should be exercised over names in a newspaper, especially as regards unflattering references. And no such articles can be anonymous, they must be signed. Sometimes, the editorial board appends a comment to the effect that although a certain article is printed in the interests of freedom of the press, the editors do not associate themselves with it, or consider it unfair.

The editor must be extremely calm, tactful and considerate, following to the dominant principle of avoiding whatever may arouse resentment and set people against the paper, neglecting nothing that might gain it friends.

A newspaper dealing with school affairs must now and again make reference to the teachers. It has the right to speak up on matters concerning regulations and discipline. However, I should not advise approaching such matters in the early days. At the same time, it is undesirable for the paper to adopt a servile attitude toward the school authorities. But, aspiring to universal respect, the paper should offer balanced opinion on all issues, and serve to benefit the teaching staff as well. Only then will it be able to weather criticism, and count on the teachers' support. Tact and impartiality must be the editor's chief concern.

No less important is it that the editor should grab every thought, every idea and suggestion which may make the paper more varied. The reader likes the regular columns in his paper but he also likes variety, surprise, something novel.

If the paper is not regularly illustrated, a holiday or jubilee extra number with sketches may be published. In one issue, a prize puzzle may be inserted, in another a joke, a suggestion for an excursion, a performance or any other entertainment. This is the rule in all great newspapers. One of the Paris dailies displayed a bottle containing peas in the show window of its buildings: "A prize goes to him who correctly guesses how many peas there are in the bottle." The bottle was filled and sealed publicly, and on a specified day the count was made in public, too. Two readers were said to have gotten the right answer — a cab driver and a member of parliament.

10. Competitions greatly enrich the editorial file. The editorial board either specifies the subjects or gives a loose indication — a competition for a poem, for an article on a political or economic theme, for a joke. A prize is awarded to the entry which receives most votes from readers.

I can suggest a few subjects, offered not as models but only by way of example: 1. My adventure in the streetcar; 2. How I lost my way (in the woods, in town); 3. My interesting dream; 4. What I would do if I were to win a million zlotys; 5. People I frequently meet on my way to school; 6. What makes me most angry; 7. The five nicest names for men and for women; 8. What would I do if I were given a free hand; 9. Suggestions for a school concert; 10. The ideal school.

Subjects four, six and seven are in the nature of a public opinion poll. Opinion soundings are very popular in the United States. Thousands of replies have been sent in to some poll questions.

It is, in fact, interesting what names are most liked by people, what vices and virtues they consider the most important, what makes people angry, what they believe happiness to be, which popular writer has the most fans.

Before the war³² a certain paper polled the public about the most popular Polish novel. Sienkiewicz's *Ogniem i mieczem* (*With Fire and Sword*) won hands down.

Sometimes such polls reveal most interesting facts, sometimes amusing ones. For example, in a certain school I asked what profession readers would choose. One wanted to be a doctor, one a teacher, another an engineer, and little Joey wrote that he would like to be a magician. Everybody laughed. The aspirant to magic powers was unidentified since the questionnaire was anonymous. So I asked whose aspiration it was: if he liked to do so, he might speak up. Joey rose: "I wrote it." Was it a joke? Far from it. The question was not: "What profession will you or can you follow?" but: "What profession would you choose?" Joey was awarded a prize, and he had given us a most interesting subject for the next questionnaire: "*What would I do if I were a magician?*"

To question "What makes me most angry?" one boy answered: "I am angriest when I tell the truth and am not believed; for instance, I am looking for my cap which has gotten lost somewhere. And someone comes up and asks where Krucza St. is. I tell him that I am too busy, I'm looking for my cap. He answers: 'You say that because you don't know.' Or someone asks to borrow something, an eraser, something

³² Refers to World War I

of that sort. You say you haven't got one, and he doesn't believe you. I could kill him for that!" It is a fact that since that time I have been much more careful in telling anyone that I do not believe him, unless I am absolutely sure that he is lying!

To the question: "What sort of person do I dislike most?" one answer was: "Those who are inconsiderate; you tell them to go away and they stick around and make a bigger nuisance of themselves."

11. I should like to mention prizes. What sort of prizes are to be awarded? The editorial board of a school paper can hardly ever be affluent, so that the prizes cannot be costly. Experience has shown that a souvenir postcard makes a very pleasing prize. A card with a suitable picture on it is selected and a sheet of paper glued onto the other side with an inscription roughly to this effect:

"Pursuant to a decision of the Competition Judges dated ... , a souvenir postcard is awarded to ... (full name)."

(date)

(signatures)

or:

"Pursuant to a decision of the Editorial Board of (name of paper) this souvenir postcard is awarded to (name)."

What the postcard has been awarded for may be stated. "For participation in a competition." — "To mark one year (six months) of collaboration — his tenth (twentieth) article."

As a form of encouragement, there may be a mention in the prospectus that a jubilee postcard will be awarded for writing twenty or twenty-five articles.

Restraint should be practiced in awarding the postcards. Indiscriminateness tends to depreciate, or it may happen that every contributor will demand a reward for any little work done and, failing to receive a postcard, will refuse to budge in the future. It should be made clear that a postcard is not a prize but a souvenir. Anyone who dislikes the paper, has no respect for it, what is a souvenir to him? To anyone who really wants to remember, a single postcard is a precious souvenir. Care must be taken not to give cause for a charge that the editor and a narrow circle of friends look primarily after themselves. Therefore, it is better to make it known in advance that the editor, for example, will receive a postcard after a year; a member of the editorial board and °, a regular contributor, for every ten or twenty issues. It is necessary to make sure in good time that no one may get a postcard more than two or three times during the year, and that recipients must conscientiously fulfill their duties and zealously contribute to the success of the paper.

One more point here. A postcard serves to advertize the paper; therefore, try to have postcards awarded to as many people as possible. Consequently, in cases of doubt, priority should be given to one who has not had a postcard before. Another idea is to hold a drawing every three months for those who have not so far received souvenirs.

This is a matter calling for considerable tact and care.

12. A single copy of a school newspaper is published. Transcription is the work of the editor-in-chief. But before I say any more about that editor-in-chief, I must call attention to one important question.

There are people with a great facility for writing. They like to write, they want to write. Some write their own material, others plagiarize. And there are those who do not like writing. In the same way, some like to play a musical instrument, others to sketch, still others to memorize, to solve arithmetical problems, to sew or sing, to help with the housework, or look after little children, to read books or tend flowers. It's fortunate that not all have the same preferences. But great is the tragedy that today's school still fails to take into consideration all of man's capabilities and likings. What can we do about that? People keep pondering but have not thought out anything as yet. And to this day, there is respect at school for those who easily and gladly do creative writing. So much so that anyone who cannot write and does not like it is thought a fool. And mighty proud of themselves are those who can write at length and competently. This is a big mistake. It embitters and harms many who are intelligent and useful men but are clumsy with a pen, as others are clumsy at music, gymnastics, chess, or declamation. For, I repeat, it is just as well that not all have identical eyes, hair, thoughts and emotions. How frequently a friendship is struck up between one who is merry and one who is melancholy, a dark and a light person, a doctor and a teacher! True, every man can write a letter, describe some adventure or event, and even if he does not like writing, it is right and proper that the school should make him do it. For every man must and should do at times what he dislikes and even what he cannot do well, if it be necessary and useful.

I have said all this so it may not sound strange that I do not consider a good, interesting and witty writer to be worth more than those who write nicely.

13. In the Middle Ages, before the days of print, the copyists enjoyed no less respect than scholars and poets. The relationship of a manuscript to print is that of a freehand portrait to a photograph, embroidery to machine work, singing to a gramophone record. Neat handwriting is also a gift and, let me add, a gift that is

all too rare.

Therefore, if a school newspaper cannot base its existence upon exceptionally capable contributors, let it not be unduly bothered if the editor-in-chief has no particular calligraphic talents. We come back to the starting point. Let him with the most beautiful handwriting undertake to copy the jubilee, holiday or illustrated issue. But as a permanent arrangement, the editor-in-chief or his deputy — the most conscientious, honest and accurate in the class — should be asked to do the work. For the most responsible job is that of the editor-in-chief. Whoever has seen how much care is taken in handling a rotary press for printing newspapers will grasp how much respect is due to the editor-in-chief of a school newspaper. He is not a machine indifferent to what it prints. Week by week, he must make a copy of the paper, including the commas, whatever is less interesting or entirely uninteresting, which readers just skip through. He would be like a machine if a machine had a soul.

His work passes unnoticed; it is not merely the work of the hand that writes but also of the eye that spots, of the ever alert mind watching that every sentence is rounded, of care not to make a mistake. Here, the letters closed up a little to keep within the space allotted; there, larger ones in the headline; and then, the breaking of words, and making sure that the page ends neatly.

Pay attention to the artistic appearance of the paper but also give the editor-in-chief time to acquire experience. Do not expect everything to be flawless; here, a missing page, there, a deletion or omission. Such things not only may but must happen; particularly at the beginning.

Be grateful to him, indulgent, and remember not to pile too much work on him. The editor-in-chief is entitled to reject an illegible, untidy text dotted with corrections. The writer's duty is to consider the editor-in-chief.

14. To the best of my recollection, the majority of school newspapers stopped appearing because nobody could be found willing to copy the articles. This should be borne in mind.

The editor-in-chief should have a deputy, must have assistance. Longer articles for issues prepared in advance may be copied by the writers themselves. It is a good way to teach them to write more concisely. Let the editor-in-chief draw up the time schedule carefully, and say what the size the newspaper is to be — a complete exercise book every week, or an exercise book to last for two issues. This is important. Inexperienced enthusiasts frequently undertake burdens which later on they find themselves unable to carry. The time required for transcription of a page should be checked with a stopwatch — how many hours for the transcription of the whole

issue, how much time can be devoted to the paper every day.

There are cases on record in which every issue was copied by a different hand. There is something to be said for this, but it is risky at first. If this method is preferred, well and good, but there must be one individual, the editor-in-chief, who bears responsibility for everything. It is absolutely essential to separate the editorial work from the administration. The editor-in-chief will never be able to find time enough to do everything and will end up by neglecting something or other. And remember that it is the beginning of the end when the paper stops appearing on time. At first it is only a day late, then a few days, a week — and finally it fades out. A paper, like man, may die suddenly, or it may pass away after a long illness.

I know of a case in which the parents, seeing that their son, a zealous editor-in-chief, was neglecting his studies, forbade him to transcribe the paper. Such an eventuality must also be taken into consideration.

This is exactly why I say that the publication of the first issue should not be rushed through before all the details have been fully discussed.

15. Nor is that all. The paper must have funds. Notebooks for regular contributors, exercise books (at least five) for the newspaper, pens for the editor-in-chief, perhaps a few souvenir postcards. Here I advise collecting the required funds in the form of voluntary contributions. The paper's budget should be drawn up in advance, receipts issued for money collected and everybody warned in advance that the whole venture may prove a flop. Let everyone be alert to the risk. Make the situation clear, then there can be no justified grumbling. Adults are well aware of the fact that the finest calculation may lead nowhere, that every new venture involves a certain risk. Only the inexperienced cry shame if they lose. But let there be no frivolousness, ill will, or dishonesty on the part of those responsible for contributed funds. The treasurer and a commission of three authorized to make purchases should be appointed well in advance so that disputes may be avoided. One definite type of souvenir postcard (with flowers, say) should be prescribed, in order to avoid conflict when one receives a prettier card than another.

The utmost care will not eliminate the dissatisfied and the plotters. However, we must not foolishly place in their hands the weapons with which to fight us. If they attack us, it will be clear either that they want to pick a quarrel or that they are the kind of people whose disgruntled nature never allows them to be satisfied with anything. The argument I consistently use when confronted with such people is:

"You don't like it, you're quite right. Neither do I. Things could be much

better. But, I haven't yet found a way; if you can suggest anything, I'll be very grateful."

16. A few words about the assistance of adults in editing the paper. Assistance is desirable but not indispensable. The best way is to ask the teacher to check every issue after transcription, and at the end, under the heading Errata, correct the grammatical and stylistic errors. The paper should preserve the freshness and originality of school-children's style. For it is not so very unlikely that in the future young people will develop a style all their own, like village folk, scientists, artists. The language of youth may prove more colorful, attractive and lively than the journalese used by adults. The school vocabulary has appealing idioms and words of its own.

Imitation of the style of adults, occasionally found in compositions, frequently annoys and amuses. The newspaper has the chance to free itself of that.

The school teacher may contribute the leader articles. Now and then, she may use some competition subject for a test paper. This would enrich the editorial file. Of course, the theme must be suggested by the editorial board.

Take care not to become wholly dependent on adults, whose major fault is that they are seldom able to collaborate with young people on the basis of mutual understanding. In the last resort they demand obedience while appearing to stand for absolute freedom. I refer to adults in general and not the rare exceptions.

17. Who should receive the copies of the newspaper after they have been read? Another point to be agreed on in advance. They may go to the school archives for the next generations of pupils to draw upon. They may be presented to the subscribers by drawing lots.

And other questions need to be discussed: lending the newspaper for reading at home, copying certain sections of it for keepsakes. And what is going to happen to the assets of the paper should it be discontinued? Are they to be handed to the school, distributed by way of a drawing among the whole class or the editorial board, or presented to the most deserving chosen by ballot.

1. I suggest that two [sic] meetings be held. The agenda of the first meeting should be as follows.
2. Statement of the purpose of the meeting (the founding of the school newspaper).
3. Election of chairman, who will take down the names of those who wish to speak and call on them in turn. (N.B. If someone is chosen as chairman, it is

silly to pretend to be modest and unwilling to do the job.)

4. Reading of this pamphlet.
5. Discussion on whether a newspaper should be published at all, how often, should teachers be asked to help, and, if so, which teachers.
6. Enrollment of those wishing to participate. The second meeting. Attended only by those enrolled.

Agenda:

1. Election of chairman and secretary of the meeting (the secretary must write a short account of the meetings for the (first issue of the paper).

2. Division of duties:

a) discussion and allocation of the various columns devoted to current topics;

b) fixing subjects and deadlines for contributions to the first four issues;

c) election of editor-in-chief and two subeditors.

3. Financial matters:

a) fixing a single contribution to serve as a capital fund;

b) fixing of a permanent monthly fee;

c) election of a treasurer.

18. After those two meetings, a prospectus of the paper is published. It states what the newspaper is to look like, what its funds are, who is to work on it. The prospectus will end with an appeal to those who, perhaps through lack of faith in themselves or inborn shyness, still hold aloof from the paper. They are urgently requested, though somewhat belatedly, to take part in the third meeting.

Agenda of the third meeting:

1. Reading the minutes of the first two meetings.
2. The treasurer's report on income and expenditure.
3. Report by the editor-in-chief on the content of the editorial file.
4. Expanding the membership of the editorial board, final division of duties, and signing of pledges for the trial month.

Point five might be a walk to Lazienki Park or Aleje Ujazdowskie.³³

I should not advise fixing the date of the first issue beforehand. Should anything be delayed, it is better to postpone a little even though the current news may become a trifle dated.

Similarly, leaving the date for the first issue open is helpful in case some misunderstanding or dissension arises, or if it becomes apparent that a large number are opposed and indifferent. It is much better to hold still another meeting, even though some may say: "Oh, hell! We meet and meet, and do nothing."

19. Some will be surprised that I conclude this pamphlet with this final advice.

After reading my views, you are free to say:

"We are not going to pay attention to all these tales. The old bore thinks that children and young people have no perseverance, can't do anything. We'll do as we please. Let get going quickly and with enthusiasm. What is there to be afraid of? It must work. God helps those who help themselves — *audaces Deus juvat!*"

A request from the author. Young people publishing school newspapers are cordially requested to send their comments on this pamphlet to the author in care of the publisher.

³³ These are among the pleasant landmarks of Warsaw.

THE SPECIAL SCHOOL

"SZKOLA SPECJALNA"

*Theory And Practice*³⁴

Thanks to theory — I know; as a result of practice — I feel. Theory enriches the intellect, practice colors feelings, trains the will. I know — does not mean that I act in accordance with what I know. The views of others must crystallize in one's own living ego. I weave from theoretical precepts, but with the possibility of choice. I reject, forget, omit, dodge, ignore. The outcome is my own conscious or unconscious theory which guides my actions. A great deal has been achieved if a piece of theory sustains within me its existence, its *raison d'être*; if it has influenced me to some degree, has had an impact. Theory I repudiate time and again; myself — rather rarely.

Practice is my past, my life, the sum total of subjective experiences, collection of failures, disappointments, defeats, victories and triumphs, negative and positive sensations. Practice distrustfully controls and censors theory, tries to each it in lies, in blunders. Maybe for him ... for that place ... perhaps for his conditions ..., but for me, in my own work, in my workshop.... Always different. Routine or experience? Routine is the result of apathetic willpower out in search of ways and means to facilitate, simplify, mechanize the work, to find a convenient short cut to saving time and energy. Routine makes emotional detachment possible, eliminates hesitation, sets up equilibrium. You do *your* job, efficiently discharge your formal duties. Routine enters at the point where the day's professional work ends. Now I find everything easy, no need to rack my brain, search, even look. I know for certain, beyond argument. I get along. I act sufficiently to avoid inconvenience. Anything new, surprising, unforeseen upsets and annoys. I want it to be just as I know it to be. The legitimate function of theory is to support my outlook, never to negate, undermine, embroil. Reluctantly, I have already once molded the framework of theory into a point of view, a plan, a program. I molded it carelessly because I do not care. You say: awful! Too late now, I am not going to start over again. For routine, the ideal quality is tenacity, my own authority propped up by the authority of *ad hoc* tenets picked up and strained off. Myself and others (a welter of quotations, names and official titles). Experience?

³⁴ First published Jan. 1924 — March 1925.

I make a start from what others know, I build according to my own capabilities, I yearn honestly, completely, not under external orders, under the pressure of control by others, but out of my own, unconstrained goodwill, under the wakeful eye of conscience. Not as a matter of conformity but to enrich my own self. Distrustful alike of alien opinion and my own, I do not know, I seek, I question. Tired, I brace myself and mature. Work is the most precious part of my innermost life. Not what is easy but what is most comprehensively effective. Seeking depth, I complicate. I understand that to experience means to suffer. Much experience — great ***suffering. I judge failure not by the sum of frustrated ambitions but by the total of amassed evidence. Whatever is novel is a fresh incentive to mental effort. The truth discovered today is but one stage. I have no notion what will be the last stage; suffice it that I am aware of the first stage of work. That first stage of educational work — what is its message, what does it amount to?

Paramount, in my opinion — judging fact at face value — is for the educator to be able:

To forgive in every case wholly and completely.

To understand everything is to forgive everything.

The teacher has to growl, grumble, shout, scold, threaten, punish; but within and for himself he must judge every offense, breach, fault indulgently. He went astray because he did not know; did not think; succumbed to temptation, prompting; because he experimented; because he could not do anything else.

Even where marked ill will is involved, the responsibility rests with those who incited it. Sometimes, a serene and indulgent teacher must patiently weather the communal storm of vengeful anger called up by the brutal despotism of a predecessor. The provocative "do it to spite him" is a trial, a test, a touchstone. To forbear, to stick it out means to prevail.

A teacher who frowns, frets, feels resentment toward the child for being what he is, how he was born, where he was reared — is not a teacher.

Sorrow — not bad temper.

Sorrow that the child should choose a crooked diversion from the lone trail of destiny. A smooth yoke or sharp-edged shackles. He is unfortunate, and the more so because he is at the beginning of the road.

Every report of an imprisonment or the death penalty is a painful memento for 'a teacher.

Sorrow, regret — but not anger. Compassion — but not vengefulness.

Are you not ashamed to be seriously angry? See how small, fragile, weak and helpless he is. Not what he will be, what he is today. A few joyful cries and sky-blue smiles at the dawn of life. He knows, senses the burden of his inferiority. Give him a chance to forget, relax. What a powerful moral lever in his sordid life will be the memory of the person — perhaps the only one — who was kind, who did not fail him. Saw through him, understood, and remained kind. He — the teacher.

It is essential to believe that a child cannot be squalid, only dirty. A delinquent child is still a child. That must not be forgotten for an instant. He has not given up yet, still does not know why he is what he is, wonders, at times realizes with alarm his own separateness, his inferiority, his being different from others. Why? Once he accepts his fate, he will cease to struggle, or worse ... if he comes to the conclusion that men, in general, are not worth his struggle with himself. Then he declares: "I am as good as, perhaps even better than, others."

How straightforward and dignified is the work of an animal tamer. The fury of wild instincts is overcome by man's unflinching, consistent will. He prevails by the spirit. A teacher might well follow with bated breath the new trends in taming — by gentleness — no longer with whip and pistol. And this is but a tiger or a lion.

Amazing how a brutal teacher can incense even gentle children.

I do not require that a child surrender totally; I tame his movements. Life is a circus ring, with moments more and less spectacular. He judges not what he is but what he does.

A teacher who has not experienced the rigors of hospital, clinical work is short of many focal points of thought and feeling. My job as a doctor is to relieve if I cannot cure, to halt the progress of the disease if I cannot help, to combat the symptoms ... all ... some and, if no other course is open, to cope with but a very few. That is the first thing. But not all. I do not ask whether he is going to use for good or ill the health I have restored to him. In this respect I must be prejudiced, dumb, if you wish. A physician who treats a man condemned to death is by no means ridiculous. He does his duty. The rest is not his responsibility.

The teacher does not have to take responsibility for a distant future, but he is fully responsible for the present. This assertion, of course, will arouse controversy. Some think just the opposite, erroneously in my opinion, though sincerely. Sincerely? Perhaps hypocritically? It is far more comfortable to suspend responsibility, to hold it over to a hazy tomorrow, than to account for every hour — right now, today. The teacher is indirectly responsible to society for the future, but for the present he is directly

and preeminently responsible to the child under his care.

It is convenient to sacrifice the child's immediate present to tomorrow's lofty ideals. To teach morality is simultaneously to nurture the good, to obtain a good which exists in spite of faults, vices, and innate vicious instincts. And confidence, faith in man, is this not in itself a good that can be perpetuated, developed as a counterweight to the evil which occasionally cannot be eradicated, and which can be controlled only with difficulty?

How much more reasonable life is than many teachers are! What a great shame.

And now, when after years of work, mental effort, harsh experience, one finally arrives at these truths, he finds to his astonishment that they present no novelty, that theory has long been saying the same thing, that he has read it some time, heard it, always known it, and now, in addition, practice has made him feel precisely what he also knows.

Whoever finds a clash between theory and practice has not developed emotionally to the level of current theory; let him not learn any more from books and prints but from life; he does not lack ready prescriptions but the moral strength, won by sweat, to feel truth, to make a blood brother of the truth of theory.

The Little Brigand³⁵

"ZŁODZIEJASZEK"

The division of institutions for children into child care and correctional, which seems neat and tidy from the point of view of the administration, may mislead an uncritical teacher. In institutions of the first type he may shut out thoughts of reform, and in the second type he obscures the problem of care by the categorical imperative of reforming. "Reformatory" is better than "penal"; and we shall have it still better — "educational."

To bring up, rear, guard under the wings of kindness and experience, in warmth and peace, shield against danger, keep in storage until they grow up, become strong enough for independent flight. Wings — flight. Dangerous metaphors. An easy job for a hawk or hen to warm chicks with her own body. For me, man and teacher of a variety of children not my own — a more complex task. I long to see my little community soar, I dream of them flying high, a yearning for their perfection is the sad prayer of my secret heart, but with my feet firmly grounded, I realize that as soon as they begin to toddle they will busy themselves — prowl, stray or plunder — in search of nourishment and crumbs of

³⁵ First published April — June 1926.

joy. Those tots — chicks — include future hawks and hens, and I offer myself equally to all. A little bird of prey is growing up — not my fault, no business of mine. And it makes no difference whether chance has placed him in an institution for correction or care.

To all this I expect a justified opposition. One needs to travel a long road of observing and solitary musing, laboriously excavate many fields of study, grow honestly conscious of the imperfection of human nature and written laws, assess the meager forces and means at the teacher's disposal — to be able to look without resentment or fear on that last link in the chain of experience. Not my fault. Not for me to remedy. Beyond my strength. My responsibility is to rear, save, shield, defend against wrong, preserve until they grow up. When they do — let the courts, police, and jails have their way. Too bad. I am responsible for my charge's present, and have no authority to influence and interfere in his future fortunes.

And that present must be cheerful, full of pleasurable effort, childish, no worries, no burdens beyond his age and strength. I am supposed to give him the chance to let off steam, to give, despite the grumblings of offended written law and its awe-inspiring paragraphs, all the air, sun, all the kindness that is his right, irrespective of his doing what is right or what is wrong, unrelated to his virtues and vices. Uproot, weed out, tend? Weeds either grow unchecked or are destroyed en masse without ceremony, and in their place potatoes are planted. As a teacher I am concerned with the laws of nature, of God, not those of officialdom, of man. How splendid, disinterested and straightforward is a hospital. It heals the wound of a hero and of a prison inmate; whether on recovery he goes back to his honest pursuits, or out to work some wickedness, or is sent to the gallows — that is not the issue for a doctor. Maximum effort to assist in restoring to normal the disordered functions of an organ. If I am ineffective, I do not blame the patient for leaving the hospital with a chronic disease and thus becoming a burden to his family, to society. That is not for me to judge.

How fraudulent and dishonest is an institution which on the basis of giving a little food, a roof, meager clothing, indifferent care, declares — in defiance of common sense: We reform! Every case of moral turpitude — we heal. As the newspapers say: "A useful, honest worker put into circulation." No. I will not litigate with the coffins of unidentified heredity, with its unknown instincts and urges. I cannot undertake to remove the scars and wounds of earliest childhood. I am no quack, no witch doctor — merely a hygienist. I provide conditions conducive to recovery — light and warmth, freedom and joy of life. I trust that in his own way he will edge toward improvement. He will struggle, suffer disappointments and shocks. Let him renew his efforts. Let him seek his own ways and means. Let him experience the joy of small and

isolate victories. I help him with the sweet atmosphere of my boarding school.

Where improvement must be forced violently — that is no place for the teacher. A job for a prison guard. Better, quicker, openly and thoroughly. They will reform, will obey, will not dare oppose, will be cowed into submission. Attention, forward march! They're off. They run. Under the threat of severe punishment, they have charged their ways in no time. Entirely and promptly. As a teacher, I can spot among the rogues many honest ones, sent here by accident. I wish there were many like them at large. I can, naturally, see thieves, too. I see how many of the worst do well for themselves, enjoy respect. I see also those led on by bad example, scarcely infected, with crime — and the incurable, absolutely doomed.

I respect their efforts, pity them — for, God knows, is contemporary life worth their inner struggle, desperate at times, their bloody path to improvement, their despairing but stubbornly renewed efforts?

Their eyes are set on me, the master, the model. They strive to be like me — their teacher — to earn my commendation, encouragement, anxious to reward me for my efforts and services. Ingenuously and yet charmingly they tune themselves to my key of justice, honesty, duty. My poor dears! I am tempted to warn you: don't overdo it. And without the actual words, they sense it themselves, anyhow.

The model reformatories cure slightly more than half. And the rest? Well, they go into life armed with the memory of a serene childhood and the image of men who felt for them, did not cuss and condemn but blessed them when they were starting out on their crooked, serpentine, stormy and hard road of life. Police work made easier. They are not benumbed with punishment which years ago ceased to produce any effect, have not become petrified in the hatred to man, tense with the passionate thought of revenge.

A little brigand with whom it is easy to find a common language.

*On Various Types Of Children*³⁶

"UWAGI O ROZNYCH TYPACH DZIECI"

A quick run over the subject, journal fashion. I begin with children who steal. These are the most numerous. From the point of view of the possibility of reform, they split into a number of categories having very little in common with each other.

A chance theft. He took because "they all do it." He snatched an apple from the push cart or from someone else's garden, a handful of candy or prunes, a box, a bag, a can. He tried to pick a pocket of a coin or small bill, he snatched a wallet. For the first time, or he has been doing it over a shorter or longer period. Happily, children in this country are rather seldom put on trial. Such cases are dealt with summarily — the delinquent is given a good scare or dealt with there and then.

I cannot get the following case out of my mind. In Berlin, a boy of nine brought a book to a secondhand bookstore. Together with the book, a sheet of paper — father's permission to sell it. The sophisticated handwriting aroused the bookseller's suspicion and the child was arrested. Thy. father was called to the police station. Trying to shield his son, he claimed that he wrote the permission. He was warned, however, that should an expert find the handwriting was not his, he would be charged and severely punished. Fearful of the consequence, he changed his statement. He did not write it himself but told the child to write it for him. It did not help him. They said he would be charged with inducing a minor in his care to commit a forgery. Finally, the father was magnanimously forgiven and the boy sentenced to several months in a reformatory. I hope that Poland can avoid such type of lawfulness for as long as possible.

A boy — dynamic, lively, with plenty of initiative and imagination — is on the lookout for adventure, thirsts for it, needs it. Incidentally, the traditional raids of village children on other people's gardens constituted a hint of the existence of vitamins in fresh fruit and vegetables long before their presence could be scientifically established.

How should such children be treated? It's like chicken pox. Suppose we are more severe — the itch which afflicts children reared with insufficient care, neglected, easily yielding to the infection of temptation. A little ointment and all will be well again. No need even for treatment. If a reformatory considers that proportion of its children as

³⁶ First published Oct. 1928 — March 1929.

reformed, it is much mistaken. Neither reform nor treatment is needed here. A good bath suffices.

Chronic temptation is the work of one enemy —hunger. I will not pause to discuss that.

He needs money for one thing or another. It is his right. Others have it, others eat. A slight relaxation of willpower, and it is all over. A short stay in an atmosphere of mental hygiene and cheerfulness and these collisions with the law vanish promptly, once and for all.

Is not playing at thieves and bandits, a pastime so common and popular — and, I should add, so eternal — evidence of the real attitude of children to theft, regardless of the moral social aspect of the problem? Children yield to a general suggestiveness, mimicry, vivid imagination, urge for adventure, occasionally ambition. There are boys who steal in order to give a treat to others.

An adventure — interesting, lively, gay, amusing. Healthy, lovable rascals! All concern for man and childish naivete are left intact. It's sufficient to tell him that he does wrong.

How come that soccer is so popular on the outskirts of towns? Three or four are waiting in a line. "Mummy's darling" comes along swinging a fine, brand new ball. That sissy wouldn't even know what to do with it. A bolder one first snatches the ball, passes it to another, on to the third, and the fourth runs off with it.

Reviewing a number of types, we would, finally, arrive at a child who magpielike always takes whatever he can lay his hands on. He cannot help it. If in the first case we are concerned with the will, either excessively strong or weak, here we have a nervous disorder calling for treatment.

I will cite a case from a few score years ago. It was in France. Two boys, shepherds, wanting money for a planned "Robinson Crusoe" voyage, murdered a farmer's whole family. I am omitting the details. Two columns were devoted to the case in the "Matin" and the "Journal." Interviews with the parents, a copy of a letter written from jail` :

"Dear Mummy! I know I have done wrong. I am sorry to have caused you trouble. You may be sure that if I get out nothing of the kind will ever happen again. Once more I beg you not to be angry with me."

The boy's age — ten.

I want to record briefly that dull and mentally deficient children must in the end fall under the control of a really criminal peer or youth. Who will play with them? Who wants to talk to a fool? What has his company to offer to peers? Only one who can get

something out of it will find interest in and associate with him, and a lot can be gotten out of an unquestioning partner and disciplined executor of an order. Probably such children have given rise to the view that one black sheep can easily spoil the whole flock. A sound intellect, a sensitive apparatus functioning efficiently is endowed with tremendous resistance against contagion. Only this way is it possible to explain that not all street and courtyard children follow the downhill road of crime. Let me insist on this most emphatically. Only a retarded one dominated by a normal intellect will yield passively. That is why the mentally retarded account for a considerable percentage of reformatory children. Incidentally, until recently there were no schools for them.

Harmless, charming little brigands. How much more detrimental to society is the chiseler type who cheats at games, exploits by swapping, betting, runs into debt, befogs the moral atmosphere, creates conflicts. Parasitic, usurious types, who may be said to pull up just one step short of the prison gate. They notably poison the atmosphere in schools. They prowl unnoticed in the very midst of the adult community.

Fortunately, only an insignificant number of merry mischief makers, disturbers of the public peace and order are detained. Less fortunately, this number is bound to increase with increased police vigilance.

In mild cases, this fleeting and common ailment needs no treatment. This is why anything will help. But the uncritical are deceived into believing that a change is brought about by a friendly word, a single heart-to-heart talk or even a good smack. Yes, such fortunate cases assuring a quick recovery may not even be harmed by corporal punishment. In the medical world, there is a well-known wisecrack: the patient recovered in spite of treatment.

Let me make it clear that a child who snorts and kicks up his heels is not merely imitating a horse but wants to be one. He wants to identify with the horse's situation. Barking, he is a dog, but obviously he will not be taken to the pound by a dog catcher. Nor would a boy who calls himself general be charged with having planned a coup d'etat. Thus, it would be nonsense to punish a child because he has momentarily played thief.

A violent child. Perhaps the most difficult problem, requiring the greatest consideration. He may kill in anger. It is a serious flaw in character and temperament. It holds danger for the future when alcohol comes into play, when he will be up against injustice and wrong. There is the serious risk of unsuitable treatment intensifying the bitterness if not the disturbance. It is very difficult to cope with these children, and still more so with such adolescents.

This is not the time or place to explain how I came (readers must take my word for it) to have a collection of twenty thousand resolutions to reform. I assert categorically that a child with a vice feels it as a burden, is anxious to rid himself of it; but he finds it difficult. Without guidance, he repeatedly launches unsuccessful assaults against himself and only a number of failures forces him to give up.

Odd. Nobody doubts that a hunchback would like to be rid of his hump, that an armless or legless child would like the missing limb to regenerate. There is no need to urge rectification in such cases; on the contrary, the impetus should be modified. Remember that only patience, persistent small efforts, the most cautious treatment can produce satisfactory results.

It is not easy to win the friendliness and confidence of distrustful children, resentful at being refused treatment, help. Let me only recall that a child regards adults as semigods who know everything and to whom everything is possible. His inevitable deduction — they are unwilling to comfort.

I cannot dwell on a small but interesting percentage of child "pigs." Their quantity is such that it would be termed "a trace" in an analytical laboratory. Those who insist otherwise imbue with their own feelings the entirely uncomprehended world of children's sensations.

Over and above offensive ambition, we find a good deal of defensive pride in children. The experience of past tribulations — at times the result of something inherent, a physical infirmity — turns them into misanthropes. Sulkers, snarling and unfriendly, they are the tragic harvest of crime.

Just one reminiscence. While in Paris, I went to a water sports meeting arranged to mark the end of the school year. A fine swimming pool, the hall filled with some ten thousand school children accompanied by teachers. Sunshine and gaiety. Then the Minister of Education makes an appearance. The orchestra plays the Marseillaise, the children rise, doff their caps. One boy of twelve remains seated. A classmate tries calmly and gently to make him stand up, takes the cap off his head. An angry glance, a threatening gesture. He sits with his cap on. He is demonstrating against the government, against France. Three pairs of eyes converge on the boy — a policeman, a teacher and myself. Then our eyes meet and we all three smile. I was moved with envy that France, rich and secure, could afford the luxury of an indulgent smile.

Wisdom in a nutshell. I am concluding with a general comment. There are pimples, little skin eruptions, ulcers — all harmless; and there is tuberculosis which grasps, spreads and infects. I clearly see and understand the attempts to prevent children of a certain category from being born. I can see the need for the hospital, isolation for a very long time to come. I do not exaggerate, neither do I belittle difficulties. The most menacing problem is to humiliate, arouse hatred, rage, to rear hungry wolves, hunted birds of prey.

Unfortunately, dismal suffering spreads like lice, and sadism, crime, uncouthness and brutality are nurtured upon it. There are three possibilities. The first is a den, a

cesspool where unhappy children will find an inferno of tortures and anguish. The second is therapy. The third (this particular one I saw in Lichtenberg) is mechanical discipline, shutting out all possibility of any independent thought, any decision. I utter a warning against that last, lest, panicked by the results of the den, we might seem to be driven that way. Model — a hospital. It neither accuses nor judges, but examines and treats.

The Incurable³⁷

"NIEPOPRAWNI

The business of a hospital is to cure. In many cases, we settle for mere improvement. The business of an institution for children is precisely that — to bring about an improvement in the inmate. We are satisfied if balance is restored to such a degree that under favorable conditions he may choose a road beneficial, not detrimental, to society.

A TB case is rehabilitated. Subsequent bad living conditions and nourishment produce a relapse and resurgence of the disease.

Therefore, the patient must be helped to change his conditions of life and work. That means training for an occupation, helping the child to earn his living and stay honest, showing him a way of life which will provide for his basic needs. Going to sea may be the answer to wanderlust. A boy with a tendency to cruelty may be directed to a slaughter house. Or perhaps the reverse. Lead them not into temptation.

Will it work or not?

A further consideration of major importance. Does the patient want to recover? What must he pay for the improvement? Will he agree to give up liquor, dancing, sports — all harmful to him. Nothing without his consent and participation.

Stipulations and bargains over the price of improvement are not infrequent among children of the well-to-do. You will get so much pocket money, but don't steal, give up bad company. Live like a decent human being.

We know that, as a rule, demands tend to be stepped up. The mutual agreement falls to the ground. An educational institution has limited means and influence, it cannot pay an exorbitant price for reform. It will teach a trade, help with finding a job. And for long?

It is necessary to husband carefully, to lay out time, energy and cash only where there is a chance of satisfactory results.

Is there any list of diseases and degrees of suffering to facilitate orientation? To guard against disappointments?

³⁷ First published Apr. 1931 — June 1932.

A few suggestions:

1. A "criminal" because he was poor and destitute. He was bribed, dragged in. Like a homeless pup he followed his nose to food. Moral if no one puts him up to tricks, if he finds no uses for his experience in illegal acquisition of essentials. Moral if steered that *way by* others but commits offenses because he cannot help it. A reliable worker in the criminal profession.

Nocturnal operators find it profitable to hire him. They too need conscientious and upright workers.

The prognosis — good.

Was he cured?

No. Rather saved like a drowning man, like one snatched from the wolf's jaws.

Are not precisely such cases the pride (unfounded) and apparent triumph of well-run reformatories?

For in the badly run, they continue to be dependent and trained in crime, increasingly infected by others.

2. A "criminal" because he easily gives way to temptations. He is drawn by changing images, drawn to fun. Boredom and monotony are his enemies.

If in the previous case the intellectual standard is irrelevant, here it is of decisive significance.

An idiot with ambitions cannot so easily be fitted in where he can give good service (and for the underworld he is also less attractive as a partner).

A lively, quick-witted youngster, with initiative, why should he commit crimes? He may be willing to fight them. He will find a place for himself in the police force or in the staff of a penitentiary. If he is bright at school, he may advance in business.

3. A brawler. Quick-tempered. Touchy. Irritable. Avoided by peers since childhood, he grows up resenting the quiet and level-headed; accepted, even singled out by those who see personal profit in exploiting his brains, initiative and courage for their shady activities.

Homeless, spiritually starved, he follows the first to come along who does not brush off and scoff. An active collaborator, perhaps even a ringleader.

But for the brevity implied by my journal, I should have to deal at more length with patients of this category.

Undoubtedly curable, but at odds with life, they may become the brains and muscle of the underworld.

Avengers, confessed enemies of the wishy-washy and phony organization of the "moral" world.

4. The dissatisfied — and their kind.

They differ from brawlers in background and degree of hostility.

Ill-disposition due to bodily ailments (headache, asthma, irritating rash), perhaps epilepsy, incontinence, ugliness, disability — any sort of flaw.

Pursuant to the conception of inferiority complexes (Adler) and Kretschmer's investigations (not completely known to me), it would be possible to apply a particular pathology and therapy to such individuals.

Consciously or unconsciously:

I am sick at heart. Injustice rules the world. I seek allies and focus my ambitions where others equally deprived fight for their right to life and joy.

5. Poisoned by distrust. This type is rebelling against his nearest and dearest, against the first guides of his early childhood. Traumas, not necessarily sexual.

Curable. Show him kindness, goodwill, set an example (no gab), gratify the yearning for truth and the good. The road to reform.

Bending, breaking, enforcing correction — that will infuriate him. It's even risky to hurry him.

This type is perhaps the most feared by educators who are insincere in what they do. Such a child will not be taken in by appearances. He will ring every coin on the counter. He will brutally reject if he smells treachery.

6. Jesters — caricaturists. The world and life in cap and bells. Unruly, restless, artistic souls. This is what a teacher-dogmatist says about them:

"First one must battle a basic fault which vitiates any serious work. This is clowning in class. This defect is fatal not only for the joker himself but also disturbs the work of others. It makes a teacher's task immensely difficult and leads ultimately to the deserved expulsion of the pupil unless the tendency is combatted early."³⁸ *De la*

³⁸ Original by Korczak is in French.

direction des enfants dans un internat de garçons par l'abbé Simon. (Child-Rearing in a Boy's Boarding School, by Father Simon).

Their enemy is any authority, seriousness and pomp. Beware the unsmiling word. They will burst out laughing at a moment only they understand.

Ascertain. Can he draw, sing, dance? Perhaps a cabaret writer, practical joker, attraction at amusement parks.

He collides with the law, gaily, out of curiosity, by accident. He insists. Don't be fools. You know that for each one caught, a hundred get away with it. They self-correct, seek one another out when free. Without us life would not be half so much fun.

They understand that. They do not believe that teachers are so naive.

Do not expect of them either work or formal behavior.

That heading — "Incorrigible"; in the writing it has not worked out. For children's "incorrigibility" is always our fault. To them we represent contemporary knowledge and conditions of life with their inertia and anarchy. Children are entitled to charge us with being incompetent. How ignoble we appear in the role of scolders, branders, how hateful when we resort to violence.

And those innate "evil tendencies?" From the same soil the raspberry draws sweetness and the nettle poison.

Ethical dyscrasia, sick heredity.

But do our forecasts work out? Does not reform appear precisely at that point where we have given up, just when we have thought it to be the least possible? Is it not the outcome of undiscerned stimuli, frequently imperceptible?

Why did this one whom we thought doomed recover, and that one on whom we had pinned our hopes fail?

For over and above the noxious secretions acquired — from the drunkard-father and harlot-mother — there are also the anonymous forces inherited from the grandfathers and great-grandfathers.

We know that surprises are frequent, but instead of allowing them to awaken vigilance and criticism, caution as regards problems and men, judgments and assertions, we allow them to offend and anger us. We want things to be as we know they should be. It disturbs our peace of mind, offends our dignity.

Refusing to look at the dizzy depths of the spirit, we reach for power to control it.

Recognizing such children are difficult to plumb, not worth all the trouble, we disdain them and mistrust the results of our own work. We prefer that they stand in the dock while we play the role of accusers. Not teachers but prosecutors.

Dishonest, even as officials, we reinforce the ranks of the transgressors, weaken the ranks of those who, armed with experience of life and toughened in the fight against their own unruly spirits, could be our allies in maintaining order.

*The Ambitious Teacher*³⁹

"WYCHOWAWCA AMBITNY"

"The right man in the right place." As regards monitoring duties, children's work in an institution, I have reverted repeatedly to the question of how simple it would be to achieve order in communal life, eliminate errors, misunderstandings, accusations, differences, upsets, struggles and tears if each one could be properly placed; so that this idle worker, inefficient and irritating, would become useful — more, devoted — in a different post. He is happy when carrying bricks, dragging logs, digging a deep ditch, swinging an axe. He says he likes it, is in his element, "like a fish in water." If you tell him to saw, peel potatoes, write, memorize poetry, he changes from cheerful and exemplary to disobedient, quarrelsome, spiteful and lying. (Teachers' training colleges should use short films. Fish in and out of water, a boy dragging planks, and the same boy in the classroom over an arithmetic problem.)

I am not unappreciative of the efforts and achievements in the field of characterology; they seem to me, however, excessively *ex cathedra*, too sure of themselves — perhaps even exactly that — rather divorced from the cool observation of minor details of the day. It is not the psychotechnique that disturbs but the overbearing self-assurance. The direction of generalization — only via classifying and comparing numerous observations, thorough analysis of accidental cases. (Patient X. Y., so many years of age, today is thus, in a year's time so and so, otherwise in the morning, when he sits up, pants, coughs, etc.) And of course experimenting and checking of results.

A change of duties, a change of tools, the impact of expert advice, a warning, a change of partner and supervisor — that is the arena for legitimate, admissible endeavors in educational work. We often disregard the fact that the first page in a fresh exercise book is distinguished by neater writing. And what about a good pen? If I provide a good broom, I am entitled to expect the child to tidy up properly. Good pals will do a job without any squabbling. A gruff order produces opposition and upsets. "It's just fun working with him; a good idea." It may also occur that he tries to conceal the fact that ordinary work appeals to him, or that he has grown weary and discouraged before acquiring the necessary experience in controlling expenditure of energy, in the economy of effort. Consequently, before ordering a child to scrub or polish the floor, one should do it repeatedly himself, watch how the children do it, and listen keenly to what they say. It is desirable to know how to wring out a rag; know all about hay-filled mattresses before

³⁹ First published Aug. 1938 — Oct. 1939.

ordering that beds be made according to the artistic daytime barrack standards; and about comfort at night — that the straw may not stick not be worn down too soon, that the boy may not slide onto the floor after many unsuccessful, sleepy attempts to settle himself. (Films would certainly be useful. A dog settling down to a doze and a child sleeping — "you've made your bed, you must be in it.") Even the lavatory monitor's turn of duty at a primitive holiday camp may be made desirable. But it is essential to provide a special shovel for sand and a dust pan to deal with uncleanness, and also to set a good personal example, demonstrating that while there is no such thing as dirty work, negligence will thwart or nullify effort.

I will surely provoke an indulgent smile or a wry grimace when I say that a two-volume work dealing with laundry and washer women would be just as dignified as one on psychoanalysis, that the kitchen and chicken broth call for more intelligence and initiative than a bacteriological laboratory and the microscope. And I would rather entrust a baby to an honest nurse than to Charlotte Buhler. That is precisely what I am talking about.

For many years, I observed the ranks of young stars of the teaching profession. There were all sorts. Of one, I thought sadly: "He won't manage, poor chap, what a pity." Of another, with a troubled sigh: "He will manage, unfortunately, and for many years will rage among the children like a chronic epidemic of influenza, catarrh, gout in the joints and the soul." Not to lose sight of the title of the article, let me refer to the teacher who is devoted — but ambitious.

Shades, varieties, individuals. A theme for a bulky volume. There is one always who is in doubt, pedantic, accusing alternately himself (somewhat rarely), the children (more frequently), working conditions (always). And another — learned, capable and efficient — revels in his own actions and accomplishments, though all around is a shambles of hearts and brains, trampling on the joy of work, the book, and life itself. He is ready to bend or break, uproot — enforce, exort or insist on his own idea of order, cleanliness, good manners, obligation to make progress, and even — on physical growth. "You must eat because it is healthy, because of the strap and discipline. You must not drink water, it is not good for you! You must sleep, play, you son-of-a-bitch, because that's what they told me in the course, because authority says so." He is anxious to shine, to do more and better than his superiors require of him. To mold every child to his own ways of understanding, his own dogmas, to pull, to - rear (ziehen, erziehen)⁴⁰ every child in line with his plans, calculations. Everybody in the class should be able to count up to ten by now, not a scrap of

⁴⁰ Korczak, an excellent linguist, plays on the similarity of two German words: "To pull" and "to rear."

paper on the floor, not a single inkblot in those exercise books. Whoever fails me is a mortal enemy. That teacher is all out for victory, applause, triumphs.

I have sought carefully among children for future teachers. And I watch with great concern how the ambitious ones with the mentality of prison guards, energetic misanthropes, diligent and active careerists (children — call them — apple polisher, holy Joe, fox), and finally hermits anchorites — intellectuals are forced to engage in social activities. "If you wanted to do it, you would know how and be able to." Quite the reverse: "If I knew how and was able to, I should want to."

A child who reads and understands a lot, listens carefully and asks interesting questions but will not pass anything on to his peers, will not help or explain, is looked upon at first merely as a rich curmudgeon (unfriendly, crafty, envious). Resentment toward him will become hate if he is singled out as a model to follow. Allowed to boss, he will demand from the community special privileges for himself.

What is a sound, noble ambition and emulation, and what is warped, false and degenerate? For show, for speculation? How much horsepower does the engine develop — the ultimate aim of the effort?

Again: two volumes — and every second issue of a pedagogic periodical contains observations, statistics, a passionate discussion, casuistry relating to particular cases. The anatomy, physiology and chemistry of ambition: the policy of the social worker, teacher.

B o y A. Age five, seven, ten. Social environment, condition of health, vital forces, outer appearance, personal charm. Plus — minus. Ambition. Eager for friendliness or obedience and leadership either by bargaining or trickery, by conquest (how) or extortion.

B o y B. Age five, seven, ten, Social environment, condition of health, etc. No ambition, willpower in abeyance, keeps aloof. Has he valuable features or none? Does he demand or give? How does he behave when giving, taking — in the event of refusal, resistance, some obstacle?

Just as in medicine — patient A and patient B. Complaints, an objective examination. Diagnosis. And only then the prescription. Diet, treatment, how he is to live and work — and only in the form of a hint, an experiment to be verified.

Penetrating complexes, inhibitions, semiconsciousness (for that exists, too), subconsciousness, through inferiority complex and superiority complex (father's position, good memory, a gift for drawing, singing, sports, a debut in ballet or as an author, or a

pretty dress), among the noisy and the well known — the trained eye of the keen observer will pick out the quiet, meek, colorless and unappreciated children; for there is nothing about them except that they are good, feel sympathy at a classmate's tear, and happiness in his joy.

We know well enough that children quarrel, get in the way, annoy, fight and, of course, spoil, exert a bad influence. "You are a good boy, you should keep out of his way, he will ruin you." A surprised glance, a gentle smile: "And perhaps I'll help him?" — And he did! "Don't play with him, he's a roughneck, a wrecker, fights everybody." — "He suits me."

It happens. The awkward, colorless, artless one seems to be a little fool. Yet he is nimble, vigilant, inventive and observant. Should any of his classmates lose something and be unable to find it, he will be on the spot in a jiffy, no one knows from where. He will undo a knot in a shoelace, carefully, tactfully, and boldly all at the same time. He will approach a rebellious brawler and whisper to him: "What are you crying for?" — and will go off without taking offense if he gets the answer: "What's that go to do with you," or else he will disarm.

But he, too, though rarely, will lose patience. An explosion of justified indignation. I once saw such a fight. He went for a stronger one and because he attacked suddenly, and caught the other by surprise — he won. "So he dared to go for me, the little stinker." The power of wounded ambition in a fight against the audacity of violence, injustice. What a crashing error it would have been to break up this splendid fight, perhaps to be disdainful, to rebuke: "You too? I didn't know that your quietness was just a pretense"; or: "Such a clumsy one and he takes to fighting."

Intuition, not empathy but ability, the quality of being able to share any wrong suffered and in any helpless misfortune — again a subject for a voluminous work. And possibly the study would reveal that such children would make good teachers, not social workers — precisely because they lack false ambition.

A parenthetical comment: various types — a beggar, an unfortunate, a chiseler, an insolvent debtor, a thief and a cutthroat. The first: "Please"; the second: "Don't be a pig, don't refuse a pal"; the third: "You give, and I'll give you something, tell you something"; the fourth will borrow, the fifth steal and the last: "You just wait, I'll break your neck." And altogether different — a leader, a politician, an educational worker, a young pedagogue.

I have developed a diversion of sorts, an exercise for the mind. I looked for educators wherever I went among the craftsmen (shoemakers, bricklayers, peddlers, caretakers,

streetcar conductors) — the common folk. Just a waitress — but her smile, walk, gestures, actions — no training — and yet just right, educational. A long time ago I discovered a nurse among prostitutes. She had worked for many years in a children's hospital and that is much like an institution for the blind and mentally deficient. And at this point — an impression, for I would not dare declare the following outright on the basis of loose, unmethodical observations. The teaching profession attracts the ambitious, retains the colorless and insipid, and isolates the good. The good keep their distance. As for the first, they are overcome by bitterness and disappointment. The second easily grow demoralized and lazy. The third feel that things should be done differently but have no idea how, nobody asks what they think anyway; they are supposed to get on with their job, that's all. If emboldened they could say a lot, pour out their grievances and explain.

If anyone chooses to devote his life to writing such a two-volume introductory study, let him take into account the views of school caretakers, orphanage charwomen, the Cinderellas of child care, and not only of the professional staff.

LOUIS PASTEUR⁴¹

"LUDWIK PASTEUR"

In an undistinguished little French town, there lived a poor craftsman. It was a long time ago. He lived, he worked, there was nothing else. But feeling lonely, he got married to a gardener's daughter. Then a child was born — and died. They were very sad.

Later, however, they had four more children — three girls and a boy. That boy was born on a Friday at two o'clock in the morning on the 27th of December 1822. When they took the little fellow to get his birth certificate, nobody guessed, nobody cared. They wrote down that the father's name was Jean Joseph and that the boy was to be called Louis. The witnesses signed. Done. Who could be bothered about a screaming suckling.

But the parents delighted in little Lou's development. He grew bigger and bigger. The father told him how he had served in Napoleon's army, and the boy listened. And he loved to draw. The father sent him to school, and every evening took care to see that he had done his homework well. But there was a small stream not far away, and Lou preferred to catch fish with his pals, or draw. The only thing that angered him was when other boys destroyed birds' nests. At school, he was no trouble, except that he asked too many questions and annoyed the teacher by wanting to know too much. The teacher did not understand that Lou liked to know everything in detail and got really upset if there was something he could not understand. Lou draws, and draws, and the neighbors say that he should be a painter and advise that he should go on studying. Let him go to a big city, to the capital, to Paris itself. For as Lou grew older, he developed a great liking for books.

The father was afraid to send his only son too far away; but when a neighbor sent his, he finally agreed. Terrible weather for the boy's departure. Rain and snow, and they were going by coach because there were no trains yet. It didn't work. Lou was homesick, wanted to return. He was still too young and the father took him home. Lou kept up his drawing, and by now everybody is saying that he will definitely be a painter. But things were to turn out quite differently.

Lou went to a higher school where there was a very young teacher who realized that the boy loved to work. But he is young and does not know what to do.

Lou once wrote in a letter: "Once a man takes to study, he can never again live without

⁴¹ First published January 1923.

it."

But he did not like everything equally. In his finals he had good grades in nature study but only fair in history and geography.

So when Louis Pasteur was eighteen, he became a teacher himself. Pupils were very fond of him. And he not only taught but also read a lot and always wrote in his letters about the books he liked most. What made him happiest, though, was a small room of his own, where nobody disturbed him.

But in books there are many things hard to understand. And Pasteur was eager to read the most difficult ones and to understand everything. So he went to Paris for the second time. And he was so 'poor that all winter he turned on the heat only twice.

He took seriously to study and work. He learned and worked all his life. And he became famous as no king, not even the world's most famous leader, had ever been.

In Paris there is a Pasteur Street, a Pasteur Hospital all made of glass and steel, a Pasteur Institute where only great scientists are allowed to work. And all Frenchmen love him, even though he is no longer alive. Now, we also have a street in Warsaw named after Pasteur. There is not a single scientific book on the treatment of diseases in the world which does not say that Pasteur was great and very learned. Now the whole world knows that it was an important — extremely important — event when in 1822 that little boy was born in a little town.

But what did Pasteur actually do that all praise him so much? Pasteur taught the world one important thing, and now everybody knows that it is as he said, so it seems to be plain and easy. But he was the first and they did not want to believe him. They laughed at him and argued. And, of course, it is awfully unpleasant if you are telling the truth and they don't believe, but laugh instead.

Pasteur was the first to say that there are such tiny things, like little worms, too small even to be seen, and that those little worms cause various sores and all kinds of sicknesses. So it is necessary to wash your hands, drink boiled water, open the windows to let in good air so that you may live long and not be sick. The doctors poked fun at him, said he was stuck up, knew nothing himself yet, thought he could teach others. They nicknamed him *The Brewer*. Pasteur was not a doctor, only a learned naturalist, and he had noticed these bacteria for the first time when they made wine. So they gave him this nickname out of spite.

Anyone else would have been insulted and said: "You don't want to believe it — too bad." But Pasteur was not insulted. He felt sorry for those who were being killed by

bacteria, leaving so many orphans. But what worried him most was that nobody was willing to help him, and he could see that his idea did not explain everything.

Because you can be very clean and still have sores, and not all diseases come from bacteria — those little things like worms.

Since that time a hundred thousand scientists and all kinds of doctors have been working on the problem and every now and then they find something new, and can see that it is true. But he was all by himself and the first ever, so he couldn't explain everything.

Pasteur had to go through a good deal before at long last some admitted he was a little right. How could they go on calling him a fool when they could see with their own eyes that he really was able to help? Before, if a mad dog bit someone, he was almost sure to die. But Pasteur discovered a method of treating them. Before, people used to die or be sick for a long time after almost every operation, and then less and less died because the doctors started washing their hands thoroughly and boiling the instruments and dressings in water. Even though there were already some who believed Pasteur: others opposed him even more because of *envy* or sheer stubbornness.

"If you know so much, tell us — why this, why that?"

"I don't know yet," Pasteur would answer.

As if one man could know everything. Pasteur was a great scientist but certainly no miracle worker.

Even later, when everyone knew that there were tiny bacteria which cause infectious diseases, one stubborn doctor said:

"Alright, I'll swallow those worms, those bacteria of yours, and you will see — the next day I will still be fit and well."

"Don't — you'll get cholera."

But he was stubborn, drank the water with the cholera bacteria — and nothing happened.

"Now who's right?" — he laughed. Some who had already learned from Pasteur said:

"You didn't catch the disease because you have a strong, healthy stomach."

"Alright then, I'll spoil my stomach with stale sausage and when my stomach aches, I'll drink some of the choleric water."

He did, got cholera, and died.

And now everybody knows that bacteria exist, everybody knows what to do against

different infectious diseases. And every doctor and every patient knows the great benefits which the famous scientist Louis Pasteur conferred on mankind.

Pasteur liked children very much. Once he said:

"When I approach a child, I have two feelings. Affection for what he is today and respect for what he can become."

Probably in saying this Pasteur remembered his own boyhood when he liked fishing more than studying, he drew, and did not know what he wanted be when he grew up, when he asked a lot of questions because he wanted to understand everything ii, and how he started to study and then could not o without it.

FORGIVE ME CHILDREN⁴²

"PRZEPRASZAM WAS DZIECI"

"You were supposed not to teach us any more" — from the back row the voice of Adam, in the same grade for the second year.

The teacher said nothing, only looked at Adam. "And that new teacher, won't he teach us?"

The teacher said nothing, straightened his eyeglasses.

It was very quiet in the classroom. Zosia was thinking:

"That Adam's got nerve. How can he behave like that?"

Many children must have thought that the teacher was bound to feel hurt. Interesting things had been happening.

There had been three new teachers. One just before the vacations, then one more and again another. All young. That second one had talked with them most.

Wacek had just been playing with the ball. And that teacher:

"Hey you, fighter, where's your school?"

Not "boy" — he said — but "fighter."

"Let me have the ball!"

And when he kicked — he merely drew back a little — and the ball went straight up. Wacek thought that was the end of it — it was out of sight.

Immediately a crowd gathered. They had guessed — a new teacher.

And he, as if he has been here long. Joking, asking questions, jolly amusing. The river, the mushrooms in the wood, who can swim? Jump?

"You must have been in the war, teacher?"

"Sure, I was, my friend. If need be, I'll go again." "And will you teach us?" — Pietrek ventured. "That remains to be seen."

⁴² First published October 1924.

He had stood in front of the school for a while. Asked whether the girls or the boys could sing better. And he sang something himself. Then he went in to have a talk with the principal, went over the school, said: "So long kids," and was gone.

He did not come back.

And now the children were waiting for the old teacher to explain. Not a word. He told them to say prayers. Murmurs of disappointment here and there.

"You may sit down."

But he did not sit down himself — stood — and now looked through the window, no longer at Adam. Once they had been glad when he looked through the window, for whoever was called to the blackboard could get away with a wrong answer because the teacher wasn't even listening. Now they felt troubled. They would like to know.

The teacher took off his glasses, wiped them unnecessarily and put them on again. Now surely he will say something. If only Adam will keep his mouth shut. Now, he'll begin.

"Quiet, don't talk."

Now.

"Well. ... What was I going to say?"

The children guessed correctly. He began.

"Come over here, Adam."

Adam hesitated.

"Go, Adam, go! The teacher is calling you." "That's how it is, my boy, it'll still be me teaching you."

That other said: "Hero, fighter."

"Yes, I'll go on. You must wait a little longer. You must be patient for another year. Our school is not to the liking of those young gentlemen. They find it too poor, too small, cramped and sad. There were five of them."

"Three."

"You saw only three because two didn't even come in. Probably there were still more of them. And I taught your fathers in this school. You remember. I was telling you ..."

"You expect us not to remember?"

The teacher started to tell them what they already knew, but a bit differently this time.

He said nothing about the whole of Poland, about Warsaw, Vilno, Poznan and Lithuania but only about the school. That it was old and so was he. That the school would die soon like an old, tired and sick grandfather.

"` Not long, now. There will be a brick building like the one in the town, in the market place. A playground by the school. Large classrooms and high windows. Beautiful pictures on the walls. Physical training, marches with a band, a school flag. All sorts of performances, amusements, games with a big ball, probably target practice."

"And a swing?"

"Surely, a swing. Moving pictures on the wall, the people in the pictures moving about — just like real. But it must be dark in the room, so the windows will have blinds. And they said in the paper that there is a new kind of telegraph so that when someone tells a story in Warsaw it can be heard through electricity any other place. Everything will be there. I know that you are cramped, have to sit uncomfortably, and there are better benches elsewhere. But it all costs a lot. And we are still poor. And if the mother hasn't got the money, she can't buy it for her child no matter how she may want to, and how many bitter tears she'll shed over it. That's how it is. No one wants to buy tears, no good to anyone.

"God alone counts the tears of fathers and mothers and of old teachers like myself, and out of those tears He builds.

"He gave us the Polish school⁴³ and that was harder, much harder work. Now we shall have a new school, a fine one. They will come to pull down this old shack, throw away the rubble and the rotten boards. They will put together stacks of new doors and windows, bring bricks to the site, and nothing but a memory will remain of this school.

"And you will have boots to go to school in winter and summer. You'll have lots of well-illustrated books. Young teachers to teach and play with you. But, as things are, they don't want to; they say: `What, in this old shack?'

"Forgive me children, and you, Adam, my dear boy, forgive me that we are still poor like a family where the father has been sick a long time, and now looks around bewildered at having escaped death, tries to get his bearings. He has just gotten up for the first time, but he is so weak that everything seems to spin round him, he cannot stand alone yet, and must lean on his son's arm...."

⁴³ Reference is to the Polish school during Russian occupation prior to World War I.

The old teacher put his hand on Adam's shoulder. The boy drew near and straightened up.

"And I want you children to forgive me that you have no new teacher yet, a young and gay one. I will go on teaching you. Be patient. It's not for long." Tears ran down under his glasses.

In the complete quiet of the classroom, Zosia's whisper could be heard.

"You see, Adam, what you've done!"

And the teacher looked straight into Adam's eyes and asked:

"Are you annoyed with me?"

"Why should I be annoyed? Far from it. You're O.K. by us, sir."

That is how the new school year began in a poor rural school.

MEMOIRS⁴⁴

This is the first printing of a typed copy, the only one saved, of the manuscript which was handed to me under Korczak's will a few days after his transfer to Treblinka⁴⁵ together with all residents of the Children's Home.

At that time, I did not consider my apartment at Zoliborz a sufficiently safe place for this valuable document. So I asked Maryna Falska to hide it somewhere in our Home at Bielany, and I managed to pass it to her before my arrest.

Wladyslaw Cichosz, an employee at our Home, following Falska's instructions, bricked it up in the attic of the orphanage building.

After the war, when the institution was taken over by the Workers' Society of Children's Friends, Cichosz recovered the papers and, Falska no longer being alive, handed them to the President of the Society, Stanislaw Zemis, who in turn passed them on to me when I returned from the concentration camps.

Publication of the Memoirs was no easy matter at that time. Korczak left no heirs. His legacy I finally deposited with the Board of the Polish Writers Union for inclusion among documents and papers of a Museum of Literature which the Union was then planning.

His Memoirs Korczak wrote in the ghetto mainly between May and August 1942, although for some time, from 1939, his growing sense of desolation had made him anxious to leave a final testament. *'Not so much an attempt at a synthesis as a grave of attempts, experiments, errors. Perhaps it may prove of use to somebody, some time, in fifty years ...'*

He wrote the first pages in January 1940, then put the work aside. Two years later, in the face of approaching extinction, he resumed, and carried on more or less systematically to the end.

In order to understand and properly evaluate them it is necessary to visualize the place, time and conditions of their being written.

Thus—the ghetto, a relatively small district of the capital, increasingly constricted by walls, packed with over half a million Jewish population from Warsaw and nearby towns. *'The district of the damned!*, Korczak calls *it*, and elsewhere in the Memoirs he writes: *'The*

⁴⁴ The material following Igor Newerly's introductory remarks is Korczak's last writing. It is neither a diary nor memoirs but rather a combination of reflections on the gruesome present and the distant, now almost unbelievable, but nonetheless real past. In Polish it is called "Pamiętnik" —a book to remember by. (MW)

⁴⁵ Treblinka — a town near Warsaw where at the end of 1940 a concentration camp was organized. About a million people, chiefly Jews, were put to death there.

appearance of the district changes from day to day: A prison — a plagued spot — a lunatic asylum — a casino. Monaco. The wager — a head.'

Famine and typhus were decimating the population. People dropped dead in the streets. Pinkert's Last Service could not keep pace with the removal of corpses. Cleared in the morning, they piled up again by the evening. Normal. Children played on the sidewalks, among bodies covered with newspapers — unnoticed, meaningless as the notice on the wall:

"Always keep your body clean. Dirt breeds lice, lice — typhus!"

Time — in the sense of a normal perspective of days and months — did not exist. There was an ephemeral present instant—and eternity. Lying down to sleep, nobody was sure that he would not be wakened by the sound of a prison van — or shot dead in bed. Going out, nobody knew whether he would return or be rounded up in the street and find himself in a cattle truck. In this district resembling a sprung trap, the dread of death omnipresent, there existed only the possibility of smuggling an existence from one instant to the next, or of utter resignation — the fusion of life in some extra-personal great existence. In something having eternal meaning and dignity: Struggle — truth and beauty — God....

The resistance movement was bubbling below the surface, and as Korczak was finishing his diary the ghetto witnessed the first street fighting.

In the ghetto were gathered large numbers of the intelligentsia, including many creative workers. They sought to, the very last to sustain human life on remainders of contemporary knowledge and culture. Scholars and artists were engrossed in their work. Young people flocked to clandestine colleges and courses, lectures by professors in specialized fields. Drama studios, artistic troupes, exhibitions, concerts, meetings with authors, lectures by eminent scholars attracted large audiences.

And the synagogues were full. The walls of the existing places of worship could no longer contain the wave of mysticism. The fervor of other religious concepts sought an outlet beyond Adonai and Christ. The God of martyrs, God of Golgotha strode through the ghetto dispensing baptism and solace by the devoted hands of Father Plater. The Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary was also packed with the faithful wearing armbands — the stigmata of temporal martyrdom and shame.

And hard nearby functioned Kon and Heller, the organization of Jewish Gestapomen, thousands of collaborators, traitors and henchmen. "Grand smuggle" by gangster tycoons and "little smuggle" by children. Stained with the blood of smugglers, big fortunes were made. Sinister figures intermingled with well-known personalities of the business participate. The two partners begat vested interests co-administering the ghetto — the humble servants of their executioners. Crime, fear, baseness preyed upon misery and hunger, elbowed the weaker into the death trucks. The gluttony and orgies in exclusive restaurants had about them something of the Apocalypse.

In this district of superimposed contrasts, under conditions endlessly macabre, the absolutely normal—so it seems to me and I should like to call attention to it — was nonexistent. No one

could suffer the atmosphere of a ghetto and an Auschwitz and emerge unflawed. Everyone, victim and henchman alike, received inevitably some physical taint.

When he was writing the *Memoirs*, Korczak was sixty-four, his constitution ruined, yet he retained entirely his sense of responsibility for the fate of more than two-hundred children and adolescents, from seven to seventeen, eighteen years of age, including a considerable number of former residents who turned to him for protection and shelter.

The institution was housed in a corner building — 16 Sienna St. and 9 Sliska St. — the former site of the Merchants Club.⁴⁶

The life of the Children's Home was in fact concentrated in the big hall on the first floor, with a few small back rooms tacked on. By night, it served as dormitory, by day for meals and classes. Ingeniously arranged chests and cabinets partitioned it into classrooms, linen store, reading room, and other special-purpose accommodation. All Children's Home events and performances were held on the second floor in the onetime ballroom. There, for example, Tagore's *The Post Office* was staged.

Peace, order, good management prevailed in the house as if the children had long lived there. The Korczakian child community organization — court of peers, self-government, school newspaper, fixed schedule of daily routines and occupations such as monitoring duties, school hours — all were maintained. The children learned, cleaned and tidied the house, worked in the linen room, the kitchen. Regularly, every week they were weighed and measured. Only the oldest boys went to work on building sites within the ghetto or at the Eastern Railway Station, unloading coal or laying rails. This gave them the chance to barter this or that, and bring back some food.

Food at the Children's Home was poor — but by ghetto standards luxurious. In the morning, a slice of bread, a cup of black synthetic coffee or hot water mixed with colored saccharin and called "tea." For dinner — potatoes, or groats mixed with horse blood, nourishing and so well seasoned as to be quite tasty. Occasionally, horse meat and cod liver oil appeared on the table. On holidays, even some sort of darkish rye cookies were baked.

In charge of the daily routine at the Children's Home was Stefania Wilczynska. Korczak used to go out in the morning and return late. He regularly went to the institution for destitute children at 39 Dzielna St., that "children's slaughter and charnelhouse." He took it upon himself to rehabilitate that institution and fought a hopeless, losing fight against the unscrupulous, thieving staff. He would make calls at the Jewish

Community Office, Centos, Judisches Hilfskomitee, the homes of the rich, the offices of notorious, utterly compromised collaborators. He begged, threatened, quarreled. He cared not who gave and whether enough remained for others. He was the father of two-hundred children and was compelled to provide for them.

⁴⁶ *It had been moved here from Krochmalna 92, which was outside the Ghetto walls.*

Already a different Korczak. Exhausted, irritable, suspicious, ready to raise hell over a barrel of sauerkraut, a sack of flour. Bear this in mind, too, when reading the *Memoirs*, especially Korczak' opinions on certain people, on his differences with them.

Korczak would return from his rounds in the evening completely exhausted, showing in his notebook the amount of the day's booty, and behind his eyes the image of the ghetto. He would join briefly in the life of the Children's Home and then finally withdraw to his own den.

He lived near the huge hall-dormitory, in one of the back rooms called the isolation room. Lodged there were also a few of the weaker children and the father of one of the girls, the old, dying tailor Azrylewicz. Separated by a plywood screen, Korczak wrote his *Memoirs* at night.

It seems unbelievable that he could still write.

The conditions, the situation and his health — all contributed, in the feverish, intensely experienced moment of recollection, to a disjointed diversity of material.

Strikingly varied is the form, from sections stylistically elaborated — for instance, the introductory reflections on the subject of old age — through the concise chronicle accounts right up to thoughts coded in abbreviations, jotted down for his own use to be developed later if time and life permitted. The same applies to the contents. The retrospective breaths of self-analysis are crossed by the images of macabre reality, from which vision repeatedly embraces the future, indifferent to the now worthless personal life, striving still to probe the ultimate fate of the world and man.

Even so, Korczak remains himself from the very first to the very last page. Frank — brutally so at times — in every single clause, with his evangelist's heart and keen eye for the grotesque. Faithful to the truths professed over a lifetime—he continues to defend them with the same fire of the controversialist and the practice of shocking the bourgeois conventions specific to the "Young Poland"⁴⁷ literary trend, exaggerating his visions of eugenics and euthanasia, balancing upon a razor's edge between absolute reason and absurdity.

And to the very end he preserved that passion for cognition, what his self-analysis termed the "*searching mind*" for which "*not the mechanism but the actual substance of the thing*" alone becomes compelling and worthy of probing.

In the deluge of total bestiality, he seeks frantically for some minimal scrap of sense, tries to take an impassioned view of the other side, of the alien point of view with its inhuman philosophy, and prepares a "*programmed speech by history*," a theme which, unless his specific approach and personality are comprehended, may create the gruesome impression of some defence of hitlerism.

Needless to say, the publishers would not presume to correct Korczak in certain formal

⁴⁷ A trend of artistic and literary character, developed chiefly in Cracow at the turn of 19th to 20th centuries. It was directed against the rationalistic point of view. The chief objective was to come back to romantic traditions.

blemishes resulting from the conditions under which his Memoirs were written, and certainly any dabbling with content, the very substance of the subject matter, would be unthinkable. However — some of the opinions expressed by this great writer and civic leader may appear to readers — they must not be muted, far less concealed. The Memoirs are printed in full without any editorial adjustment, with such reverence as is due this document of the last days and thoughts of a man of this stature.

IGOR NEWERLY

Part One

Gruesome, depressing is memoir literature. An artist or scholar, a politician or great leader of men — these enter life hugging ambitious plans. Tenacious, offensive and smooth movements — a vital mobility of action. They climb, negotiate obstacles, extend the range of their influence, and, armed with experience and a number of friends, they press — with increasing success and ease — stage by stage, toward their objectives. This takes ten years, sometimes twice, three times that long. And then...

Then comes fatigue, but only bit by bit, still doggedly in the once chosen direction, choosing the easier road, with less zeal and with the painful conviction that it is not as it was meant to be, not enough, that it is much harder single-handed, that the only result is the graying hair, the wrinkles on the once smooth and bold forehead, and the effortful movement of the legs.

What is wrong? — old age.

This one resists, does not give in, wants to go on as usual, even faster and more forcefully, for time is short. He deceives himself, fights back, rebels and wriggles. Another in sad resignation begins not only to give up but even to regress.

"I can't any longer. I don't even want to try. Not worth it. I've lost my grip. If only I could recover the casket containing the ashes of the years, the energy squandered in gabbing, the relentless ardor of the old power...."

New men, a new generation, new wants. By now they irritate him, and he is irritating. At first some misunderstandings, later total misunderstanding. Their gestures, their walk, eyes, white teeth and smooth foreheads, though they stay dumb.

Everything and everybody around, and the earth, and you yourself, and your stars say:

"Enough ... Your sunset ... Now we ... Your end...." You say that we. ... We do not argue with you, you know better, you're experienced, but let us try to proceed our own way.

Such is the chain of life.

So it is with man and animals, so, it seems, with trees, and who knows, perhaps stones as well.

Theirs now — the will, the power, and the time.

Yours — today old age, and the day after tomorrow — senility.

While the hands of the clocks move faster and faster. The stony gaze of the sphinx is asking the eternal question:

"Who walks on all fours in the morning of life, at noon briskly on two, and in the evening of life on three?"

You — leaning on your stick, gazing into the cold dying rays of the setting sun....

I will try to approach my own life story differently. Perhaps a lucky thought, perhaps it will come off, perhaps it is just the right way.

When you make a well, you do not begin to dig at the deepest level. First you break up the upper layer, throw the earth aside, shovelful after shovelful, not knowing what is underneath, how many tangled roots, what obstacles and flaws, how many stones and other obstructions to the work, dumped by yourself and others, long forgotten.

Decision. Strength enough to start. And, generally speaking, is any work ever in fact finished? Spit on your hands. A firm grip on the shovel. Get to it!

One, two, one, two....

"For God's sake, old one! What are you driving at?"

"See! I seek subterranean springs. I cleave asunder the pure, cool element of water to drag out memories."

"May I help you?"

"No, my dear friend, each for himself. Nobody can undertake the job for you, or replace you. Anything else together so long as you trust me, do not deprecate me; but this final work — mine alone."

"God be with you!"

Now then....

I want to refute a mendacious book by a false prophet. It has done a great deal of harm.

Also sprach Zarathustra.

And I had the honor to talk to Zarathustra. His wise innovations, serious, hard and sharp, led you, poor philosopher, behind the sinister walls and close bars of a lunatic asylum — for so it was. It says in black and white:

"Nitzsche died at odds with life — insane!"

I want to prove in my book that he died painfully at odds with truth.

The very same Zarathustra taught me something different. Perhaps I had better hearing, perhaps I listened with greater care.

In this much we are together: the road of the master and the road of me, the disciple, were both hard. More defeats than successes; numerous diversions, consequently time and effort wasted, apparently wasted.

For in the hour of payment, not in a solitary cell of the saddest hospital of all, but with butterflies and grasshoppers, and glowworms and a concert by crickets and a soloist high up in the sky — the lark.

Good Lord!

Thank you, Good Lord, for having ordered all so wisely, that the flowers are fragrant, the glowworms glow upon the earth, the stars sparkle in the sky.

How joyous is old age.

What a delectable silence.

Delectable repose.

"Man who is so immeasurably blessed with Thy gifts, whom Thou hast created and saved.⁴⁸

One, two. old men are sitting in the sun.

"Tell me you old codger, how come that you are still alive?"

"Well, I've led a respectable, sensible life free of shocks and sudden turns. I don't smoke, drink, play cards, chase women. Never hungry, never overtired, no haste, no taking chances. Always at the right time and with moderation. I didn't strain my heart or exhaust my lungs or overtax my brain. Moderation, peace, and reflection: That is why I'm still alive."

"And you, friend?"

"Differently. Wherever a bruise or a bump on the head was to be found, there I was. I was a young pup when I had my first taste of revolt and shooting. Sleepless nights and enough of prison as would take the rough edges off any youngster. Then the war. I took it as it came. It had to be sought in remote places, beyond the Ural mountains, beyond Lake Baikal, through the Tatar, Khirgiz, Buryat country, right up to the Chinese. I stopped for a time in the Manchurian village of Taowayjou and — then again a revolution. Then peace of a sort for a brief while. I drank vodka, true, more than once I staked

⁴⁸ This is an allusion to F. Karpiński's church hymn "Kiedy ranne wstają zorze..." (When the morning's dawns arise...)

my life and not a crumpled scrap of paper on a single card, Only I had no time for girls, if only because they're such a greedy lot, night birds, and — aha — get pregnant. A rotten trick. I fell for it once. A nasty taste in my mouth ever since. I had enough of threats and tears. I smoked unlimited cigarettes. In the daytime, talking things over with myself, one after another, like a chimney. And there is not a bit of me left sound. Adhesions, aches, ruptures, scars. I go all to pieces, groan, am unstitched, live. And how! Anyone who has gotten in my way will tell you. I can still kick pretty hard. It happens even now that a whole gang sneaks by when they see me. I still have followers and friends, too."

"Yes, so have I. Children and grandchildren. And you?"

"Two-hundred." "You're kidding...."

The year 1942. May. A cold May this year. And this night is not the quietest of the quiet. It is five in the morning. The children are asleep. There are two hundred of them — it's a fact. In the east wing — Miss Stefa. I am in the west, in the so-called isolation room.

My bed stands in the middle of the room. Under the bed, a bottle of vodka. Black bread and a jug of water on the night table.

Good old Felek, he has sharpened the pencils on both ends. I could write with a fountain pen, Hadaska gave me the first, and the father of a difficult boy the second.

I already have a groove on my finger from that pencil. It just occurs to me that I could do it differently, make it more comfortable, that it is easier with a pen.

It was not for nothing that as a child I was called gawk and booby by my poor old dad, and when he really fell into a rage — idiot and ass. Grannie was the only one who believed in my star. For the rest — idler, moaner, crybaby (I've said it before), idiot, and good-for-nothing.

More about that later.

They were right. Equally. Half and half. Grannie and dad.

More about that later.

Idler ... right enough ... I dislike writing. Thinking — yes, definitely. No difficulty. Just like telling myself fairy tales.

I read somewhere:

"There are people who do not think just as there are some who say, 'I don't smoke'."

I do think.

One, two, one, two. I simply must gape at each shovelful of my well. Reflect ten minutes. And not because I'm weak today, or because I'm old.

It was always so.

Grannie would give me raisins and say:

"You philosopher."

It appears that even then I confided to grannie in an intimate chat my scheme for remaking the world. No less, no more — simply get rid of all money. How and where to be rid of it, and what to do next, I probably had no idea. No need to be too stern a judge. I was only five then, and the problem was perplexingly difficult: what could do away with dirty, ragged and hungry children with whom one is not allowed to play in that same courtyard where under a chestnut tree in a candy box, wrapped in cotton, was buried my dear and beloved dead, for the time being only, canary? Its death brought up the mysterious question of religion.

I wanted to put a cross on the grave. The housemaid said no, because it's only a bird, something much lower than man. Even to cry over it was a sin.

So much for the housemaid. It was worse that the caretaker's son had decided that the canary was a Jew.

Me, too.

I was a Jew, and he — a Pole, a Catholic. Paradise for him. As for me, if I did not swear and submissively stole sugar for him from the house, I would end up, when I died, in a place which, though not hell, was dark. And I was scared of a dark room.

Death — Jew — hell. The black Jewish paradise. Certainly something to consider.

I am in bed. The bed is in the middle of the room. My subtenants: Monius Jr. (there are four of that name), then Albert and Jerzyk. At the other end by the wall, Felunia, Gienia and Haneczka.

The door of the boys' dormitory is open. There are sixty boys. Somewhat farther to the east, wrapped in peaceful slumber, sixty girls. The rest on the top floor. It is May, and though it is cold the older boys can, in a pinch, sleep in the top-floor hall.

Night. I have notes about it and about the sleeping children. Thirty-four small pads filed with notes. That is why it was so long before I could make up my mind to write memoirs.

I plan to write:

1. A thick volume on nighttime in an orphanage and in general about children's sleep.
2. A two-volume novel. The scene is Palestine. The first night of a newly married halutz couple at the foot of Mount Gilboa, at the place where a spring bubbles up. "A reference to the mountain and the spring is made in the Books of Moses.

(Deep will be that well of mine if I have the time.)

3, 4, 5, 6. Some years back, I wrote a piece for children on the life of Pasteur. A continuation of that series: Pestalozzi, da Vinci, Kropotkin, Pilsudski and a few dozen more including Fabre, Multatuli⁴⁹, Ruskin and Gregor Mendel, Nalkowski,^{*****} and Szczepanowski⁵⁰, Dygasinski⁵¹, David.

Never heard of Nalkowski?

The world is deaf to the names of many great Poles.

7. Years ago I wrote a novel about King Macius. Now for the king-child: King David II.
8. How can one waste five hundred children's weight and height graphs and not describe the wonderful, honest and joyous work of the growth of man? In the coming five thousand years, somewhere in the abyss of time — socialism, now anarchy. A contest of poets and musicians in the most splendid of Olympic Games. A contest for the most beautiful prayer, for a world hymn to God once a year.

I forgot to mention that now, too, there is a contest, a war is on.

9. Autobiography.

Yes. About myself, about my small and important self.

Someone once said scornfully that the earth is a speck of mud suspended in space. And a man an animal that has made a career. Have it that way. But an addendum: that drop of mud knows suffering, can love and weep and is filled with yearning.

And the career of man, if you consider it carefully, is doubtful, highly doubtful.

Half past six.

⁴⁹ Pen name of D. E. Decker, Dutch writer (1820-1887). ** An eminent Polish geographer, pedagogue and civic leader (1856-1911).

⁵⁰ Business promoter, journalist, one of the pioneers of the Polish oil and coal industries (1846-1900).

⁵¹ Polish novelist, storyteller, journalist and pedagogue. Pioneer in the field of self-education (1839-1902).

Someone in the dormitory calls out:

"Boys, bath time, get up!"

I put the pen away. *Get up or not?* It is long since I had a bath. Yesterday I caught on myself and killed without turning a hair, with one dexterous squeeze of the nail — a louse.

If I keep going, I shall write a eulogy to a louse. For our attitude to this fine insect is unfair and undignified.

An embittered Russian peasant declared:

"A louse is not a man, it doesn't suck every drop of blood."

I have written a short tale about sparrows which I have been feeding for twenty years. I set myself to exonerate the little thieves. But who will explain the injustice done to the louse?

Who, if not I?

Who will come forward, who will have the guts to go on record in its favor?

"For the callous attempt to shift the responsibility for an orphan onto the shoulders of the community, for the arrogance of the insults, abuses and threats hurled around in frenzy at the foiling of your attempt — you, madam, have to pay within five days, 500 zlotys to the 'Orphans Aid' fund.

"Taking into account the low level of your social environment, and the house where you live, the fine is set low. I expect a cooked up justification that you did not know who it was who was making the survey. When your youngest progeny, sent to escort me, had seen my identity card shown to the policeman, she shouted by way of parting: `Cattle!' I did not insist on the young person's arrest, taking into consideration her age and the fact that she was not wearing the armband."⁵²

Finally, allow me to mention that this was my second unhappy encounter with the den of thieves masquerading in the elegant house at 14 Walicow, for during the siege of Warsaw, I was refused help in carrying a dying soldier with his chest gaping open into the courtyard gateway so that he might not breathe his last like a dog in the gutter.

And a few comments:

The lady occupants of the premises from which I was thrown out with shouts of:

⁵² The armband indicating that the child was Jewish.

'Get out of here you old bastard, break your neck' — those lady occupants were the 'friends' of none other than Stefania Sempolowska.⁵³

I should like to enlarge on the theme since the matter has more general implications.

Sempolowska was a fanatical protagonist of Jews, defending alike against false and justified charges made against us by equally fanatical enemies.

The three Jewesses from Walicow St. were such types who by glib words, even baptism, would shamelessly force their way into Polish society, to homes and families, so that there they might represent the Jews.

I repeatedly made it clear though without effect to the enthusiast, Miss Stefania, that there could not be nor ought there to be any understanding or even as much as a loose contact between these Jewish rascals and the Polish intellectual, moral elite.

This was precisely the cause of the deplorable differences and estrangements occurring during the thirty years of our acquaintanceship.

Wojciechowski — Pilsudski — Norwid — Mickiewicz — Kosciuszko — Zajaczek⁵⁴, who knows, perhaps Lukasiewicz⁵⁵ as well — even Kreon and Antigone — was their remoteness one from another caused precisely by their closeness?

Formerly Nalkowski and Straszewicz,*** seeming enemies, yet filled with longing for each other.

How easy it is for two rogues to get together for a joint enterprise in treachery, crime, fraud. How utterly impossible is harmonious collaboration when two people love in the same way but apprehend differently, from a different stock of experience.

I hated and detested Jewish peddlers of ideas and phraseology. I have witnessed the dignity of those Jews who, having escaped, hid out so as not to meet friends within the walls.

Who could pass over dear old 'Wojtek,' a militant nationalist who, over a cup of coffee, asked almost with despair:

"Tell me, what is one to do? The Jews are digging our grave."

⁵³ A well-known author and liberal social worker (1870-1943).

⁵⁴ Some well-known Poles whom Korczak knew personally, others historical figures.

⁵⁵ Jan Lukasiewicz (1878-1956), philosopher, logician, professor in Lwow, Warsaw and Lublin universities.

And Godlewski:

"We are a weak lot. For a glass of vodka, we are selling ourselves into Jewish slavery."

And Moszczenska:

"Your virtues are a sentence of death on us."

The corner of Zelazna and Chlodna St. A smoked meat shop. Overflowing the chair, an enormously fat Jewess is trying on a pair of shoes. The visiting shoemaker is kneeling in front of her. His face overly spiritual. Hair gray, eyes wise and good, voice serious and deep, on his face an expression of hopeless resignation.

"But I warned you that those shoes...."

"And I'm warning you, that you can keep those shoes for your wife. If you're a shoemaker, you ought to know. What does my foot look like?"

And she keeps swinging the fat foot in front of his nose — almost touching it.

"Are you blind? Can't you see the marks?"

One of the worst scenes I have ever witnessed, but not the only one.

"Our people are no better."

"I know."

Well, what is the answer?

He who buys it has a radio. And a car. And a ticket to a premiere. And journeys, and books and paintings.

That group of Polish tourists met in Athens. No less, no more — taking snapshots of one another in front of the Pantheon [sic]. Babbling, scruffy, every pup turning in circles to catch its own tail.

Why am I writing all this?

Well. There is Satan. True. But some are more, some are less wicked.

Januszek and Ireczka made a garden in sand, with a little house, and flowers and a fence. They carried water in a matchbox, taking turns. They consulted, built a second house. They consulted: a chimney. They consulted: a well. They consulted: a dog kennel.

The dinner bell rang. Moving toward the dining room, they turned back twice to put on final

touches, to have one more look.

All along Musiek had been watching them from a distance. Then he trampled over it all, kicked the building down, and for a long time hit at it with a stick.

When they got back after dinner, Irka said:

"Of course — Musiek."

Born in Paris — returned to his homeland, and for the past three years he has been poisoning the life of thirty orphans in the kindergarten.

I wrote an article about him for "Pedagogika Specjalna," advocating penal settlements, I even hinted at the death penalty. He is still small! He is going to be at large for fully fifty years!

Dear Madam Maria with her perplexed smile: "You must be joking."

"Far from it. How much harm, how much pain, tears...."

"So you don't believe in correction?"

"I am not Adler" — I said gruffly.

No one can long be angry with Dr. Maria Grzegorzewska. A compromise: I cut out the death penalty — left only the penal settlement (and that only with difficulty).

Are decent people of the higher orders of men to be indefinitely condemned to Calvary?

Why do I write all this?

Of course, it's night. Twelve thirty.

I've had a hard day.

A conference with two gentlemen, high priests of

social welfare. Then two investigations, one involving the row referred to. Then a meeting of the Board. Tomorrow — 39 Dzielna St.

I said to that lawyer:

"If everyday things get just a trifle better, that stimulates to greater effort. If everyday worse, there will be disaster and some change. But we keep going around in circles, getting nowhere."

Note what I say — it may come in handy.

There are four ways of dealing with undesirable newcomers:

1. Bribe. Admit to the ring the chosen few, and bamboozle.
2. Agree to anything and, watching for the moment when he is off guard, go on as usual, doing as you please. I am one against the rest. I assess them, at a liberal estimate, three hours a day. They think about how to deceive for twenty-four. More about this when I come to thinking in one's sleep. Anyhow, there is nothing new in all this.
3. To wait, mark time, lie low and when the right time comes — compromise.

"Look! It was he who ordered it!"

There may be a frame-up. (They wanted me to surrender public money.)

4. To wear him out. Either he will go of his own volition or will stop spying. Anyhow, what's the use of it?

I have run out of ink.

I feel old whenever I revert to the past, to bygone years and events. I want to be young, so I make plans for the future.

What will I be doing after the war?

Maybe they will invite me to cooperate in building a new order in the world or in Poland. Highly doubtful and not my idea. I should have to be come an official, meaning the slavery of fixed working hours, contacts with men, a desk, armchair and telephone here or there. Squandering time on current petty everyday problems and contending with little men with little ambitions, friends in high places, hierarchy, and goals.

In a word — a yoke.

I prefer to be on my own.

When I was down with typhus, I had a vision:

A huge theater or concert hall. Crowds of people all dressed up.

I am giving an address about war and hunger, destitution and misery.

I speak in Polish. The interpreter summarizes into English. (It all takes place in America.) Suddenly my voice breaks down. Silence. An outcry somewhere in the hall. Running toward me is Regina. She stops in front of the dais, throws a watch on the platform and cries out: "For you — everything!" Then a shower of banknotes, gold and gems. They are throwing

rings, bracelets and necklaces. Boys from the Children's Home come running onto the stage: the Gelblat brothers, Falka, Meir Kulawski, Gluzman, Szejwacz —and they stuff it all into mattresses. The audience, deeply moved, cheer, clap, and weep.

I have no particular faith in prophesies, and yet for well over twenty years I have been waiting for the vision to come true.

I shall have something to say of Regina when I come to the strange fates of the inmates of the white house on Krochmalna St.⁵⁶ in weary Warsaw.

So I shall come into unlimited means and call for tenders for the construction of a great orphanage in the hills of Lebanon, near Kfar Giladi⁵⁷.

It will have large barrackslike dining rooms and dormitories. There will be small "hermit dens." For myself, upon the flat roof of the building, one room, not too big, with transparent walls so that I may not miss a single sunrise or sunset and that, writing at night, I may be able to look at the stars.

Young Palestine is making arduous and honest efforts to come to terms with earth. But heaven's turn will come. Otherwise all would be a misunderstanding, a mistake.

Why not Birobidjan, Uganda, California, Ethiopia, Tibet, Madagascar, India, southern Russia or Polesie? Even England, well meaning and world-wise, does not know where to plant that handful of Jewry, small as it is.

Every year I should visit for a few weeks my native town, my friends, to talk over matters, important and eternal.

I suppose that I keep on repeating my dream monotonously, unvaried. Every time some modification.

My biggest problem is with the construction of dens for hermits. Those who have earned a life of solitude, aspire to happiness through solitude, they read it and are supposed to translate it into a comprehensible language — orbi et urbi. They must, must, must have it. But what should they have? There's the rub.

Moszek has again forgotten to put enough carbide in the lamp. The flame is dying.

I must stop now.

⁵⁶ The location of Korczak's ,major institution was at number 92 of that street.

⁵⁷ A kibbutz in Northern Galilee which Korczak visited during a trip to what is now Israel.

Five o'clock in the morning

Good old Albert, he has let the daylight in.

The panes are covered with black paper shades so that light from the windows may not make the military authorities suspect lamp signaling, and they also say it may guide enemy planes. As if there were not a score of other means and landmarks. People believe in spite of everything.

So it is light again.

Naive, good-hearted people. Probably unhappy. They have not much of an idea what happiness consists in. Everyone understands it differently.

For one: a delicious tscholent or sausage with sauerkraut. For another: peace, comfort, every convenience. For a third: women, many and varied. For a fourth: music, or cards, or travelog.

And each one fights in a different way against boredom and longing.

Boredom — hunger of the spirit.

Longing — desire, desire for water and flight, freedom and man — a confidant, a confessor, an adviser — advice, confession, a friendly ear to my grievance.

The spirit feels nostalgia in the narrow cage of the body. Man ponders over death as the end but death is merely the continuation of life, another life.

You may not believe in the existence of the soul, yet you must acknowledge that your body will live on as green grass, as a cloud. For you are, after all, water and dust.

"The world is the metamorphosis of evil, everlasting" — Tetmajer⁵⁸ says.

That unbeliever, pessimist, ironist, nihilist also speaks of eternity.

Immortal is the amoeba, man is a colony of sixty trillion — says Maeterlinck, and he certainly knew his authorities. For a dozen odd years I tried unsuccessfully to find out how many times to multiply two billion.

A fellow teacher, professor Paszkiewicz said it was an astronomic figure. Until by chance, I

⁵⁸ Polish poet, novelist, playwright, representative of "Young Poland" trend (1865-1940).

found the answer in the Termites.

There are two billion men in the world, and I constitute a community many million times as great, therefore I have the right, the duty to look after my own trillions, for which I have responsibilities.

Maybe it is dangerous to announce it, although everyone senses it even though not entirely consciously. Anyhow, is my universe of life and its prosperity not dependent on the prosperity of a whole generation, from the Australian cannibal islands, right up to the study of a poet, a scientist, and up to the man looking through a telescope set on a snowbound peak on the plain of the terrestrial pole?

If little Genka coughs at night, altruistically I commiserate but egoistically I think of the disturbed night, am concerned about her health: and perhaps it is contagious? The expense of extra food, the trouble and the cost involved in sending her to the country.

I am sleepy. Before my beehive starts buzzing, I will have a nap for an hour.

Surely the dictatorship of the clock will come to an

end in the future, rational society. I sleep and eat when I feel like it.

Happily, the doctors and the police cannot prescribe how many times I should breathe per minute, how many times my heart has the right to beat.

I go to sleep at night unwillingly, because then I cannot sleep in the daytime. Bread and water taste better to me at night.

It is nonsense to put a child to bed for ten hours of uninterrupted sleep.

Man of the future will be astonished to find that we used cut flowers to decorate our apartments. And paintings on the walls. And animal skin for carpets.

Scalps, scalps of flowers, our noble brothers-in-life.

And a canvas daubed with colors to which you pay no heed after a time — dust settling on the frame and vermin on the back.

How insignificant, poor and uncouth was that primitive man of thousands of years ago.

They will learn with pity about our forms of education.

The crass ignorance of the dead language.

"Going among simple folk," I used to pick out children's talents.

Somewhere downtown by the river, in a small one-room shack of a day laborer, I was shown sketches drawn by a small boy: the horse was a horse, the tree a tree, the ship a ship.

I took a roll of them, those that seemed to me the best, to show to a well-known painter.

He looked at them and said with a grimace:

"All this is absolutely worthless. Copied. But that one is not so bad."

He said an odd thing:

"Everybody should be able to sketch in pencil whatever he wants to retain in memory. Not to be able to do that is to be illiterate."

How often I recollected this irrefutable truth. Here is a scene, a face which in a moment will be lost forever. What a shame, what pity!

Tourists have found a way: the photograph. Now even moving pictures. A generation of young people is growing up who will be able to see their first clumsy footsteps.

The unforgettable pictures of the awakening dormitory. The sleepy look, slow movements, or a sudden leap out of bed. One rubs his eyes, another wipes the corners of his mouth with the sleeve of his nightshirt, one strokes his ear, stretches holding a piece of clothing in his hand, stops dead, stares awhile somewhere ahead.

Energetically, phlegmatically, skillfully, clumsily, surely, meekly, accurately, carelessly, deliberately or automatically.

Those are real tests: you can sum him up right away, and why always like that or only for today.

A lecturer comments on a film:

"Look carefully [he indicates with a pointer, as if on a map]. The resentful exchange of glances between the two on the right shows their mutual dislike. Their beds should not be adjacent.

"The screwed up eyes of that one show definitely that he is shortsighted.

"Don't be sure of the staying power of that boy: evident effort, nervous movements, variable rhythm, intermissions in apparent determined haste. Perhaps he has taken on a wager, challenged to a race the one on the left at whom he looks nervously now and again. "For this one here, I prophesy a bad day. Something is wrong with him. While washing, making the

bed, at breakfast, in a moment, in an hour, he will get into an argument or fight, he will talk back to the teacher."

We were standing, the two of us, by the window while a new game of `two fires' was just being started.

A noble, knightly game.

A ten-year-old expert was my instructor.

"That one will soon be finished, he's tired alright. That other one will show what he can do halfway through the game. See that one, he's got eyes in the back of his head, looks to the right and passes to the left. That one will pretend to be as good so as to cut out those other two later on. This one here will get offended, or start quarreling, or crying."

Should the forecast prove wrong, the expert knows exactly why and explains. In his calculations and assessment of the situation, he has failed to take this or that into account:

"He is playing like that because yesterday he broke a windowpane. He's afraid what will happen. That one has the sun in his eyes, and this other one hasn't gotten used to the ball yet, too hard for him. A sore foot — that one. This good shot is, really, his friend's doing — always backs him up."

He reads the game like a musician reads the score, comments on the moves as if it were a game of chess.

If I have a vague idea about it all, I owe it to my devoted instructors. How patient, selfless, friendly they are. How incapable and inefficient I am.

No wonder: I was over forty when soccer came to this country, while these boys crawled on . all fours holding a ball under the arm.

Five thick volumes:

1. Ordinary ball.
2. Soccer.
4. "Two fires."
5. Psychology and philosophy of ball playing.
6. Life stories, interviews. Descriptions of outstanding shots at the goal, games, stadiums.

And a hundred kilometers of film.

If I have anticipated a reaction well in advance then nothing irritates me, makes me impatient, angry or indignant.

Today the class will be restless because it is All Fools' Day, because it is hot, because in three days there is to be an outing, because the holidays are in a week, because I have a headache.

I remember a school teacher, already experienced in the profession, who would get indignant at the boys because their hair grew so fast. And I remember a young boarding-school worker, a beginner, who used to start her routine report on the girls' bedtime with:

"The girls were absolutely unbearable this evening. There was still some bustle at nine. At ten, still whispers and laughter. And all this because the principal had me on the carpet, because I was annoyed, because I was in a hurry, because tomorrow I have an examination, because I mislaid my stockings, because I have received a disturbing letter from home."

Someone will say:

"What will a film be worth if the children know that it is being taken."

Easy:

The camera is fixed in one place. The operator turns the handle with . no film in, at different times. and angles. The children are promised they will see the film when it is ready, but .every time something seems to go wrong. Sequences are repeatedly taken of troublesome, difficult, unpopular "children, and are uninteresting. The children are never once told to be natural, to look this way and not that, or that they should `act normally.' The floodlights are switched on and off at random. Then again a game is interrupted and a tiresome repetition ordered.

After a period of initial fascination comes impatience. Finally, they cease to take any notice. After a week, a month. No need to explain it. Of course they do it like that. There's no other way.

A teacher who does not know that is an illiterate, a moron if he does not understand it.

In the future, every teacher will have to be a stenographer and cameraman.

And dictaphones, and radio?

And the epoch-making experiments of Pavlov?

And that horticulturist who by crossing or grafting grows roses without thorns and 'pears

on willow trees.⁵⁹

We already have an outline of man. Perhaps even a photograph? Perhaps we are not so far off? All that is needed is a skillful and conscientious retoucher?

Others are afraid to sleep in the daytime because they may lie awake at night. It is the reverse with me. I go to sleep at night unwillingly, prefer the daytime.

May 15, six o'clock

I already know about the girls half of what I ought to know.

More or less. The question:

"Do you know, Helcia, you are a restless person?" She:

"Am I a person?"

"Of course. You're not a puppy."

She pondered. After a long pause, surprised:

"I am a person. I am Helcia. I am a girl. I am Polish. I am mummy's little daughter, I am a Warsaw resident. What a lot I am!"

And again:

"I have mummy, daddy, grannie. Two grannies, grandpa, a dress, hands, a doll, a little table, a canary, an apron. And you, too?"

A certain nationalist told me:

"A Jew, a good patriot, is at best a good resident of Warsaw or Cracow, but not a Pole."

I was rather taken aback.

I admitted frankly that I am unmoved by Lwow, Poznan, Gdynia, the Augustów Lakes or Zaleszczyki or the Zaolzie region. I have never been to Zakopane (horrible place), I am not drawn to Polesie, the seacoast, to the Bialowieza Forest. The River Vistula near Cracow is alien to me. I do not know and don't want to know Gniezno. But, I love the Vistula at Warsaw and when away from Warsaw I am nostalgic.

Warsaw is mine, and -I am Warsaw's. I am Warsaw. Together with Warsaw I have rejoiced

⁵⁹ A Polish saying corresponding to achieving the impossible. (Trans.)

and grieved. Its weather has been my weather, its rain and mud, mine also. I grew up with it. We have drifted somewhat apart of late. New streets and districts which I no longer embrace have emerged. For many years, I felt like a foreigner at Zoliborz⁶⁰. Much closer to me is Lublin, and even Hrubieszow, though I have never seen them.

Warsaw has been my field of work, my workshop. Here are the landmarks, here are the graves.

Throughout a puppet show, I once recollected the small group at Miodowa St. and the animated crib in Freta St.

This is how it was:

Beginning at Christmas, building_ workers, unemployed at that time of the year, used to go from courtyard to courtyard in the richer quarters, and when summoned to the apartments, presented a show.

A wooden box for a stage, an accordion or barrel organ. And on the stage, puppets: king Herod on the throne, the devil with a pitchfork.

The show was usually presented in the kitchen so that mud should not be carried from the street to the living rooms. The cook would put away smaller items, because they stole. On one occasion, two silver spoons from a set had disappeared. The show was beautiful and awe-inspiring, and instructive.

At the end, an old man with a bag appeared to take up a collection.

Father always told me to drop the smallest silver coins into the old man's bag, and I for my part would change all the money I had into those smallest coins, and, shivering with excitement, drop them into the bag. The old man always looked inside, shook his long white beard and said:

"Very little, very little, young gentleman — a bit more."

At that time I went with father to a nativity play. The long hall of the home, the curtain, the air of mystery, the crowds, all jammed tight, expectation. Some odd creatures wear blue coats and white caps and stiff wings.

I was afraid. I was choking with sobs.

"Don't go away, daddy."

⁶⁰ A section of Warsaw.

"Nothing to be afraid of."

A mysterious, strange lady told me to sit in the first row.

Never do that if the child is unwilling. I preferred to sit somewhere on the side, even if others got between me and the stage, even if I was very crushed and uncomfortable.

Helplessly:

"Daddy!"

"Keep still. Don't disgrace yourself!"

On the way, I kept asking whether Herod and the devil would be there.

"You'll see for yourself."

Terrible — this adult reticence. Never prepare surprises for children if they themselves do not want them. They should be told beforehand, be warned if there is to be any shooting, if certainly, then when and how. Preparation is necessary for a long, far and dangerous journey.

Only one thing bothers the adults.

"Go to the toilet, you won't be able to there." And I happen to be busy, anyhow I don't want to. I simply can't do it `just in case'.

I was sure it would be somehow a more important mystery play and a hundred times more marvelous, and without the old man with the bag.

Better without the old man.

I have said it already. An instructive hour. Yes. That old man. Not only he, but he above all.

He was insatiable.

First, the indifferent parental coins, then my own deliberately saved coppers went into his bag. Taught by the bitter, degrading experience, I saved them up for a long time in any way I could. Frequently, a real old beggar in the street was the victim because of this. I thought:

"I'll not give to him. I'll keep it for the one at the mystery play."

My old man was insatiable, and his bag bottomless.

It was tiny, a fifth of the size of my purse, but it would swallow up, devour, squeeze out everything.

I gave, added more. I'll try again, maybe, finally he will say it's enough.

Daddy! Grannie! Katherine, I'll pay it back, please lend me! I'll give you all my year's allowance for a few coppers now.

Curiosity. Perhaps I'll be able to see how he disappears for a moment behind the stage and then comes back to insist and wheedle.

And the fear, the sad awareness that with the old man the play ends, is no more.

Worse: the wearisome rite of washing before going to bed, perhaps even cod liver oil. On red letter days, children should be spared some duties, and not irritated with all that history, learning, experience have justifiably ordained for the benefit of children. Give them a day's leave.

The whole of mental concentration, the whole of freedom, the whole of fairy world woven into the drab fabric of life.

The old Man from Miodowa St. puppet show —how dreadfully mutilated in the siege of Warsaw — taught me a great deal. The hopelessness of defense against the insistent request, against the infinity of demands that cannot be met.

At first, you give eagerly, then unenthusiastically, from a sense of duty, then, following the laws of inertia, habitually and without heart, then resentfully, angrily, despairingly.

And he wants all that is yours, including yourself.

I hold on to that old man in the mystery play as to the last thread linking me with the enchanting fable of life, with the enchanting mysteries of life, the magic of colorful and festive emotions.

Gone — never to return. Defunct — buried. That special one, that peculiar [...]. And the way he frightened. Good, evil.

Ardent desire, impotence, multiplicity, nothingness. Perhaps I shall tell how I used to feed sparrows forty years later.

You must not refuse if a child asks for a fairy tale to be repeated over and over again, and once more the same.

For some children, far more numerous than we are apt to think, a performance should consist of a single item repeated time after time.

A single spectator, he is frequently a large and grateful audience. Your time will not be wasted. Old nannies and building workers are frequently better pedagogues than a doctor of psychology. Indeed, the adults also clamor `encore.'

Encore!

The same tale endlessly repeated, like a sonata, a favorite sonnet, like a sculpture without the sight of which the day seems colorless.

Those who are crazy about a single exhibit visit the picture gallery repeatedly.

Mine is San Juan by Murillo in a Vienna museum and two sculptures in Cracow by Rygiel — Craft and Art.

Before man sticks utterly in the mud and reconciles himself to the slovenliness of his own experiences ... defends himself ... suffers ... feels ashamed of being worse than the crowd: or perhaps only painfully experiences his own loneliness and alienation in life?

A puppet show without the old man, not a puppet show, just a creche.

It was bad, very bad.

Very properly mother was reluctant to entrust the children to father, and very properly with a thrill of delight and _whoops of joy we welcomed and long remembered — my sister and I — even the most strenuous, exhausting, unfortunate and deplorably ending 'pleasures' sought out with peculiar intuition by that not particularly reliable pedagogue — daddy.

He painfully pulled our ears, despite the most emphatic protests by mummy and grannie.

"If the child gets deaf, it will be your doing."

It was unbearably hot in the hall ... The preparations dragged on. The faint sounds coming from behind the curtain tensed the nerves intolerably. The lamps smoked. The children were pushing and shoving.

"Move on! Take your hand away! Keep your legs to yourself. Don't lean on me."

The bell. Eternity. The bell. Such feelings are experienced by an airman under attack, when he has run out of ammunition but has still an important assignment to fulfill. There is no going back, and no will, desire or thought of such.

I do not think the simile inept.

It started. Something unrepeatable, unique, final.

I have no recollection of the people. I do not know exactly even whether the devil was red or black. More likely black — he had a tail and horns. Not a puppet. Live. Not a child in disguise.

Child in disguise?

Only adults can believe in such childish stories. King Herod himself says to him:

"Satan!"

And such laughter, such leaps and that real tail, and that `No' and that pitchfork, and that `Come' —I have never seen, never heard before, and I have even an odd feeling, even if it is true, that there really is a hell.

Everything was authentic.

The lights go off, cigarettes, coughing — that is disturbing

Miodowa and Freta streets. And on Freta stood Szmurlo's school. The switch was used there. That's authentic, too. But absolutely no comparison.

Four o'clock

I have uncovered one window only, so as not to wake up the children.

Reginka has erythema nodozum⁶¹.

Very likely unwisely, I today administered salicylate 10.0 per 200.0, a tablespoonful every two hours, until she heard ringing in the ears and was seeing yellow. But yesterday she vomited twice. However, now the nodes on her legs are pale, small and painless.

I have a dread of anything like rheumatism in children.

Salicylate — so they said in Paris — and who: Hutinel, Marfan, and what is even more odd, Baginski in Berlin⁶².

Vomiting — a trifle. But enough to bring the unfortunate doctor back again, even though he understands that this complication comes from the medicine.

As for me, after the mystery play, I had a fever for a couple of days. It was not perhaps so high, but was treated drastically by my mother so that a determined `No!' could be administered should father dare to bring ice cream home, at least until spring.

I am not sure whether on our way back we did drop in to have ace cream or iced soda water with pineapple juice. Artificial ice was not yet known then, and it was easy to get natural ice in winter. So we were able to cool off after the devilish heat.

⁶¹ A rash associated with rheumatism.

⁶² All three named are well-known pediatricians of France and Germany. not

I remember that I lost my scarf.

And I also remember that while I was still in bed on the third day, father came up to me, but mother sternly admonished him:

"Your hands are cold. Don't come near him!" Withdrawing meekly, father threw me an understanding glance.

I replied in the code of a knowing look corresponding to something like:

"That's the best way."

I think we both felt that in the last resort not they — mother, grannie, the cook, sister, the maid, and the governess Miss Maria — that monstrous regiment of women — hold the upper hand, but we, the men.

We are the masters. We give in for the sake of peace.

Curious. During my practice as a doctor, several years long but not particularly varied, I was frequently called by the fathers. But always only once.

This time the mothers were giving in for the sake of peace.

Let me still tell about [...].

A comment, or rather a hint, for those who in some thirty years will be drawing up radio programs.

Devote one hour — half and half to the grandson and the grandfather (or father) — to a chat entitled `Yesterday.' `How I spent my yesterday.' Always open it the same way:

"I woke up yesterday at ... I got up ... dressed." Such talks will teach how to regard, how to spell out current events, how to omit and how to emphasize, how to extract the most from life, appreciate and ignore, attack and follow up — how to live.

Why in fact not women, why not a teacher and pupil, an artisan and his employer, an office worker and the business callers, a lawyer and his clients?

This needs trying out.

Conclusion.

The Polish language knows no such word as `homeland.' Fatherland is too much and too difficult.

Is he only a Jew, perhaps also a Pole? Perhaps not fatherland but a cottage with a garden?

Does not a peasant love his fatherland?

It is as well that my pen has almost run dry. I have a hard day ahead of me.

Postscript

Ugolino-Dante. They will pass at a pinch. The mystery play.... If they were alive, they would know what it is to be just.

There were years when I kept sublimate and morphia pills hidden in the far corner of a drawer. I would take them out only when I went to my mother's grave at the cemetery. Since the beginning of the war, I have kept them in my pocket, and it is interesting that they were not taken from me when I was searched in jail.

There can be nothing (no adventure) more detestable than an unsuccessful attempt at suicide. Such a plan should be fully matured so as to ensure absolute infallibility of execution.

If I kept on postponing my plan, which I had fully thought through, it was because always at

very last moment some new vision would come along, which I could not abandon without working it out in detail. These visions were like themes for a short story. I have put them under a common heading: `Strange affairs.'

So:

I invented a machine (I made a detailed design of the complicated mechanism). Something in the nature of a microscope. Scale — a hundred. If I turn the micrometer screw to ninety-nine, everything that has not one percent of humanity must die. It gave me a lot of work. I had to determine how many men (living beings) would fall out of circulation each time, who would take their place, and what would be the outcome of such a purged, tentative, new life. After a year's deliberations (at night of course) I got halfway with the distillation. Now the only people left are half-beasts, the rest have perished. Evidence of how minutely, to the last detail, I thought of everything is that my own person was completely excluded from this peculiar system. Otherwise, turning the micrometer screw of my `microscope' I could also annihilate myself. What then?

I confess with some embarrassment that I revert to this theme nowadays, too, on the more difficult nights. The nights in prison produced the most interesting chapters of my tale.

There was a choice of about a dozen of those dreams in the workshop.

Well.

I found a magic word. I am the dictator of light.

I used to fall asleep so worried that it was making me rebellious.

Why pick on me? What do you want? There are younger ones, wiser, purer, more suitable for this mission.

Leave me alone with children. I am not a sociologist. I'll make a mess of everything. I'll compromise both the project and myself.

For rest and relaxation, I went to a children's hospital. 'Miejscowka.' Just for me, the city casts out children like little sea shells, and I do nothing. I am just good to them. I ask neither where they come from, nor for how long or where they are going, for good or evil.

The 'Old Doctor' doles out candy, tells stories, answers questions. Sweet tranquil years remote from the market place of the world.

Sometimes a book or a visit from a friend, and always a patient who needs the greatest of care for several years.

The children recover, die — as it is in a hospital.

I do not extend myself. I do not try to go deeper into a subject which I have fathomed to the bottom. Indeed, for the first seven years, I am precisely a sort of unassuming resident doctor in a hospital. After that I am bothered by a nasty feeling of having deserted. I betray the sick child, medicine and the hospital. I am carried away by a false ambition: physician and sculptor of the soul of the child. Soul. No more no less.

Oh, you old fool, you have made a mess of your life, and your cause! You got what you deserve! A woman, a hysterical flounder, an idler with the mentality of a hospital cleaner now represents this important sphere of life, a maitre d'hotel dabbling in hygiene.

For that I went around hungry, down-at-heels, in the clinics of three European capitals. Better to keep quiet about it.

I don't know how much of this autobiographical stuff I have already scribbled. I cannot bring myself to read back over such piffle. And I am increasingly in danger of repeating myself. What is even worse, the facts and experiences may, must, and will be differently told as regards the details.

Never mind. It is only evidence that these moments, to which I constantly revert, were

so profoundly experienced.

It shows that reminiscences hinge on our immediate experience. Recollecting, we unconsciously prevaricate. That is obvious, and I say it only for the benefit of the most primitive reader.

A frequent daydream and plan was a trip to China. It might even materialize quite easily.

My poor four-year-old Iuo-Ya from the times of the Japanese war. I wrote a dedication for her in Polish.

She was extraordinarily patient in teaching Chinese to a certain dumb pupil.

Of course, there should be institutes of oriental languages. Of course, lecturers and lectures.

But everyone must spend a year in such a village in the Orient and pursue a preliminary course of study under a four-year-old.

I was taught German by Erna. Walter and Frieda were already too old for that, already grammatical, influenced by novels, handbooks, the school.

Dostoevski says that with time all our dreams come true, only in so denatured a form that we don't recognize them. I can now understand my dreams of prewar years.

Not that I went to China. China came to me. Chinese famine, Chinese orphan misery, Chinese mass child mortality.

I do not want to pursue that subject. To describe someone else's pain is like thieving, preying upon misfortune, as if there were not enough of it as things are.

The first newsmen and officials from America did not hide their disappointment: not so terrible. They were seeking corpses, and in orphanages — skeletons.

When they visited the Children's Home, the boys were playing soldier. Paper caps and sticks.

"Obviously the war hasn't upset them too much," said one, ironically.

"They've got used to it. Appetites have increased and the nerves have become numbed, things are getting better at last. Here and there even toys to be seen in shops, and plenty of candy from ten groszy up to a Zloty."

"I saw it with my own eyes: a tiny tot scrounged ten groszy and promptly spent it on candy."

"Don't put that in your paper."

I read: nothing is easier to get used to than others' misfortune.

When we marched to East Prussia through Ostroleka⁶³, a woman, a small shopkeeper, asked us: "What will happen to us civilians? Why should we suffer? As for you officers, you're going to certain death."

Only once did I ride in a rickshaw in Kharbin. Now in Warsaw, I recoiled from it for a long time⁶⁴.

A rickshaw runner does not live more than three years, a strong one — five.

I did not want to have any hand in it.

Now I say:

"One must help them earn a living. Better I than two heavy-weight profiteers with packages in the bargain."

It is unpleasant when I have to pick one of the healthier and stronger (if I am in a hurry). I always give fifty groszy more than what they ask.

Noble — then and now.

Whenever I shared a room with healthy children and lit a cigarette, I told myself:

"Smoke is a good expectorant. I do them good."

Five glasses of raw alcohol mixed half and half with hot water gives me inspiration.

Then comes a luxurious feeling of weariness, painless since the scar does not really count, neither does the stiffness in the legs, nor even the aching eyes and the burning in the scrotum.

Inspiration I draw from the awareness that I am in bed, and so I will remain until the next morning. So for twelve hours the lungs, heart and mind will work normally.

After a hard day.

The taste of sauerkraut and garlic, and of the caramel I put in the glass with the spirits to make it more palatable. An epicurean.

What's more, two teaspoons of real coffee grounds with ersatz honey.

⁶³ During World War I.

⁶⁴ Korczak refers to the use of vehicles drawn by humans in Warsaw.

Odors: ammonia (urine decomposes quickly now, and I don't rinse the bucket every day), the smell of garlic, of carbide and from time to time, my seven bed fellows.

I feel content, calm and safe. Of course, the tranquility may be disturbed by Miss Stefa coming in with some piece of news, a problem, a desperate decision.

And perhaps Miss Esterka to say that one is crying and can't fall asleep because of a toothache. Or Felek about the letter to go to that dignitary first thing in the morning.

Now a moth has flown by, and at once — anger, inner ferment. Bed bugs — new, once infrequent visitors — and now moths, the last enemies, let's say number five. Damn it, that's a subject for tomorrow. Now, in the silence of the night (ten o'clock), I want to go over the day. A hard day, as I said.

Apropos vodka: the last half-liter bottle from the old lot. I did not intend to open it. Kept it for a rainy day. But the devil never sleeps — sauerkraut, garlic, the need to calm and five decagrams of sausage.

So peaceful and safe. Yes, even safe. I do not expect any visit from the outside. Of course, there may chance such a visitor as a fire, air raid, plaster falling on your head. But the very definition 's e n s e o f s a f e t y' shows that subjectively I take myself as living far behind the front line. Those unfamiliar with the front will not grasp this.

I feel at ease, and I want to write for a long time, until the pen runs dry. Say till one, and then six full hours of rest.

Even want to joke.

"Everything is fine" — said a not quite sober cabinet minister not quite at the right time because here and there famine and typhus were ravaging the villages, and the graph of fatal tuberculosis cases was rising steeply.

Afterward, political opponents picked on him in papers which call themselves independent (God forgive them!).

"Everything is fine" — I say and I want to make merry.

An amusing reminiscence.

Five decagrams of so-called sausage now costs 1 zloty 20. Formerly 80 groszy (bread is a little more expensive).

I said to the saleslady:

"Tell me, miss, don't they by any chance make these sausages from human flesh? They are rather cheap to be horse."

She answered:

"How should I know. I wasn't there when they made them."

No sign of annoyance, no friendly smile for a jocular witty customer, no shrug to denounce the joke as nightmarish, macabre. Nothing. She just stopped cutting, waiting for me to make up my mind. A sorry customer, a sorry joke or suspicion, not worth talking about.

The day began with weighing the children. May showed a marked decline. The earlier months of this year were not too bad and even May isn't yet alarming. But we still have two months or more before the harvest. No getting away from that. And the restrictions imposed by official regulations, new interpretations, and overcrowding are expected to make the situation still worse.

The children's weighing hour on Saturday is one of big excitement.

After breakfast, the school meeting.

Breakfast itself also amounts to work. Now, following my nasty letter to the dignitary, we have received a fairly good supply of sausage, even ham, even a hundred buns. Never enough, but although it doesn't amount to much 'per head' it has an effect.

Then even a surprise in the form of two-hundred kilograms of potatoes.

An echo of the letters. But there is a rub to it. A passing diplomatic victory, an easily won concession should not give rise to exaggerated hopes and lull vigilance.

They will try one way or another to get their own back — how to stop them? From where will the clouds roll in? What invisible ohms, volts, neons will add up into a thunderclap, into a khamsin, and when?

The gnawing: 'Have I done right or wrong?' A gloomy accompaniment to the children's carefree breakfast.

After breakfast, on the run, a la fourchette — the toilet (just in case, therefore a bit of a struggle), and a meeting to discuss the school's summer program of leaves and substitutes.

It would be convenient if it could be arranged the same way as last year. But a lot has changed since, different situation in the dormitories, many newcomers and departures, new promotions, things are — why keep on about it — different. And we would like things to be better.

After the meeting, the school newspaper and court decisions. Thefts have appeared. Not everyone is willing to listen carefully for a good hour to the subject of who has managed well and who badly, what has been received and what is missing, what to expect, what to do. The

school newspaper will be a revelation to the new children.

But the old ones know: that neither this way nor that will they find out what is important and most important to them. In fact, no one is interested, no one listens, so if it is possible to save trouble — why not?

Immediately after the newspaper, tiring for me who can reasonably acquiesce in and cunningly turn a blind eye to what it is more convenient not to see, when one will not use violence if persuasion is impossible — immediately after the newspaper, a longish conversation with a lady using her influence to get a child admitted. This is an intricate business, calling for caution, pleasantness and firmness. You can go absolutely crazy. But about that some other time. The gong has sounded for dinner.

Whether this Saturday's dinner differs in any way from others I'm not sure, so I prefer to put that off, too.

I am planning for today only three addresses and three calls. Looks easy.

1. To call on a supporter after his illness.
2. A talk on yeast for children in a house almost next door.
3. Close by, a welcome to returnees from the east, kind, friendly people whom I wish well.

Well ... well.

The first call was to amount to a continuation of the morning discussions on the school.

He wasn't at home.

"Please, convey my belated congratulations. I intended to come sooner but simply couldn't make it."

Thoughts are wearying — so many of them.

But that elderly man, odd and atypical as a primary school teacher. What do I know about him? Never a longer talk, perhaps none at all, for a whole year.

There was no time? I'm lying. (I can't keep my eyes open any longer.) Honestly. I'll wake up and finish later.

... Welcome — lovely silence of the night.

I didn't wake up, and in the morning some letters had to be written.

Continued on the next night

My blessing on peace and quiet.

N.B. Last night, only seven Jews were shot, so called Jewish gestapomen. What can it mean? Better leave it at that.

An hour's lecture on yeast. Brewers' or bakers', active or inactive? How long should it lie? How many times a week and how much?

Vitamin B.

Five liters a week required. How? Through whom? From whom?

During the third call a lecture on the national cuisine. How kugel and tscholent were made in his childhood.

An explosion of old men's memories. They have come from hell to the Warsaw paradise. So it was, so it is.

"You are still a youngster in age and experience. You don't know a thing."

And this tscholent as well.

While in Kiev I thought many a time of tripe as it is prepared in Warsaw, and eating it I cried out for my .country.

He listened — nodded.

I was stopped by the caretaker at the front entrance. "Almighty, save us! Let them not question, not ask for anything, say anything."

The body of a boy lies on the sidewalk. Nearby three boys playing horses and drivers. Suddenly they notice the body, move away` a few yards, go on playing. Anyone who is better off must help the family.

The family — own and wife's brothers and sisters, their brothers, sisters, old parents, children. Help them with from five to fifty zlotys — and so from dawn to dark.

If someone is starving and happens to find relatives willing to acknowledge kinship and ensure two meals a day, he will be happy for two or three days, not more than a week, he will then ask for a shirt, shoes, a human place to live, some coal. Then medical treatment for himself, his wife and children. Finally, he does not want to be a beggar, demands employment, a steady job.

It cannot be otherwise, yet it makes one so angry, discouraged, apprehensive, and disgusted

that even a decent and sensitive man turns against the family, all men and himself.

I wish I had nothing, so that they might see it for themselves, and that would be that.

I returned utterly shattered from the `round.' Seven calls, conversations, staircases, questions. The result: fifty zlotys and a promise of five zlotys a month. I can provide for two-hundred people!

I stretched myself on the bed with my clothes on. The first hot day. I cannot sleep, and at nine what is called an educational session. Occasionally someone will break out for a moment, then withdraw (not worthwhile). Occasionally a meek comment (just for the sake of appearances). The ceremony lasts for an hour. The formality has been preserved: from nine to ten. Of course, I exaggerate.

I have various thoughts stored up to put me to sleep. This time: what could I eat without having to force myself, even without abhorrence?

Astonishing. I who only six months ago didn't know exactly what I liked (occasionally that which had reminiscent associations.)

Raspberries (aunt Magdzia's garden), tripe (Kiev), buckwheat groats (father), kidneys (Paris).

In Palestine, I used to soak every dish in vinegar. And for now, as a soothing subject, what should I have?

Answer:

Champagne with dry biscuits and ice cream with red wine.

A harking back to the time of my throat troubles and no ice cream for twenty years. Champagne I drank perhaps three times in my life. Dry biscuits I probably ate as a child when ill.

I question myself:

Perhaps fish with Tartar sauce?

A Viennese schnitzel?

Pate, rabbit marinated in Malaga with red cabbage.

No! A thousand times no!

Why?

Odd: eating is work, and I am tired.

Sometimes, on waking up in the morning, I think:

"Have to get up, sit on the bed, reach for my underpants, button up, if not all the buttons at least one. Struggle into my shirt. Must bend to put on my socks. Suspenders...."

I can sympathize with Krilov who spent all his adult years on a couch, with all his books under it. He would reach for and read the first thing that came to his hand.

I can understand the mistress of P., a friend of mine. She never lit the lamp in the evening but used to read by the light of wad matches which he bought her specially for the purpose.

I'm coughing. Hard work. To get off the sidewalk into the street and to climb back again. I am pushed inadvertently by a passer-by: I stagger to one side and lean against a wall.

It is not feebleness. I could easily lift a schoolboy, thirty kilograms of resistant weight. Not short of strength but of will. Like a cocaine addict. I have been wondering even if there is not something in the tobacco, raw vegetables, in the air we inhale. For I am not the only one. Sleepwalkers — morphinists.

The same with memory.

It happens that I am on my way to see somebody on important business. I stop on the staircase:

"Well, what I -am going to see him about?" I ponder deeply for some time, and then with relief: "Of course — I remember. (Kobryner — sickness allowances, Herszaft — extra food rations, Kramsztyk — poor quality of coal and his wrong attitude on wood allocation.)"

Likewise at meetings. The thread of any discussion is easily severed. Someone will make a remark and we go off at a tangent for a long time.

What was it we were talking about? Occasionally, somebody starts off with: "Firstly...."

You wait in vain for: `Secondly.'

Of course, garrulity, too.

A motion:

"The child should be admitted."

Recorded: `Admit.' We ought to pass to the next application. No. Not one but three speakers support the motion. At times, it is necessary to intervene more than once.

The discussions keep on `skidding' like a badly driven car.

Wearying, irritating.

Enough!

That's just it: enough! There's no such feeling at the front. The front means orders.

"Ten miles forward, five back — a halt — countermarch, bivouac here."

On horseback or motorcycle — day or night — a brief order penciled on a scrap of paper. Must be carried out, no argument.

Only five undamaged houses left in a village. Prepare to receive two-hundred wounded. Already on the road. Get on with it your own way.

It is not like that here:

"If I may request. If you will kindly agree."

You are free to do nothing, do it some other way, argue.

In the army the commanding officer may be objectionable. He may deceive stupidly, humiliate, make senseless demands and, at a critical moment, disappear having given no orders. And without an order nothing can be done.

Men talk, think, dream about him. But in civilian life it is different: one can argue, discuss, quarrel, threaten.

The effect is the same.

Boredom.

Boredom at the front is temporary. Somebody has knocked at the door of the hut, a horse has snorted on the road. News. Perhaps moving into town, tonight in a fine palace maybe, or sent to another front, and perhaps the worst — captivity.

And now, here, we Jews do not know what tomorrow holds. In spite of that, there is a sense of security. Consequently boredom.

Wouldn't you rather be in the battle of Kharkov?

I scornfully brush aside the newspaper trash and answer:

"I would."

Worse, perhaps, but different.

That is why some escape to industry, others to black marketeering, to social work, to [...]

It's day again. I yawn. One more.

That tooth which makes my tongue sore — maddening. I filed it down, to no purpose. Perhaps it's cancer, perhaps my time has come?

May 29, 1942, six in the morning in bed

If you want to check your resistance to hydrophobia try to help a moron.

You put the paper right into her hand. You're to deliver it tomorrow only to him personally. Here is the address and hour. And she lost the paper or forgot to take it with her, or had no time, or the porter advised her to do something else. She will go tomorrow. It's all the same. Anyhow, she is not sure whether it will be alright. No one to leave the child with, she has some washing to do, just the child's dress.

"Couldn't you leave the washing till tomorrow?"

"It's hot. I promised."

She is upset. Perhaps nothing will come of it? Before the war such things were her husband's affair.

"Perhaps I'm no good, but please don't be angry with me."

I check on the material situation of a family. She has applied for admission of her boy.

"He can sleep here. It is quite clean."

"You call that clean? You should have seen our place before the war...."

"He could be here with us all day."

"And if it rains?"

"It's not for me to decide. I have recorded my opinion, it is up to the ladies to say what is to be done."

"Doctor! You have no idea what a child! You'll see for yourself. You'll be sorry to have only one like him. I had five doctors with me at my confinement."

I do not say: "You are being silly."

I did say that once thirty years back to a mother in the hospital.

She answered: "If I were rich, I would be smart right away."

I say to another woman:

"Even Rothschild doesn't give his child more than five meals a day."

"His child will have enough to eat all his life." I say:

"If your child needed tea to drink, God would give you milk in one breast and tea in the other."

"If God would only give children what He might give, and what they need...."

I say:

"If you don't believe me, you may call another doctor whom you trust."

"Please, doctor, I don't mean any offense, but how can I trust men if sometimes I don't trust even God?" Speech turned upside down:

"When I had spanked his behind so hard that it seemed to be burning, I was so sorry for him that, pardon my saying so, I began to cry."

Sami just brought me a letter to bed: will this do?

"To the Reverend Father, Vicar of All Saints:

"We kindly request the Rev. Father to grant us permission to come a few times to the church garden on Saturdays, in the morning hours, early if possible (6.30-10 a.m.).

"We long for a little air and greenery. It is stuffy and crowded where we are. We want to get acquainted and friendly with nature.

"We shall not damage the plants.

"Please don't refuse us.

Zygmus

Sami

Abrasza

Hanka

Aronek."

How many jewels man loses because he has no longer the patience to talk to people with whom he has no business, merely for the sake of getting to know them better.

This application with which we began the day is a good omen. Maybe I'll collect more than

fifty zlotys.

They sleep in the isolation room. Seven of them. Old Azrylewicz tops the list (angina pectoris), Genia (probably lung trouble), Haneczka (asthma). On the other side, Monius, Reginka, Maryla.

Hanka to Genia:

"He has sacrificed so much for her. He would give his life for her and everything, everything in the world. And she didn't love him, the pig."

"Why pig? Must one love when one is loved?"

"That depends how he loves. If he loves just a little, it doesn't matter, but if he is ready to give his life and everything, everything?"

"And did she ask him for anything?"

"That was all he needed!"

"Well, you see."

"That's what I say, too."

"No, you said she's a pig."

"Because she is."

"I don't want to talk to you."

They got angry.

I am content and discontent. Angry, pleased, anxious, indignant, eager to experience and to evade, live and let live while calling down the punishment of God and man. I qualify: this good, that bad.

But everything is so theoretical. Made to order. Flatly, drably, habitually, professionally as through a mist, blotched emotions, dimensionless. They are beside not inside me. Without effort I can renounce, postpone, cancel, suspend, substitute.

The sharp tooth cuts into my tongue. I am witness to a revolting scene: I hear words that ought to shock me. I can't cough it up, my throat is blocked, I suffocate.

A shrug, it's all the same to me.

Indolence. Poverty of feeling, that limitless Jewish resignation: What? And what next?

"What if my tongue is sore, what if some have been shot?" "He already knows he must die. And what next?" "Surely you cannot die more than once...?"

Occasionally, something will rouse me, and I am surprised, seem to realize or recollect that it is so, can be, was once. I see the same thing in others.

A chance meeting with someone we have not seen for many years. In his changed features, we read how different we ourselves look from how we looked formerly, from what we were.

And in spite of all, from time to time....

A scene in the street:

A youngster lies by the sidewalk, still alive or perhaps already dead. Just there, three boys playing horses and drivers try to `disentangle the reins. They consider, try one way then another, grow impatient, stumble over the one on the ground. Finally one of them says:

"Let's move on, he gets in the way."

They move a few steps away and continue to struggle with the reins.

Or: I check out an application for a boy to be admitted to the institution. 57 Smocza Street, apartment 57. Two decent families, dying out.

"I don't know if he will be willing to go to the institution right now. He's a good boy. Until his mother dies, too, he will be sorry to leave. The boy is out: he has gone scrounging for food."

The mother lying on a divan bed:

"I can't die before he is settled somewhere. Such a good child: he tells me not to sleep in the daytime so as to be able to sleep at night. And at night he says: what are you moaning for, that won't help? You'd better go to sleep."

Just as the cabmen are quarrelsome, noisy and spiteful, the rickshaw men are gentle and quiet. Like horses or oxen.

On the corner of Solna St. and Leszno St., I notice a group of people including an excited rickshaw man, an enraged peroxide blonde with crinkly hair, a policeman looking somewhat surprised, disappointed. Standing to one side, a smart woman looks on, evidently shocked. She waits to see how it will all end.

The policeman says gloomily:

"Better give the hooligan what he asks."

And he shuffles off.

The rickshaw man asks rhetorically:

"If the lady doesn't want to pay, then I am a hooligan?"

She: "I'll pay you two zlotys but you must take me to that house over there."

"You agreed to three zlotys to the corner of Ciepla St."

He turns around and rides away, parks the rickshaw in a row.

I ask the shocked woman:

"Do you know what happened?"

"Yes, I was riding with her."

"Who was right?"

"He. But why does he give up two zlotys rather than take her that extra hundred feet?"

"He wants his own way."

"Evidently."

I go up to the rickshaw man.

"What was the trouble?"

"Nothing. I lost two zlotys. So what? I wouldn't be any poorer, and a hooligan I am either way."

I went to three places and I related the incident to three sets of listeners.

I couldn't do otherwise. I simply had to.

One or two fellow workers from Dzielna St., not without encouragement from another one, a woman, not from Dzielna St., have denounced me to the Chamber of Health for failing to report cases of typhoid fever. Failure to report a single case may carry a death sentence.

I went to the Health Office and managed to calm them down somewhat and fix things for the future. I wrote two letters to two offices. To one, that I promise and don't keep my promise. To the other I addressed a question: What do they plan to do with me and my new center at Dzielna St',

The letters were not courteous. By no means. But do they justify lightheartedly calling me a blackguard?

Now I know: that woman's name is [...].

But if she is annoyed at me and a damn nuisance to the hospital system, and I wrote only

that about her, then why am I a blackguard?

What am I expected to do?

A small shopkeeper said to a customer with a complaint:

"My good woman -- these are not goods and this is not a store, you are not a customer nor I a vendor, I don't sell to you nor do you pay me because these scraps of paper are not money. You don't lose, and I don't profit. Who would bother to cheat nowadays — for what? Only one must do something. Well, am I not right?"

If I were given a missal, I might in a pinch celebrate a mass.

But j should not be able to preach a sermon to the flock in armbands. I should swallow the sentences, read a question in their eyes:

"What now? And what next?"

The words would stick in my throat.

Sliska, Panska, Marianska, Komitetowa streets. Memories, memories, memories.

Every house, every courtyard. Here were my half-rouble calls, usually at night.

For medical advice in the daytime for the rich and in rich streets, I asked three or five roubles. Brazen as much as Anders, more than Kramsztyk, Bączkiewicz — professorial fees. I, resident doctor, general hack at the Berson Hospital.

A thick volume of reminiscences.

Doctors, Jews, did not practice among Christians, except the well placed living in well-to-do streets. And about these — proudly:

"I was called to the district police chief, the restaurant proprietor, the bank commissioner, the schoolmaster in the high school at Nowolipki Street, the postmaster."

That was already something.

And I had phone calls, not every day, of course.

"Countess Tarnowski would like to speak to you, Doctor. The Prosecutor General of the Judicial Chamber. Madam Tygajlo, wife of a big shot director. The lawyers Makowski, Szyszkowski."

I write the address on any scrap of paper at hand, asking:

"Would it be alright tomorrow? After the hospital, say, at one. GIs there a temperature? Yes, he may have a soft-boiled egg."

Even once:

"General Gilchenko's wife."

And by unimportant contrast: Captain Hopper, a phone call, sometimes two, each time the child had his bowel movement.

Such were the calls to the author of *Drawing-Room Child*⁶⁵, while Goldszmit used to go at night to the basement at 52 Sliska St., up to the attic at 17 Panska St.

I was once called to the Poznanski residence⁶⁶ at Aleje Ujazdowskie.

It must be today. The patients are restless. "Three roubles," said Dr. Julek, who knew everybody in Warsaw. "Stingy."

So I go.

"Will you wait a moment, doctor? I'll send for the boys."

"Are they out?"

"Not far. They are playing in the park. Meanwhile — a cup of tea."

"I can't spare the time to wait."

"And Doctor Julian always.... Have you been writing anything lately?"

"Unfortunately only prescriptions."

The next day:

"For God's sake, my friend! — They're furious. Enemies!"

"I don't give a damn."

"Well, well."

As resident doctor, I had accommodation, an annual salary of 200 roubles, paid quarterly. The house was run by a good old soul to whom I paid fifteen roubles a month. From private practice — a hundred roubles a month, and odd sums from articles, too.

I used to spend a lot on cabs.

"A cab to go to Zlota St.? Twenty kopecks? Spendthrift!"

⁶⁵ One of Korczak's early books.

⁶⁶ Well-known family of textile manufacturers in Poland. (Trans.)

I treated free the children of socialists, teachers, newspaper men, young lawyers, even doctors — all progressive men.

Sometimes I phoned:

"I'll come in the evening. I must bathe and change — quite a few scarlet fever cases. I'd hate to infect the youngster."

The youngster!

This was the bright side.

And the shadows ...

I declared:

"Since the older doctors don't want to turn out at night, especially to the poor, I, being young, must hasten at night on errands of mercy."

You understand. Immediate help. How else? What if the child does not last till the morning?

Assistant surgeons declared war and acquired drug wholesalers and two hostile pharmacies as allies.

Unanimous opinion — cracked. A dangerous lunatic. They differed only in prognosis: curable?

Once, at night, a woman in a head scarf. Pouring rain.

"My mother."

"But I only treat children."

"She's gone all childish. I know you can't help, so why do I bother? But the doctors don't want to write a death certificate. But it's my mother. And like this without a doctor?"

I went.

"I didn't know, I beg your pardon, that you are only for children. Assistant Surgeon Blucharski sent me. A Jew but a decent man. He said: `My good woman, you'd have to pay me a rouble because it's a night call. But there's a doctor in the hospital — he'll come for nothing, and still leave some money for medicine'."

Out of spite, I had been signing prescriptions without the d-r — doctor.

They would say:

"We don't know any doctor by that name, probably an assistant surgeon."

"But ... a doctor in the hospital."

So:

"The medicine was prescribed by Dr. NK (not known, improper medicine)."

I used to take twenty kopecks because "it is written in the Talmud that an unpaid doctor is no help to a sick man."

For the most part I found the patients amusing. Queer people. Occasionally disturbing.

The night bell. The ambulance brings a child suffering from burns.

"What do you think?"

"I don't think. Nothing can be done."

"This is no ordinary child. I am a merchant. I have a house. I can pay."

"Please don't shout. Please leave, you'll wake the patients."

"What's that to me?"

The assistant surgeon and I took him under the arms, and out onto the stairs. The bed with the child in it was rolled into the surgery on the ground floor.

"You've got a telephone so you can summon as many Warsaw professors as you like!"

"I'll write to the papers about you. You'll be struck off the roll."

A spoiled night.

Or: six o'clock in the morning. A woman enters my room.

"To a child."

I am drowsy after a bad night.

"What's wrong with him?"

"Inflammation after scarlet fever."

"Who has been treating him?"

"Various."

"Then you'd better call those various."

"And if I prefer you? I can pay."

"I don't go out at night."

"Is six in the morning night?"

"Night."

"So you're not coming?"

"No."

Banging the door, she threw a final:

"Aristocrat! Just lost three roubles."

Without bargaining, she would have given me 25 kopecks, and three 'for the caretaker.' She wanted to punish me: now he won't be able to sleep, will bite his fingers, feeling sorry for himself.

He lost three roubles.

These are my native districts. Panska St., Sliska St. I abandoned the hospital for the Children's Home. I have a guilt complex.

Once I had to leave (the war).

The second time — a year in Berlin.

The third time — less than six months in Paris. Toward the light, toward knowledge.

Now that I know that I do not know and why I do not know, now that I can act in accordance with the supreme rule 'don't harm the sick,' I set out for unknown waters.

The hospital has given me a great deal, and I, ungrateful, so little to it. An ugly desertion. Life has taken revenge.

Yesterday I went to Grzybow No. 1 to collect a donation. The last building before the ghetto wall. A Jewish policeman was killed here yesterday. They say he was signaling to smugglers.

"That's not the place for wholesale business," a neighbor explains.

The store is closed.

People are scared.

Yesterday, in front of the house, the caretaker's assistant:

"Doctor, you don't remember me?"

"Wait ... of course, Szulc!"

"You do remember ...?"

"Well! I remember you well. Come, tell me." We sat down on the church steps.

Good God, Grzybów: here in 1905 Sobótka was wounded.

Two recollections intermingled. Bula is forty by now. Not so long ago, he was ten.

"I have a child. Perhaps you would come and have cabbage soup. You'll see him."

"I'm tired, I'm on my way home."

We've been talking for fifteen minutes, perhaps half an hour.

Shocked Catholics in armbands⁶⁷ have been stealing discreet glances. They know me.

In broad daylight on the church doorstep Korczak sitting with a smuggler. The children must be in a bad way over there. But why so openly, demonstratively, and, however you look at it, shamelessly.

A provocation. What would the Germans think if they saw this? Well, what is one to say: the Jews are brazen and irritating.

And Szulc confides in me:

"In the morning, he has half a pint of milk, a roll and butter. That mounts up."

"What for?"

"He must now he's got a father."

"A rascal?"

"Not he. My son."

"Your wife?"

"A fine woman."

"Do you quarrel?"

"Been together for five years, never raised my voice once."

"You remember?"

A suspicion of a smile.

"I often think of the Children's Home. Sometimes I dream about you and Madam Stefa."

"Why didn't you ever come up during all these years?"

⁶⁷ Nazi regulations designated many practicing Catholics as Jewish by virtue of their ancestry. They had to wear Star of David armbands like all others. (MW).

"When I was well off, I had no time. When I was down and out, how could I come — ragged and dirty?" "Do you ever meet Lejbus?"

"No."

He helped me up. We kissed warmly, heartily.

Too honest for a crook. And perhaps the Children's Home sowed something in him, and mowed something down? All the time I had believed that he had either gotten rich or was no more.

"My partner is rich."

"He helps you a bit?"

"Not he."

How quickly the hours go by. Just now it was midnight — and already three in the morning. I had a visitor in my bed.

Mendelek had a bad dream. I carried him to my bed. He stroked my lace (!) and went to sleep.

He is moaning. Feeling uncomfortable.

"Are you asleep?"

"I thought I was in the dormitory."

He stares surprised with black monkeylike beads of eyes.

"You were in the dormitory. Do you want to go back to your own bed?"

"Am I in your way?"

"You lie at the other end. I'll bring you the pillow." "Fine."

"I'll be writing. If you're frightened, go back." "O. K."

Also a grandson. The youngest Nadanowski.

Jakub has written some sort of a poem about Moses. If I don't read it today, he may feel hurt.

With satisfaction and melancholy, I am reading his and Monius's diary. Differing in age, so distinct in intellect, style of life — emotionally alike.

Men of a clear plateau, of the same level.

There was a strong wind and dust yesterday. Passers-by squinted and covered up their eyes.

I remember a scene observed during a sea voyage. A little girl on the deck. The sapphire sea in the background. Suddenly a gust of wind. She closed her eyes and covered them with her hands. However, curious, she looked up and — amazing! — Clean wind, for the first time in her life.

Nothing to get into the eyes. She tried it twice before she felt reassured, and she rested her elbows on the rail. And the wind caressed and combed her hair. She boldly opened her eyes as wide as possible. Embarrassed, she smiled.

"There is such a thing as wind without dirty dust but I didn't know about it. I didn't know there was pure air anywhere in the world. Now I know."

A boy on leaving the Children's Home said to me:

"If not for the home I wouldn't know that there are honest people in the world who never steal. I wouldn't know that one can speak the truth. I wouldn't know that there are just laws in the world."

Program for this Sunday.

In the morning, 39 Dzielna St. On the way see Kohn.

I received a notice to pay a fine following the case I had in court. Five hundred zlotys a month. So including today (June 1) I ought to pay fifteen hundred zlotys. Should I default, the whole amount, three or five thousand — I don't remember exactly — would be payable at once.

The point is that I want them to accept my savings book with 3000 zlotys. I suggested this when they asked me at Aleja Szucha⁶⁸ whether the community office⁶⁹ would not pay bail for my release.

"Don't you want the community office to pay for you?"

"No."

It was then they wrote down that I had 3000 zlotys in a savings book.

Several weeks rich in developments have gone by. I stopped writing because Heniek was sick, and I thought there was nobody to type my nightly revelations.

Curiously enough, I believed that to be true, although I knew that several other boys

⁶⁸ Gestapo headquarters in Warsaw. (Trans.)

⁶⁹ Jewish Community Office.

could do it equally well.

It would have been a different matter if I had decided to make writing a daily duty. Like during the war. *How To Love a Child* was typed even during halts of a few hours. At Jeziorna, even Walenty rebelled⁷⁰.

"Is it worthwhile for half an hour?"

And then in Kiev, too, absolutely every day.

And now I am finishing the pad. Another excuse to write no more tonight, though I feel perfectly rested. I had four cups of strong coffee, prepared from dregs it's true, but I suspect reinforced with fresh-ground coffee.

We deceive ourselves: I have no paper. I shall read Diderot's *Jacques le fataliste*.

Probably for the first time I have forgotten that I am living through my tenth seven-year life-stage, 7X9.

Tensely, I waited for 2X7. Perhaps it was precisely then that I had heard of this for the first time.

The Gypsy's seven, seven days of the week. Why not the victorious ten of olden days (number of fingers)?

I remember the tense feeling experienced when I waited for the clock to strike midnight. The change was supposed to take place just at that instant.

There was some scandal with a hermaphrodite. I am not sure whether it was exactly at that time. I don't quite know whether I was afraid that I might wake up to find myself a girl. I made up my mind that if that happened I would keep it secret at all costs.

Gepner⁷¹ 7X10, I — 7X9. If I go over my life, the seventh year of age brought a sense of own value. I exist. I have weight. I have meaning. They see me. I can. I will.

Fourteen years. I look around. Perceive. See.... My eyes were due to open. They did. The first ideas concerning educational reforms. I used to read a dot. First anxieties and frustrations. Now, imagined voyages and stormy adventures, then again quiet family life, friendship, love for Stach. The primary dream among many, among many dozens: he a priest, I a doctor in that small town. I thought of love, formerly I only felt it, I

⁷⁰ It appears that during World War I Korczak's orderly objected to his notes, which deprived him of rest.

⁷¹ A well-to-do philanthropist supporting the Children's Home.

loved. From seven to fourteen I was permanently in love, always with a different girl. Odd, but I remember many of them. The two sisters from the skating rink, Stach's cousin (grandfather an Italian), the one in mourning, Zosia Kahorn, Anielka, Irenka from Naleczów. Stefcia for whom I used to pick flowers from the beds by the fountain in Saski Park. Then that little rope skipper, I grieved bitterly over her. I loved for a week, a month, occasionally two at once, three. One I wanted to have or a sister, another for a wife, for a sister-in-law.... My love for Mania from my fourteenth year (at Wawer in summer) was an integral part of that [...] feelings that alternately gently rocked or violently shook me. The exciting world was not already behind me. Now it is within me. I exist not to be loved and admired, but myself to act and love. It is not the duty of those around to help me but I am duty-bound to look after the world, after man.

3X7. In the seventh year, school, in the fourteenth, religious maturity, in the twenty-first, military service. For long the feeling of being cooped up. Once I was imprisoned by the school. Now I am generally shut in. I want to prevail, fight for new space.

(Probably these thoughts were suggested to me by the 22nd of June when, after the longest day in the year, the sun sets three minutes earlier day by day. Sneakingly, imperceptibly but inexorably there is less of the day by three minutes and again by three, and again. I used to commiserate with old age and death; now, less sure myself, I begin to fear for my own self. One must fight for and achieve a great balance in order to have enough to write off for losses. Perhaps it was precisely then that the dentist pulled out my first adult tooth which would not grow again. My rebellion against the law of nature, not the social conditions, came to a head. Get ready, aim, fire.)

4X7. The need for efficient functioning over the limited area of one's own `workshop.' I am anxious to be able, to know, not to idle, not to stray. I need to be a good doctor. 'I shape a model of my own. I do not wish to model myself upon acknowledged authorities. (Things used to be otherwise once. Even today there are moments when I feel like a young man with a long road ahead. I find it worthwhile to plan and venture. In the second, and certainly in the third seven years, I felt old at times, constant repetition, already too late, not worthwhile. Indeed, life is like a flame. Dies down though there is ample fuel. Suddenly, when it is about to die down, flares up sending out sparks and shooting up brightly. And dies down. A hot day in the fall and awareness that this is the last, exceptional, cold morning in July.)

5X7. I got my money back in the lottery of life. My number is already drawn. My money back. So I will not lose in this drawing unless I stake again. Might have been worse: I might have lost. But no more chance of the big prize — a pity. Fair enough — I have gotten back what I paid in. Safe. But drab — and regrettable.

Loneliness does not hurt. I appreciate memories. A schoolmate — a friendly chat over a cup of coffee in a quiet corner where no one will disturb. I seek no friend because I know I will not find one. I do not strive to know more than may be. I have signed a pact with life: we will not get in each other's way. It is unbecoming to fly at each other — no use anyway. In politics, I believe, they call it a demarcation of spheres of influence. So far and no farther, nor higher. You and I.

6 X 7. Perhaps? Already, or not yet? That depends. Let us strike a balance. Assets, liabilities. If one knew how many years more, when the end. I do not feel the inner rumblings of death, but already I think about it. If a tailor makes me a new suit, I do not say: that'll be the last. But the office desk and the chest of drawers will surely outlive me. Barring freaks and the unexpected. There will be more severe and milder winters, rainy and scorching summers. And gratifying coolness, and gales, and dust storms. So I will say: for ten, fifteen years we have not had such hail, such floods. I remember a fire. I was young then, let me think — already a university student or still a schoolboy?

7X7. What really is life, what is happiness? So long as it is not worse, just like it is now. Two sevens have met and exchanged polite greetings, glad that things are as they are, and precisely here, and under such specific conditions. A newspaper — seemingly only mindless reading. Perhaps it is. Yet you cannot do without it. There are the leaders, and a novel in installments, obituaries and theatrical reviews, reports from the courts. The movies — a new film. A new novel. Small accidents. Classified advertisements. Not so much interesting as offering a choice. Someone under the streetcar, somebody has invented something or other, someone's fur coat stolen, and here a five-year prison sentence. Somebody wants to buy a sewing machine or a typewriter, or has a piano for sale or is looking for a three-room apartment with all modern conveniences. A broad river bed, I should say, of the majestically flowing Vistula as it is near Warsaw.

My city, my street, my store where I regularly shop, my tailor, and most important of all — my workshop.

As long as it is no worse. For if one could order the sun: stop, probably it should be at this time of life. (There is a small dissertation *On the Happiest Period of Life* — and, believe it or not, by Karamzin⁷². His stuff sure bothered us in the Russian school.)

7 X 8 = 56. How these years have flown. Literally flown. It seems but yesterday it was

⁷² N. N. Karamzin (1766-1826) Russian writer and historian.

7X7. Nothing added, nothing subtracted. What a vast difference in those ages: seven and fourteen, fourteen and twenty-one. And for me, at 7 X 7 and at 7 X 8 — absolutely the same.

Please do not get me wrong. Obviously there are no two leaves identical, nor drops, nor grains of sand. This fellow has a balder head, that one more gray hair. This one has false teeth, that one only crowns. This one eyeglasses, that one hard of hearing. This one more bony, that one fatter. But what I am concerned with are the seven-year stages.

I know: life could be divided into five-year periods, and that way, too, it could be made to fit. I know: the conditions. Wealth, poverty. Success, worries. I know: war, wars, disasters. And this is relative, too. A certain lady told me: "The first war spoiled me completely, and it was very difficult then to settle down." Even the present one has spoiled many. Yet surely there is not a man who does not believe that the failures of strength, health and energy spring not from the war but from that 7 X 8 and 7X9.

What ghastly dreams! Last night: the Germans, I without the armband during the curfew at Praga⁷³. I woke up. Again a dream. On a train, I am moved, a meter at a time, into a compartment where there are already several Jews. Some died again tonight. The bodies of children. A dead child in the bucket. Another skinned, lying on boards in the mortuary, clearly still breathing. Another dream: I am standing high up on a wobbly ladder, and my father keeps on pushing a piece of cake into any mouth, a big lump with sugar candy and currants, and anything that falls from my mouth he puts crumbed into his pocket.

I woke up in a sweat at the most dangerous point. Is not death such an awakening at a point when there is no apparent way out?

"Every man can surely find five minutes in which to die" — I have read somewhere.

Summer. 39 Dzielna St. Abstracts.

When the tenth in turn pesters me about a decision regarding candy and honey cakes it makes me wild. Are there no other problems to solve except those of honey cakes!

Yesterday, a little boy came back from the hospital after having had a leg amputated following frostbite. Everybody thinks it his duty to tell me about it. An annoying thoughtlessness. I'll put up with it. But that boy — hero of the day?

One sees too few hysterics around here.

⁷³ The section of Warsaw east of the Vistula.

Two sensible, level-headed, unbiased informants and advisers have let me down. The weighing machine and the thermometer.

I have ceased to believe them. They tell lies, too.

We say:

Group one, group two — area A, area B, area C. We say: the wing. (The wing has not yet gotten breakfast.) We say: area U, area I. Group A boys and girls for the shift....

Incidental, sort of historical rodomontades, or a desire to intimidate and flabbergast a newcomer.

Hard to say.

There are `men' here — a barrow man once, an errand boy once, porter or caretaker once. There are women manual workers, house servants, charwomen, governesses — today a hygienist has emerged. There are sectional or floor or landing monitors, probably guards as well. It did not bother me in jail, but here it is upsetting.

Hard to say.

There are women workers for the morning, afternoon, ill, convalescent, feverish, here today and gone tomorrow, group leaders, half-and-halves, outside workers, the dismissed.

Hard to 'say who, what.

She looks at me with scared eyes and answers: I don't know.

As if she came yesterday, hasn't worked here for ten years but ,came yesterday. As if what I am asking about related to the North Pole or the equator.

She doesn't know. Just does her job.

The only way: not to interfere and not to know what the hundred-headed roll of employees do.

Children?

Not only children but cattle, and carrion, and dung.

I have caught myself in a transgression. I do not give a full teaspoon of cod liver oil. I think that on their graves will grow nettle, burdock and madwort, not nutritious vegetables

and flowers.

I have the impression that they send here the refuse of children and staff from allied institutions. An imbecile, a spiteful predator expelled from the

Children's Home has landed here, too. When finally a German soldier intervened in his behalf, I told the policeman that if Fula were to come back I would take his gun and stand guard, and let him, the policeman, take charge of the Home.

So the mother placed him here.

The staff.

The chimney sweep must be smeared with soot. The butcher must be stained with blood (the surgeon, too).

The cesspool cleaner stinks.

The waiter must be crafty. If he is not, woe be unto him.

I feel all smeared, blood-stained, stinking.

Crafty, since I am alive — I sleep, eat and, occasionally even joke.

I have invited for consultations:

Brokman

Hallerowa

Przedborski

Gantz-Kohn

Lifszyc

Mayzner

Zandowa⁷⁴

Advise me: limewater: alright. What else?

Long after the war, men will not be able to look each other in the eyes without reading

⁷⁴ An attorney and several physicians working in the Ghetto.

the question: you are alive, you survived? What were you doing?

My dear Anka....

1. I don't make social calls. I go to beg for money, foodstuffs, an item of information, a hint. If you call that social calls ... it is arduous degrading work. Must play the clown, too. People don't like gloomy faces.

I often call on the Chmielarz family. They always find some food for me. That's not a social call, either. I see it as a good deed, they — as an exchange of services. In spite of the kind, gentle and soothing atmosphere, it is frequently tiring, too.

Reading as a relaxation begins to fail. A dangerous symptom. I am distracted and that itself worries me. I don't want to sink into idiocy.

2. I have sent the 500 zlotys. If I am in any danger, the least from that side, in that case. A reliable and stalwart friend — an excellent lawyer — looks after the matter. I take no step without his approval.

3. I am going to see the head of the Staff Section. I could not have failed to consider the case since there was none. Whatever Madam Stefa said, promised and undertook, I did not know since no one told me. I have kept the secret.

4. In my humble opinion, I discharge my duties to the best of my ability. I never refuse if I can help it. I have never undertaken to look after politicians, so the charge is unjust.

June 26, 1942

END OF PART ONE

I have read it over. I could hardly understand it. And the reader?

No wonder, memoirs are incomprehensible to the reader. Is it possible to understand strange reminiscences, a strange life?

It seems that ;I ought to be able to know without an effort what I write about.

Well! Is it possible to understand one's own reminiscences?

Slowacki left behind his letters to his mother. They give a vivid picture of his experiences over several years. Because of those letters, a document has survived attesting to his

transformations under the influence of Towianski⁷⁵.

It crossed my mind:

"Perhaps I should write these memoirs in the form of letters to my sister?"

Cold, strange, detached was my first letter to her. A reply to her letter.

Here:

"My dear ..."

... ..

What a great and painful misunderstanding.

Proust is scattered and petty?

Far from it:

Every hour — that thick copybook, that's an hour's reading.

So be it.

You have to read all day to understand my day more or less. Week after week, year after year.

And we, during a few hours, at the expense of a few hours of our time, want to relive a whole lifetime.

Not so easy. You will grasp something from a vague abstract, a careless sketch — a single episode in a thousand, in a hundred thousand.

I am writing this in the classroom during the Hebrew lesson.

Zamenhof⁷⁶ comes to my mind. Naive, audacious, he wanted to rectify God's error or God's punishment. He wanted to fuse the confused languages into one again.

Stop!

To divide, divide, divide. Not to join.

What would men have?

⁷⁵ Creator of a religious sect among Polish emigrants in France. His ideas of Messianism had a great influence on Polish poets and writers of that time.

⁷⁶ A Warsaw physician, the inventor of Esperanto (1859-1917).

Time must be filled, men given activity, life must have a goal.

"He knows three languages. He is studying a language. He knows five languages."

Here two groups of children have given up amusement, easy books, chats with friends.
Voluntary study of Hebrew.

When the younger group finished their hour, one exclaimed with surprise:

`What, an hour has passed already?"

So. `Da' in Russian, `ja' in German, 'oui' in French, `yes' in English, `ken' in Hebrew. One can fill not one but three lives.

Part Two

Today is Monday. From eight to nine a dormitory chat. Whoever wants to may attend.
Provided he does not interrupt.

Suggested themes:

1. Emancipation of women
2. Heredity
3. Loneliness
4. Napoleon
5. What is duty?
6. On the medical profession
7. Amiel's memoirs⁷⁷
8. From the doctor's reminiscences
9. On London
10. On Mendel
11. Leonardo da Vinci
12. On Fabre
13. The senses and the mind
14. The genius and his surroundings (mutual impact)

⁷⁷ French poet who became known when his memoirs were posthumously published (1821-1881).

15. The Encyclopedists
16. How different writers did their creative work differently
17. Nationality. Nation., Cosmopolitanism.
18. Symbiosis
19. Evil and malice
20. Freedom. Destiny and free will.

When I was the editor of `Maly Przegadd,'⁷⁸ only two themes attracted young people: Communism (politics) and sexual problems. Wicked, shameful years — rotten, base. Prewar, lying, falseness. Cursed.

Life was not worth living.

Filth. Stinking filth.

The storm came. Cleared the air. Easier to breathe. More oxygen.

FROM THE SERIES "STRANGE HAPPENINGS"

**I devote this tale
to Szymonek Jakubowicz**

Let the planet be called Ro, and he be named Professor, Astronomer or whatever you like. And we shall call the place on planet Ro where Professor Zi was making his observations, Laboratory.

The name of the instrument in our imperfect speech will be a bit too long: 'astropsychomicrometer,' a micrometer in the medium of astral psychical vibrations.

In terms of our terrestrial observatories, the Professor used a telescope which, by buzzing, communicated what was going on here and there in the universe, and possibly the intricate instrument projected pictures onto a screen or recorded vibrations in the same way as a seismograph.

Anyhow, this is unimportant.

What is important is that the scientist from Planet Ro could control psychic energy and could change heat radiation into spiritual, to be more precise, moral power.

⁷⁸ A weekly supplement to the prewar Warsaw daily 'Nasz Przegadd.'

Alright. So long as we take morality to be the harmony of impressions and the equilibrium of feelings.

One more comparison comes to mind: a radio that transmits not songs and music or war communiques but rays of a spiritual order. In the life of stars, and not merely in our solar system.

Of order and tranquility.

And so Professor Zi sits troubled in his workroom and thinks:

"That restless spark which is Earth is again in ferment. Disorder, disquiet, negative emotions predominate, reign. Miserable, impure is their life over there. Its disorders upset the run of time and impressions.

A pointer has stirred again. The line of suffering has gone up violently."

One, two, three, four, five.

Astronomer Zi frowns.

"Put an end to this senseless game? That bloody game? The beings inhabiting earth have blood. And tears.. And they moan when hurt. Don't they want to be happy? Are they wandering, unable to find the way? It is dark over there, a gale and a dust storm blinds them."

The pointer records more and more new impacts.

Improperly used iron imposes a penalty. But at the same time guides and trains, prepares the spirit for new conquests and initiations.

"There are bodies of water upon that distant spark. From slaughtered trees, you have built floating houses, braced them with iron. What a stupendous effort. Unruly, foolish but capable. They have no wings yet. How vast to them appear the altitudes of flight and the expanse of oceans."

Bzzzz... Bzzzz.

instead of rejoicing in their hearts, in song, intensified collective effort, instead of tying the threads, they tangle and tug.

"So what am I to do? To check them would mean to press them onto a road for which they are not yet sufficiently matured, an effort beyond their strength and a goal transcending their present comprehension. Slavery, coercion, violence. All that foments, festers and hurts."

Professor Zi sighs. Closes his eyes. Applies the sensor of the astropsychomicrometer to his chest and listens.

And there is a war proceeding on the earth. Fires, shambles, battlefields. Man, responsible for Earth and its products, does not know, or knows but understands for himself alone.

Space over Planet Ro (perhaps Lo) is filled with blue, with the fragrance of the lily of the valley and the sweetness of wine. Winged feelings flicker like snowflakes, raising the song of songs, gentle and pure.

Our earth is still young. Its beginnings painful labor.

From the diaries they bring to be read.

Marceli writes: "I have found a penknife. I will give 15 groszy for the poor. I promised myself."

Szlama: "A widow sits at home and weeps. Perhaps the older son will bring something from his smuggling. She does not know that the gendarme shot her son dead. ... And do you know that soon everything will be alright again?"

Szymonek: "My father was a battler for a piece of bread. Although father was busy all day, yet he loved me." (And two shocking memories):

Natek: "Chess was invented by a Persian wizard or king."

Mietek: "That siddur⁷⁹ that I want to have bound is a souvenir since it belonged to his brother who died, his brother in Palestine sent it to him for the day of confirmation."

Leon: "I needed a box to keep all sorts of souvenirs. Hersz wanted to sell me a French polished box for 3 1/2 zlotys." (An involved account of the deal.)

Szmulek: "I have bought tags for 20 groszy. Tomorrow I will have big expenses."

Abu: "If I sit a bit longer in the toilet, they right away say that I am selfish. And I want to be liked by others." (I know this problem from jail.)

I have fixed a toilet fee scale:

1. For urinating — catch five flies.
2. For a bowel movement — second class (a bucketstool-with-a-hole combination) — ten flies.
3. First class — toilet seat — fifteen flies.

One of the boys asks:

⁷⁹ Prayer book.

"May I pay the flies later? I can't wait."

Another:

"You go and do it, go on.... I'll catch them for you."

Every fly caught in the isolation room counts as two.

"And does it count if a fly is hit and gets away?" Whatever else, there are certainly very few flies. Using the same system, a dozen or so years ago, kindergarten children caught all the bugs at Goclawek.

Community good will — a mighty force.

EUTHANASIA

The church has shrouded in ritual the functions of birth, marriage and death.

The ritual of the mass has taken possession of man's entire spiritual life, controlling even the accessory economic life of the flock.

When men cast away (why so abruptly?) the childish cloth, already tight and too short — artless and repeatedly patched up — the flock — the church expanded into a number of institutions.

Now construction is not only in the service of places of worship. The first, you understand, France and Paris, erected the contemporary Babel. The name of it is the Eiffel Tower.

The buildings of schools and secular universities, theaters, museums, concert halls, crematoria, hotels, stadiums — great, magnificent, hygienic, modern.

There is now talk over the radio and not only a sermon and the priest's address.

Libraries, printing shops, bookstores and not only a holy book or a scroll on the altar and a street stand with amulets.

The physician — the mighty structure of medicine.

Now it is no longer the priest's prayer which protects against contagion.

Against hail, fire and death — health insurance schemes and insurance companies now.

Social care replaces the one-time penny for the blind.

Sculpture and painting on canvas in art galleries, not only on holy ceilings and walls.

Meteorological institutes instead of prayer services. The hospital stemmed from the church.

All was contained within it and took its beginnings from it.

The stock exchange controls prices, not the square in front of the church.

International meetings of learned specialists and countless periodicals, not exchange of private letters and mutual social calls, discussions and feasts of the Levites.

Diplomacy, no less effective than prayers, protects against the outbreak of war.

The penal, civil, and commercial codes are the equivalent of the old decalogue and commentaries.

Prisons are the former cloisters. Judgments — excommunications.

Man of today has matured, but he has not become wiser and gentler.

Once upon a time, everything was in the church, whatever was lofty, solemn, rational, beautiful, humanitarian, humane. Outside was nothing but a beast of burden, numbed, exploited, helpless.

And even today, even upon the snowy peaks of development and knowledge, men have founded their most important affairs upon baptism, the sacraments of marriage, and rites linked with the hour of death for some and inheritance for the quick.

Not so long ago, yes, almost yesterday, there appeared at conferences: population or birth control, discussion on the perfect marriage and — euthanasia.

The right to kill as an act of mercy belongs to him who loves, and suffers — if he himself also does not want to remain alive. It will be this way in a few years.

An odd saying has come into use:

"To be sociable, a Gypsy has gone to the gallows."

When on my sister's return from Paris I suggested to her that we should commit suicide together, there was no idea or program of bankruptcy in it. On the contrary. I could find no place for myself in the world and life.

Qui Bono that dozen odd years more? Perhaps it was my fault, who knows; that I did not revert to my offer. The deal did not materialize because of certain differences of opinion.

When during the dark hours I pondered over the killing (putting to sleep) of infants and old people of the Jewish ghetto, I saw it as murder of the sick and feeble, as assassination of the simple.

A nurse from the cancer home told me that she used to put a lethal dose of medicine by the bedside of her patients, instructing them:

"Not more than one spoonful, because it's poison. One spoonful will alleviate the pain like a medicine."

And over many, years, not a single patient reached for the fatal dose.

How will this problem look to the future?

An official board, what else? A well-developed organization. One big office, small rooms. Office desks. Lawyers, doctors, philosophers, business advisers, of different ages and specialties.

The one concerned submits an application. Everybody is eligible. Perhaps ample restrictions so that applications are not made without proper consideration or not in earnest, deceitfully for the purpose of taking advantage of the board or to trick one's own family.

An application for death might serve to exert pressure upon the family:

"Come back to me, dear wife, or else — see, a receipt for my application.... Daddy, I need money to have a good time.

"If you don't give me a passing grade in my matriculation, you will suffer pangs of conscience, I'll poison your peace of mind."

So:

The application must be on a specified kind of paper only. Say, in Greek or Latin. A list of witnesses to the application to be enclosed. Perhaps stamps. Perhaps the fee payable in four quarterly installments or three monthly ones, or seven weekly.

The application must be well grounded:

"I do not want to live because of a disease, a financial crash, a disappointment, a surfeit, because father, son, friend has failed me.

"I request that the operation be performed within one week, without delay."

Has anyone collected incidents and experiences, confidences, letters, memoirs from concentration camps, prisons, from condemned men or those threatened with a death sentence, on the eve of a big battle, on the stock exchange, in gambling houses?

Application accepted. Formalities complied with. Now the examination, conducted along the same lines as a trial in court.

Medical examination. Consultation with a psychologist. Perhaps confession, maybe psychoanalysis. Additional interviews with the witnesses.

Fixing the dates, any possible changes. Specialists and experts.

Refusal or postponing of the implementation of a favorable decision. Or a trial euthanasia. For it happens that man, having once tried the delights and joys of committing suicide, lives to an advanced age, never trying again.

One of the initiation processes for freemasons is said to be such a test consisting of an unsuccessful leap into the unknown.

Place of execution. This is my personal invention — after a cut-off date.

Or:

Proceed to this or that place. There you will receive the death applied for. Your request will be granted in ten day's time, at a morning, evening hour. The authorities are asked to assist on land, at sea and in the air.

It looks as if I am joking. No.

There are problems that like bloodstained rags lie right across the sidewalk. People cross to the other side of the street or turn their eyes away in order not to see.

I do the same.

However, where a whole problem, and not just a beggar dying of starvation, is involved, this is not allowed. It is not one or a hundred miserable wretches in a hard year of war but millions through the centuries.

This you must look straight in the face.

My life has been difficult but interesting. In my younger days I asked God for precisely that.

"God, give me a hard life but let it be beautiful, rich and aspiring."

On discovering that Slowacki had done the same, I felt rather pained that it was not my invention, that I had a precursor.

When I was seventeen, I even started writing a novel entitled *Suicide*. The main character hated life out of fear of insanity.

I used to be desperately afraid of the lunatic asylum. My father was sent there several times.

So I am the son of a madman. A hereditary affliction.

More than two score years, and to this day this thought is at times a torment to me.

I am too fond of my madness not to be afraid that someone may try to treat me against my will.

At this point, I should write down: part two. No. All this taken together is but talkativeness. But I can't be more concise.

July 15, 1942

A week's break in writing which, it seems, was absolutely unnecessary. I had the same feeling when writing *How To Love A Child*. I used to write at stops, on a meadow, under a pine tree, sitting on a stump. Everything is important and if I do not note it down I will forget. An irretrievable loss to humanity, At times, a pause for a month. Why make a fool of myself? Whatever is wise is known by a hundred men. When the proper time comes, they will tell you, realize whatever is of major importance. It was not Edison who made the inventions. They were hanging as if on a line, like wash drying in the sun. All he did was to gather them.

The same goes for Pasteur, the same for Pestalozzi. It is there. Only spell it out.

So it is with every problem.

If not one, then another, will launch himself into space.

For a long time I could not understand in what way the present-day orphanage differs from earlier ones, from our own as it once was.

Orphanage — barracks. I know.

Orphanage — prison. Yes.

Orphanage — beehive, anthill. No.

The Children's Home is now a home for the aged. I have seven occupants in the isolation room, three of whom are new. The age of the patients ranges from seven right up to Azryl, sixty, who moans sitting on his bed with his legs dangling, and elbows resting on the back of a chair.

The morning discussions of the children are the product of temperature measurement. My temperature, and yours. Which one is feeling worse? How did each pass the night?

A sanatorium for rich patients, capricious, affectionately attached to their ailments.

Leon has fainted for the first time in his life. Now he is trying to find the cause.

The children are dreamy. Only the outer skin normal. Underneath lurks weariness, discouragement, anger, mutiny, mistrust, resentment, longing.

The seriousness of their diaries hurts. In response to their confidences I share with them as an equal. Our common experiences — theirs and mine. Mine more diluted,

watered down, otherwise the same.

Yesterday, while counting the votes of the staff at

Dzielna St., I understood the essence of their solidarity. They hate one another but none of them will allow

another to come to harm.

"Don't meddle in our affairs. You are a stranger, an enemy. Even if you offer something useful it is only an illusion and will ultimately do harm."

The most devoted nurse, Miss Wittlin, died — tuberculosis.

Too bad — Wittlin. Two: school and the isolation room. `The salt of the earth' dissolves — the manure remains.

What will be the upshot?

"It is harder to pass a day well than to write a book."

Every day, not merely yesterday, is a book — a thick exercise book, a chapter, nourishment for years. How improbably long a man lives.

There's nothing absurd about the calculations of the Holy Scriptures: Methuselah did live about a thousand years.

Night, July 18

During the first week of our last stay at the Goclawek summer home, the result of the consumption of bread of unknown composition and make was a mass poisoning which affected the children and some of the staff.

Diarrhea. The excrements boiled in the chamber pots. Bubbles formed upon the surface of the pitchlike matter. Bursting they exuded a sweetish-putrid odor, which not only attacked the sense of smell but invaded the throat, eyes, ears, the brain.

Just now we have something similar, it consists of vomiting and watery stools.

During the night, the boys lost 80 kg among them - average a kilogram per head. The girls — 60 kg (somewhat less).

The children's digestive tracts were struggling under heavy strain. Not much needed to precipitate a disaster. Perhaps it was the inoculation against dysentery (five days ago) or the ground pepper added pursuant to a French recipe to the stale eggs used for Friday's

`pate.'

The next day, not so much as a single kilogram of the losses in weight was made up.

Help for those vomiting, moaning with pain, was administered in near darkness — limewater. (Unlimited dental chalk for whoever wanted it, jug after jug. In addition, a drug for some suffering from headaches.) Finally, for the staff, sparingly — morphine. An injection of caffeine for a hysterical new inmate following a collapse.

His mother, wasting away of ulcerated intestines, was unwilling to die until the child had been placed in the Home. The boy was unwilling to go until the mother had died. He finally yielded. The mother died alright, now the child has pangs of conscience. In his illness, he mimics his mother: moans (screams), complains of pain, then gasps, then feels hot, finally is dying of thirst.

"Water!"

I pace the dormitory to and fro. Will there be an outbreak of mass hysteria? Might be! Victory for the children's confidence in the leadership. They believed that as long as the doctor was calm there was no danger.

Actually I was not so calm. But the fact that I shouted at the troublesome patient and threatened to throw him out onto the staircase was evidence that the man at the helm had everything under control. Decisive: he shouts, so he knows all about it.

The next day, that is yesterday — the performance. *The Post Office* by Tagore. Applause, handshakes, smiles, efforts at cordial conversation. (The chairwoman looked over the house after the performance and pronounced that though we are cramped, the genius Korczak had demonstrated that he could work miracles even in a rat hole.)

So others are allotted palaces.

(This reminded me of the pompous opening ceremony of a new kindergarten in the workers' house at Górczewska St. with the participation of Mrs. Moscicka⁸⁰ — the second.)

How ridiculous they are.

What would have happened if the actors of yesterday were to continue in their roles

⁸⁰ Wife of the prewar President of Poland.

today?

Jerzyk fancied himself a fakir.

Chaimek — a real doctor.

Adek — the lord mayor.

(Perhaps illusions would be a good subject for the Wednesday dormitory talk. Illusions, their role in the life of mankind....)

And so to Dzielna St.

The same day. Midnight

If I were to say that I have never unwillingly written a single line, that would be the truth. But it would also be true to say that I have written everything under compulsion.

I was a child `able to play for hours on his own,' concerning whom `you wouldn't know there was a child in the house.'

I got building blocks (bricks) when I was six. I stopped playing with them when I was fourteen.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself? Such a big boy.

You ought to be doing something. Reading. Blocks — what next...."

When I was fifteen I acquired the madness, the frenzy of reading. The world vanished, only the book existed.

I used to talk to people a lot: to peers and to much older ones, adults. In Saski Park I had some really aged friends. 'They were amazed at me.' A philosopher.

I conversed only with myself.

For to talk and to converse are not the same. To change one's clothes and to undress — two different things.

I undress when alone, and converse when alone. A quarter of an hour ago I finished my monologue in the presence of Heniek Azrylewicz. Probably for the first time in my life I told myself positively: "I have an investigating mind, not inventive." Investigating in order to know?

No.

Investigating in order to ascertain, to plumb? Not that either.

Rather investigating in order to ask further and further questions.

I put questions to men (to infants, to the aged), facts, events, fates. I am not so pressed for answers, I go on to other questions — not necessarily on the same subject.

My mother used to say:

"That boy has no ambition. It's all the same to him what he wears, whether he plays with children of his own kind or with the caretaker's. He is not ashamed to play with toddlers."

I used to ask my building blocks, children, grownups, what they were. I did not break toys, it did not interest me why the doll's eyes closed when it was laid down. Not the mechanism but the essence of a thing, thing all for itself, in itself.

Writing memoirs or a life story I am obliged to talk, not to converse. Now back to euthanasia.

The family of a suicide.

Euthanasia to order.

Insane, certified, incapable of independent decision.

A code comprising a thousand articles is needed. Life itself will dictate them. What is important is the principle: permissible, desirable.

On a beautiful remote island, serene, as in a fairy tale, a fine hotel, boarding house, a suicide casts the die. Is living worth while?

How many days or weeks necessary to decide? Life following patterns of contemporary magnates. Perhaps work?

Hotel service. Duties in shifts. Work in the garden. Length of stay?

"Where is he?"

"He has left."

To a neighboring island or to the bottom of the sea. Should there be a rule:

"The decree of death will be realized in one month, even against your will. For you have signed an agreement, a contract with an organization, a deal with temporal life. So much the worse for you if you recant too late."

Or death — liberation comes in sleep, in a glass of wine, while dancing, to the accompaniment of music, sudden and unexpected.

"I want to die because I'm in love."

"I long for death because I hate."

"Take my life because I'm capable of neither love nor hate."

All that exists, but in crazy confusion, festering, filthy.

Death for profit, for a fixed payment, for convenience, to oblige.

The most intimately bound up with death are sterilization, prevention and interruption of pregnancy.

"In Warsaw, you are free to have one child, in a small town, two, in a village, three, in a frontier village, four. In Siberia, ten. Take your choice."

"Free to live but childless."

"Free to live but unmarried."

"Manage by yourself, pay the taxes exclusively for yourself."

"Here is a mate for you. Pick one out of ten, out of a hundred girls."

"You may have two husbands. We allow three wives."

Hurrah! lots of jobs, files, agencies, offices!

(A steel machine does the work, provides accommodation, furniture, food, clothing. You are concerned only with organizing.)

A new method of land cultivation or livestock breeding, or new synthetic products, or colonization of regions today inaccessible — the equator and the poles. The total population of the earth can be increased to five billion.

Communication has been established with a new planet. Colonization. Mars, perhaps Moon will accept new immigrants. Perhaps even more efficient means of communication with a distant neighbor. As a result, ten billion men like you and me.

Earth has the last word, who, where to, how many.

Contemporary war is a naive, though insincere, shooting off. What is important is the great migration of peoples.

Russia's program is to mix and crossbreed. Germany's is to gather those having the same color of skin, hair, shape of nose, dimensions of skull or pelvis.

Today, specialists feel the stranglehold of unemployment. A tragic quest for a *dish* of work for physicians and dentists.

Not enough tonsils waiting to be cut, vermiform appendixes to be taken out, teeth for filling.

"What next? What is to be done?"

There is: *acetonemia, pylorospasmus*. There is: *angina pectoris*.

What will happen if we find that tuberculosis is not only curable but with a single injection, intravenous, intramuscular or subcutaneous?

Syphilis — test 606. Consumption, 2500. What will be left for doctors and nurses to do?

What will happen if alcohol is replaced by a whiff of gas? Machine No. 3. Price, ten zlotys. Fifty-year guarantee. Dose as prescribed on the label. Pay in installments.

Sufficient daily nourishment is contained in two x-bion pills. What about the chefs and restaurants?

Esperanto? One daily paper for all peoples and tongues. What will linguists do, and above all, translators and teachers of foreign languages?

Radio — perfected. Even the most sensitive ear will detect no difference between live music and a "canned, conserved" melody.

What will be then, when even today we need disasters to provide work and goals for only one generation?

We cannot go on like that, my dear friends. For unprecedented stagnation will set in, a stench such as no one has ever experienced, and unique frustration.

A theme for a short story:

Tomorrow begins a radio contest for the master violinist of the year, playing this or that symphony or dissonance.

The whole world at the loudspeakers. Unprecedented Olympic Game.

Fans of the violinist from the Isle of Parrots experience moments of terrible suspense.

The last night.

Their favorite flops.

They commit suicide, unable to reconcile themselves to the fall of their idol.

There is a Chekhov story: A ten-year-old nanny is so desperate for sleep that she strangles the screaming baby.

Poor nanny — she could not do otherwise. I have found a way. I don't hear the irritating

coughing, I heartlessly ignore the aggressive and provoking behavior of the old tailor.

I don't hear it. Two o'clock in the morning. Silence. I settle down to sleep — for five hours. The rest I will make up in the daytime.

I would like to tidy up what I have written. A tough assignment.

July 21, 1942

Tomorrow I shall be sixty-three or sixty-four. For some years, my father failed to obtain my birth certificate. I suffered a few difficult moments over that. Mother called it gross negligence: being a lawyer, father should not have delayed in the matter of the birth certificate.

I was named after my grandfather, his name was Hersz (Hirsz). Father had every right to call me Henryk: he himself was given the name Józef. And to the rest of his children grandfather gave Christian names, too: Maria, Magdalena, Ludwik, Jakub, Karol. Yet he hesitated and procrastinated.

I ought to say a good deal about my father: I pursue in life what he strove for, for what my grandfather tortured himself for many years.

And my mother. Later perhaps. I am both mother and father. That helps me to know and understand a great deal.

My great-grandfather was a glazier. Splendid: glass gives warmth and light.

It is very hard to be born and learn to live. Ahead of me is a much easier matter: to die. After death, it may be hard again, but I am not bothering about that. The last year, month or hour.

I should like to die consciously, in possession of my faculties. I do not know what I should say to the children by way of farewell. I should want to make clear to them only this — that the road is theirs to choose, freely.

Ten o'clock. Shots: two, several, two, one, several. Perhaps it is my own badly blacked out window. But I do not stop writing.

By contrast: thought (a single shot) soars even higher.

July 22, 1942

Everything else has its limits, only brazen shamelessness is limitless.

The authorities have ordered the hospital in Stawki St. to be cleared. And the head doctor, a woman, was told to admit all the bad cases to Zelazna St.

What do we do? Prompt decision, efficient action.

X and Z have 175 convalescent children. They have decided to place a third of them with me. There are more than fifteen institutions, but ours is nearby.-

And the fact that over a period of six months the lady in question stooped to every conceivable outrage against the patients for the sake of convenience, through obstinacy or stupidity, that she fought with devilish cunning against my humane and simple plan — that goes for nothing [...].

While I was out, Mrs. K. agreed, and Mrs. S. proceeded to put in operation the shameless demand, detrimental in the highest degree, harmful to their children and ours [...].

Spit on the floor and clear out. I have long been contemplating it. More — a noose — lead on the feet.

(It has come out incomprehensibly again. But I am too tired to write more.)

Azrylewicz died this morning. Oh, how hard to live, how easy to die!

July 27, 1942. Yesterday's rainbow.

Yesterday's rainbow.

A marvelous big moon over the fugitives' camp. Why can't I calm this unfortunate, insane quarter. Only one brief communiqué.

The authorities might allow it.

At the worst, will refuse.

Such a lucid plan:

Declare yourself, make your choice. We do not offer a choice of easy roads. No playing bridge for the time being, no sunbathing, delicious dinners paid for with smugglers' blood.

Choose: either get out, or work here on the spot. If you stay, you must do whatever may be necessary for the resettlers.

The autumn is near. They will need clothes, footwear, underwear, tools.

Anyone trying to get out by a trick will be caught, anyone wanting to buy himself out — we shall gladly take his jewelry, foreign currency, anything of value. When he has already surrendered his all — hurry up — then we shall ask him again:

"Here or there? What — have you decided?"

So long as there's no sunbathing on the beach, no bridge and no pleasant nap after reading

the newspaper.

A social worker? Alright. You can even pretend that for a time, we will pretend to believe you. In general, we believe for as long as it is convenient and in what is convenient. Pardon: not convenient. What is in the plan.

We are running a gigantic enterprise. The name of it: war. We work in a planned, disciplined manner, methodically. Your petty interests, ambitions, sentiments, whims, claims, resentments, cravings do not concern us.

Of course — mother, husband, child, old lady — a family heirloom, a favorite dish — all very nice, pleasant, affecting. But for the present, there are more important things. When there is time to spare, we shall return to such things, too.

Meanwhile, in order not to prolong the matter. things must get to be a bit rough and painful, and without any particular, if I may put it that way, precision, elegance and even scrupulousness. Just roughly cut for the current, temporary purpose.

You yourself are longing to see it over. So are we. Therefore, don't obstruct.

The Jews to the East. No bargaining. It is not a question of your Jewish grandmother but of where you are needed most — your hands, brain, time, life. Grandmother is only a

grandmother. It was necessary only to find something to hang it on, a key, a catch word.

You say you cannot go east — you will die there. So choose something else. You are on your own, you must take the risk. For clearly we, to keep up appearances, are obliged to bar the way, threaten, prosecute and reluctantly punish.

And you muscle in with a fresh wad of notes. We have neither time nor desire for that sort of thing. We are not playing at war, we were told to wage it with the greatest possible expedition, efficiently, as honestly as possible.

The job is not clean, or pleasant, or sweet smelling. So for the present we must be indulgent to the workers we need.

One likes vodka, another women, a third to boss about, while yet another, by contrast, is meek and lacks self-confidence.

We know: vices, shortcomings. But they put their names down in good time while you were scratching your head too much, procrastinating. I beg your pardon — the train must run on schedule, according to a timetable prepared in advance.

Here is a siding.

Italians, French, Roumanians, Czechs, Hungarians this way. Japanese, Chinese, even Solomon Islanders, even cannibals that way. Farmers, highlanders, the middle class and intelligentsia.

We are Germans. It is not a question of the trademark but of the cost, the destination of the products.

We are a steel roller or a plow or a cutter. So long as there is bread from that flour. And there will be, provided you don't obstruct. And you will not obstruct. Whine. Get all upset. Pester. We may feel sorry for you at times, but we must use the whip, the big stick or the pencil, because there must be order.

A poster.

"Whoever does this or that — shot."

"Whoever does not do this or that — shot." One asks for it. A suicide? Too bad.

Another is not afraid. Hail! A hero?

Let his name shine in letters of gold but — now, out of the way, there is no alternative.

A third is afraid — livid with fear, constantly runs to the toilet, dulls himself with tobacco, liquor, women, and obstinately wants his own way. What would you do with him?

The Jews have their merits. Capabilities, and Moses, and Christ, and hard working, and Heine, and an ancient race, and progress, and Spinoza, and yeast and the first and selfless. All true. But over and above Jews, there are others, and still something.

The Jews are important, but later — you will understand some day. Yes, we know and remember. Important issue, but not the only one.

We do not blame. It was the same with the Pole and it is the same even now with Poland and Palestine, and Malta, and Martinique, and with the respectable proletarian, and the fair sex and the orphan, with militarism and capitalism. But not all at once. There must be some order of doing things, only certain items on the agenda.

Hard for you. It's not easy for us, either. The more so since there is no buffet handy where formerly one could escape from a wearisome discussion.

Brother you must listen" to History's programmed speech on the new character.

WHY DO I COLLECT THE DISHES?

I know that many are dissatisfied at my collecting the dishes after meals. Even the monitors seem to dislike it. Surely they can manage. There are enough of them. •If there

were not, one or two would be added. Then why that ostentation, that obstinacy, and maybe ugly pretense of not shirking work and being democratic.

Even worse, if anyone comes to see me on important business, I tell him to wait, saying:

"I am occupied now."

What an occupation: picking up soup bowls, spoons and plates.

But the worst of it is that I do it clumsily, get in the way while the second helping is being passed. I bump against those sitting tightly packed at the tables. Because of me he cannot wipe clean his soup plate or the tureen. Someone may even lose his second helping. Several times something fell from plates carried clumsily. If anyone else had done it, he would be told off and be charged in court. Through this ostentation, some have a sort of feeling of guilt for letting me do it, others feel guilty because it seems to them they exploit me.

How is that I myself do not understand or do not see it? How can anyone understand why I do it when right now I am writing that I know, see, understand that instead of being helpful I make a nuisance of myself?

Odd. I sense that everybody thinks I should not pick up the dishes, but nobody has ever asked why I do it. Nobody has approached me: Why do you do it? Why do you get in the way?

But here is my explanation:

When I collect the dishes myself, I can see the cracked plates, the bent spoons, the scratches on the bowls. I clear the tables and the table used for the little shop so that the monitors can tidy up sooner. I can see how careless tables throw about, partly in a quasi-aristocratic and partly in a churlish manner, the spoons, knives, the saltshaker and cups, instead of putting them in the right place. Sometimes I watch how the extras are distributed or who sits next to whom. And I get some ideas. For if I do something, I never do it thoughtlessly. This waiter's job is of great use to me, it's pleasant and interesting.

But it is not precisely that which is important. Something quite different. Something that I have spoken and written about many times, that I have been fighting against for the past thirty years, since the inception of Children's Home. I am fighting without a hope of victory, without visible effect, but I do not want to and cannot halt that fight.

In the Children's Home I have fought that there should be no elite work and crude work,

no clever and stupid, no clean and dirty. Work for nice young ladies and for the mob. In the Children's Home, there should be no exclusively manual and no exclusively mental workers.

In the institution at Dzielna St. run by the City Council, they look at me shocked and disgusted when I shake hands with the charwoman even though she just happens to be scrubbing the stairs and her hands are wet. But frequently I forget to shake hands with Dr. K., and I have not been responding to the bows of Drs. M and B.

I respect honest workers. To me their hands are clean and I hold their opinions in high esteem.

The washerwoman and the caretaker at Krochmalna St. used to be asked to sessions, not just to please them but in order to take their advice and benefit by their assistance as specialists in a matter which would otherwise be left unresolved, i.e. be placed under paragraph 3.

There was a joke in our weekly newspaper of twenty years back. Actually not a joke but a witty comment.

Some Josek — I don't remember which one, there were many of them — could not solve an arithmetic problem. He tried hard and long and finally said:

"I don't know how to do it. I award it paragraph three."

No one is better or wiser for working in the storeroom or pushing the wheelbarrow. No one is better or wiser for wielding power. I am not better or wiser for signing the passes, or receipts for donations. This brainless work could be done conscientiously and better by a youngster from the third or even second grade.

A rude woman, a collector of money, is a boor and a nobody to me. Mr. Lejzor is a fine fellow though he dabbles in the filth of sewage pipes and canals. Miss Nacia deserves as much respect when she peels potatoes as now when she types. And it is not my fault that Miss Irka, the nurse, shifts the worse jobs onto Mira and Mrs. Róza Sztokman, whom I also respect even though once in a while she may not scrub the toilet or the kitchen floor just to have a rest.

In farming, this is called crop rotation. In hygiene and medicine — change of climate. In church — an act of humility. The Pope is called Holy Father, big men kneel down before him and kiss his slipper. And, once a year, the Pope washes the feet of twelve beggars in the church.

The Jews are conceited and that is why they are despised. I believe this will change,

perhaps soon. Meanwhile, please don't get cross with me for collecting the dishes or emptying the buckets in the toilet.

Whoever says, 'Dirty work, physical work,' is lying. Worse still the hypocrite who says, 'No one should be afraid of any work,' but picks for himself only white work, avoids what is described as black work, and thinks that he should keep out of the way of black work.

August 1, 1942

Whenever the stems of potatoes grew excessively, a heavy roller used to be dragged over them to crush them so that the fruit in the ground could ripen better.

Did Marcus Aurelius read the wisdom of Solomon? How soothing is the effect of his memoirs.

I hate, and perhaps I even try to fight single individuals. Such as H, or G. I do not indict the Germans: they work, or rather plan, reasonably and efficiently. They are bound to be angry because people get in their way. Foolishly get in their way.

And I get in their way, too. They are even indulgent. Just grab, and order to stand in one place, not to walk about the streets, not to get in the way.

They do me a favor, since roaming about I might be hit by a stray bullet. And so I am safe standing by the wall, and can calmly and carefully observe and think -- spin the web of thoughts.

So I spin.

A blind old Jew remained at Myszyniec. Leaning on a stick, he walked among the carts, horses, Cossacks and field guns. What a cruel thing to leave a blind old man behind⁸¹.

"They wanted to take him along" — Nastka says. "But he put his foot down and said that he would not go because somebody must stay behind to look after the synagogue."

I struck up an acquaintance with Nastka while trying to help her find a bucket taken by a soldier who had promised to bring it back but didn't.

I am the blind Jew and Nastka.

⁸¹ Again recollection of World War I.

It is so soft and warm in my bed. It will be very hard to get up. But today is Saturday, and on Saturday I weigh the children in the morning before breakfast. Probably for the first time, I am not interested in the result of the week. They ought to have put on a bit of weight. (I don't know why raw carrot was given for supper yesterday.)

In place of old Azrylewicz, I have now young Julek. Liquid in his side. Certain difficulties with breathing, but for a different reason.

The very same manner of groaning, gestures, resentment against me, selfish and theatrical desire to attract attention. Perhaps even take revenge on me for not thinking about him.

Today Julek had the first quiet night for a week. So did I.

So did I. Now that every day brings so many hostile and sinister impressions and sensations I have completely ceased to dream. The law of equilibrium.

Tormented day, soothing night. Gratifying day, tormented night.

I could write a monograph on the quilt.

The peasant and the quilt.

The proletarian and the quilt.

It is a long time since I have blessed the world. I tried tonight. Didn't work.

I do not even know what went wrong. The purifying respirations worked more or less. But the fingers remained feeble, no energy in them.

Do I believe in the effect? I believe but not in my India! Holy India!

The look of the quarter is changing from day to day.

1. A prison
2. The plagued spot
3. Mating ground
4. Lunatic asylum
5. Casino. Monaco. The wager — a head.

The most important is that it all was.

Poor wretches suspended between prison and hospital. Slave work: not only the effort of the muscles but the honor and virtue of a girl.

Debased faith, family, motherhood.

Commerce in all spiritual commodities. A stock exchange quoting the weight of conscience. The market unsteady — like onions and life today.

Children live in constant uncertainty, in fear. "A Jew will take you." "I'll give you away to a wicked old man." "You will be put in a bag."

Orphanhood.

Old age. Its degradation and moral decrepitude.

(Once upon a time one earned one's old age, it was good to work for it. The same with health. Now the vital forces and years of life are purchased. A scoundrel has a good chance of achieving gray hair.)

Miss Esterka.

Miss Esterka is not anxious to live either gaily or easily. She wants to live nicely. She dreams of a beautiful life.

She gave its *The Post Office* as farewell for the time being.

If she does not come back here now we shall meet later somewhere else. I am absolutely sure that she will serve others in the meantime in the same way as she used to distribute good and make herself useful.

1

August 4, 1942

I have been watering the flowers, poor orphanage plants, Jewish orphanage plants.

A guard has watched me as I worked. Does that peaceful work of mine at six o'clock in the morning annoy or move him?

He is standing and looking on, his legs apart.

2

All the efforts to get Esterka released have come to nothing. I was not quite sure whether in the event of success I should be doing her a favor or harm and wrong her.

"Where did she get caught?" -- somebody is asking. Perhaps it is not she but we who have gotten caught (having stayed).

3

I have written to the police to send Adzio away: mentally underdeveloped and maliciously undisciplined. We cannot afford to expose the house to the danger involved in his outbursts. (Collective responsibility.)

4

For Dzielna St. a ton of coal, for the present to Rózia Abramowitz. Someone asks whether the coal will be safe there.

In reply — a smile.

5

A cloudy morning. Five thirty.

Apparently an ordinary beginning to the day. I say to Hanna:

"Good morning!"

In response, a look of surprise.

I plead:

"Smile."

They are ill, pale, lung-sick smiles.

6

You gentlemen, officers, liked your drink and plenty of it, that's for the blood. Dancing, you jingled the medals honoring the infamy which you were too blind to see, or rather pretended not to see.

7

My share in the Japanese war. Defeat — disaster. In the European war — defeat — disaster.

In the world war.

I do not know how and what a soldier of a victorious army feels....

8

The papers I contributed to were usually closed down — went bankrupt.

My publisher, ruined, committed suicide.

And all that not because I am a Jew but because I was born in the East.

It might be a sad consolation that the haughty West also is not well off.

It might be but is not. I never wish ill to anyone. I cannot. I don't know how it's done.

9

Our Father who art in heaven....

This prayer was carved in hunger and misery. Our daily bread.

Bread.

Why, what I experience, was. Was.

They were selling furniture, clothing — for a liter of lamp oil, a kilogram of groats, for a glass of vodka.

When a brave young Pole kindly asked me at the police station how I managed to run the blockade, I asked him whether he could not possibly do 'something' for Esterka.

"You know very well I can't.

I said hastily:

"Thanks for the kind word."

This expression of gratitude is the bloodless child of poverty and degradation.

10

I am watering the flowers. My bald head in the window. What a splendid target.

He has a rifle. Why is he standing and looking on calmly?

No orders.

And perhaps he was a village teacher in civilian life, perhaps a notary, a street sweeper in Leipzig, a waiter in Cologne?

What would he do if I nodded to him? Waved my hand?

Perhaps he does not even know that things are as they are?

He may have arrived only yesterday, from far away....