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# Helping Children to Grow

*by*

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## PREFACE

I have tried to correlate ideas of various members of the Psychological Association, Delhi, on the development of personalities of children. I have made liberal use of their unpublished papers in writing this book. I gratefully acknowledge my debt to Dr. K. G. Rama Rao, Director, Vocational Guidance Bureau, Central Ministry of Education, Shri Som Nath Saraf of the Education Section of the Planning Commission, Shri Ude Shanker, Reader in Psychology, Central Institute of Education, Mrs. Rajni Kumar, lately Principal Salwan Girls Higher Secondary School, New Delhi, Dr. Saeed Ansari, Principal, Teachers' Training Centre, Jamia Milia Islamia and Dr. U. S. Gheba, Director, Child Guidance Clinic, New Delhi,

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*Delhi.*

10. 11. 1956.

J. D. CHOWDHRY



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## INTRODUCTION

### I

Thirty-three years ago I was a young teacher in a Boarding School where more than three hundred boys lived together as a homogeneous rural community. Their social background was very un-satisfactory. They came from landless agricultural families of precarious economic conditions and their parents were mostly uneducated. But they spent six years of the most formative period of their lives under very favourable circumstances. There was security ; food, study, recreation, rest and healthy social intercourse were provided. Most of them passed their Matriculation Examination and followed careers open to boys of the lower middle class in towns and cities. Those who were intelligent and industrious joined a denominational college where facilities for further studies were amply provided by a philanthropic organization.

These boys could not claim a distinctive heredity and yet in practical life they were successful to a large extent. One can count doctors, lawyers, magistrates, teachers, technicians, military officers and administrators

in different parts of the country out of this group. That is an experiment of some import as far as socially backward classes are concerned.

My next assignment, after spending 3 years in the Boarding School, was a teaching-cum-administrative post in a Reformatory School. For fifteen years I worked among these neglected, exploited and mal-adjusted children. Their ages ranged between 8 and 18 years. Most of them came from broken homes; they were full of resentment against society and the state. Their attitude to life was one of utter pessimism. Some of them had complexes, some were mentally deficient but the majority were led to delinquent behaviour due to unfavourable social environment in early child-hood. They needed re-education to give them a new start in life.

After spending an average of four years a boy went out of the Reformatory School as a productive member of society. That was borne out by the after-care records of these young offenders. During their period of detention, they showed progress in literacy, handi-crafts, games, dramatics and other extra-curricular activities. They won first class Scout-badges, played inter-school matches in hockey, foot-ball, basket-ball etc. They performed items of variety entertainment, dances and dramatics in public halls. Their

hand-work was shown at state exhibitions and during the war many of these boys were recruited as carpenters, leather workers, fitters etc. In civil offices some of them became peons and chowkidars and "malis"—gardeners. As domestic servants they were in great demand. Nearly 70% led honest lives. Their courage, resourcefulness and group loyalty were recognized by all those who came into their contact. The incentive to improve, the congenial atmosphere, the purposeful activities, the regular life and the earnest endeavour of the staff helped to change their attitude to life.

For next five years the writer supervised education of children of the former Criminal Tribes of the Punjab. They lived under severe legal restrictions and social handicaps. Cut off from the main currents of social life, living in isolation as wandering tribes, they had evolved their own peculiar communal customs and moral code. Being very backward economically and culturally they did not take to education willingly. The Basic System of education might have appealed to their concrete intelligence but classroom verbal instructions made no lasting impression on them. However, when these children were removed from their normal surroundings and placed in instructive environments they responded well. They valued the liberty of free movement above everything else and it was indeed a social

revolution when the Criminal Tribes Act was repealed. These tribes having been emancipated from the crippling restrictions now support themselves by working in mills, factories and other industrial establishments in large cities. Their children, now feel a purpose in their lives.

The stigma of being born low and the antipathy of the public towards these tribes had made them social "out-laws". Now they take pride in their brave ancestors—they claim to be Rajputs—and behave as worthy descendants. They are passing through a period of transition and are hoping to be absorbed in the social organism. In their case, crime and bad conduct were not inherited. Social antipathy was responsible for the unsatisfactory behaviour of the children of the former Criminal Tribes. Social emancipation has helped to gain social advancement.

There is a story in our ancient literature which helps to understand the potentialities for good that are hidden in the lives of these outcasts. Satyakama was the son of a maid-servant Jabala by name. He went to the "guru" and wanted to be enrolled as a pupil. The Guru admitted only children of noble descent. He, therefore, asked Satyakama about his lineage. Satyakama did not know the name of his father for he was born out-of-wedlock. He could tell his mother's name as he had not seen his father.

The Guru appreciated Satyakama's truthfulness and admitted him to be his pupil exclaiming that he was a true Brahman.

## II

The ill-effects of congested and crowded classes on the intellectual and social development of children can be seen if one visits the Primary Schools of Delhi. For three consecutive years the writer supervised pupil-teachers' work in a number of primary schools scattered in different parts of Delhi. Generally the buildings were unsuitable, class-rooms were small and equipment poor. Sanitation was neglected. But the greatest draw-back was the non-existence of a Maidan or play-ground for the children.

The physical and mental growth of children can be judged from the improvement in quality of movement. Unfortunately our teachers of small children are generally ignorant of this aspect of education. "As the children grow older, their capacity for movement seems to increase; not only are they active, but in skill, vigour and agility, they show great progress."\*

Play gives children immense pleasure ; it affords opportunities to express aggressive impulses and to work out their restitutive

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\*Physical Education for Pry. Schools H.M.S.O., London. .

children's art is exhibited at important school functions. Child Welfare Boards are spending huge sums on various schemes for the Welfare of Children.

It must however, be observed that our society and the state have not as yet provided on any large scale the opportunities for development of talents and aptitudes of the children in our country. Cultural and social institutions are mostly placed in urban areas. We have large masses of undeveloped personalities in our villages. A child's physical health is weakened and impaired with attacks of disease and insufficient food. For their lack of education, many parents do not know how to tackle their children. Due to general backwardness parents try to deal with modern problems in traditional ways. This creates confusion in the child's mind, Homes which are reflections of the general social pattern are not providing conditions suited to child's growth.

Home is the most immediate and important environmental influence in childhood. Nearly half the number of children in India do not get a chance to go to school. For them home and community are the only instructive environment and where these are backward, the child's development is severely retarded, Even during the school career, a child spends more than half its waking time in the home including the most impressional time, *i.e.* the

meal times and the bed time. Importance of home as moulder of a child's life and character can not therefore be minimized.

It is being realized slowly in our country that bad environmental conditions of childhood give rise to abnormalities of character. Our childhood atmosphere determines whether our later attitude to the world would be pessimistic, confident, easy-going stoical, self-assertive, antagonistic, inferior or snobbish. It is in childhood that we first develop self-consciousness, and the impression we get when we first catch sight of ourselves, is destined to remain with us throughout life and produce normal or abnormal conditions of character. Where the environment has been devoid of love and understanding the child suffers from the severest difficulties. Only happy homes can bring up children with fully developed personalities. A disorganized society does not create happy homes.

Right up-bringing of children contributes to solving the issues of war and peace, of economic mal-adjustment or the personal responsibility under democracy, Modern psychology postulates that if problems of breast feeding and weaning, of answering satisfactorily children's questions, of training in cleanliness and regard for its sensual life—"if these various situations could be generally handled with a greater degree of wisdom than

is commonly found today, a great deal of mental stress which in later life not only appears in personal conflict but serves to augment social disruption and international strife, would be mitigated.....

“We persistently under-estimate the reality of the child’s feeling, to assume that he cannot hear and see, or is not listening, or not concerned with what we do and say and are. Yet it is precisely these general attitudes, these pervading modes of behaviour towards, the child that affect his feelings towards us, far more than our explicit statements of our didactic purposes towards him. It is in these ways that we show what we really are in ourselves”.\*

Next in importance is the Nursery School—a place where the child is helped forward not only to social life, but to internal security and harmony. A nursery school by providing the right materials and the right opportunities for the child’s own normal impulses to skill and achievement, produces remarkable changes in health and peace of mind—thus giving him a profound re-assurance against his inner-doubts and difficulties and depressions.

In the following chapters I have tried to analyse the various influences—hereditary and environmental which make or mar a child’s personality and character.

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\*“On The Bringing Up Of Children—publishers—Kitabistan, Allahabad.

CHAPTER ONE  
EACH CHILD IS UNIQUE

I

We have accepted individual differences in children as an educational principle and in practice we emphasize individual attention in class teaching. But we have not yet fully grasped the truth that "each child has a *unique* set of growth capabilities and will make allowances and adjustments for them." To discover the "capabilities" and to provide suitable environment for their growth through adjustments, is the task of the parent, the teacher and the psychologist.

Those who accept the maxim that each child is unique, will find no difficulty in recognizing that each child has a separate personality. Awareness of the separate personalities of human beings, contributes to respect for the dignity of the individual. That is the basis of democracy in social and political life. Unfortunately our methods of mass teaching under pressure of existing economic and political conditions, have dimmed our vision of the awareness of the separate personalities of human beings. This has resulted in fewer contacts between the teachers and the pupils in schools and colleges and

indiscipline is one of the striking features of the present educational system.

Experience and observation amply support the fundamental truth that each child is unique. Three small boys who played truants in their schools, grew into three different types of citizens ; one became an artisan, the second the Headmaster of a Govt. High School and the third landed into a Reformatory.

G possessed an average intelligence and reached V class without failures. The school was nearly a mile and a half from his home and on way to the school G. had to pass through a street where neglected and idle boys played marbles and indulged in petty gambling. G. was first a spectator but gradually became interested and participant. He picked up friendship with some of these boys and began neglecting class work. He started missing a class now and then without the knowledge of the parents. Daily he left his home at the proper time to go to school and returned at the exact hour of the closing of the school. The teachers however, were aware of the irregular attendance but there being no contact between the school and the home, G. successfully made excuses, to allay teacher's suspicion of his being a truant.

However, G. was not keeping pace with his class mates. Soon it was detected that he

was neglecting his studies. This compelled the teachers to report the boy to the headmaster who believed in no other remedy to be so effective as the rod. Corporal punishment of a rather severe type instead of helping G. to be careful and regular made him a greater truant. The last punishment of twenty canings on the palms of the bruised hands of G. by the headmaster brought to an end the educational career of a playful but promising boy. Subsequently the parents made the boy an apprentice in the sports industry where he learnt manufacture of sports goods. That suited the social and economic needs of the family and apparently the boy adjusted himself to his new environment.

K. was delicate of health, sensitive and highly intelligent. He started playing truant in IV class without attracting the attention of his teachers. His examination results were good inspite of his irregular attendance. He suffered from severe Trichoma of both-eyes and was nicknamed "Chucha". This physical ailment coupled with his small stature and frail constitution saved K, from severe corporal punishment from teachers and the Headmaster. There was however, no change in his truancy or in the distaste for class work. He would deposit his books in the class and slip away to the neighbouring tank to play with cowherds and the like. His classmates knew K's haunts and invariably caught him

and brought him back to the school. This drama was played almost daily for several months. Then came the annual examination. K. steadied a bit and his class work improved considerably. He was promoted to V class and made monitor of his section. He responded well and truancy left him for good. His name was sent up for District Scholarship Competition Examination of Primary class boys that year and he came out successful. K. became a brilliant student and won scholarship in Middle and High School Competitions. With the blossoming of his mind, the body put on a little more flesh and K's extraordinary talent for dramatics was revealed in the last year of his school career. K's College career ended after he passed his Intermediate Arts Examination but he managed to pass his M.A. from the Punjab University by studying privately. He started as a teacher and rose to be the Headmaster of a High School in Joint Punjab.

R. was the son of a Patwari, a petty revenue officer, in the Punjab. When he was committed to Reformatory School for 5 years' detention for theft, he was nearly 13 years of age. His face was set and showed signs of maturity beyond his years but physically he impressed to be alert and agile. It was impossible not to be attracted to the boy when he started talking. The teachers and instructors found him restive. He was attached to the tailors class but he was not

happy to sit still. He was only average in games but having had some education previous to his commitment he was very handy to the Chief Head-Warder who entrusted R with the responsibility of maintaining Roll Call register and other records of routine nature. The boy related the story of his way-wardness which was corroborated by the father during several interviews.

“R lost his mother when he was 10 years’ of age. There were two younger children, a boy and a girl in the family. R was studying in the village school and his progress was normal. The Patwari’s son was treated with indulgence by the teacher and was allowed to take initiative in activities of extra-curricular nature. At home R took responsibility for looking after the younger children in the absence of the father. After some time the father remarried and through a coincidence was transferred to a new Tehsil at this time. R’s waywardness started at this point.

R felt the presence of step-mother as a challenge to his authority and status. The mother was kind and loving but the boy kept away from her as much as possible. When the father was on tour, R went to his relations’ village without the stepmother’s knowledge or consent. When the father learnt of these escapades he admonished R but that seemed to have no effect. The boy started neglecting his studies in the new place and to

meet expenses of his frequent journeyings, he began stealing his step-mother's money. When the father learnt this, there was no other alternative but to punish the boy severely. The punishment drove the boy further away from home. He ran away to his maternal grand parents who lived some thirty miles from the Patwari's headquarters. Fearing that leniency and indulgence of grand-parents might spoil the boy, the father brought R home and warned him solemnly, 'If you make another attempt to run away, I will chain you to the bed stead and will set you free only for certain hours of the day when I am at home.' The boy felt insulted and rebelled. He again ran away from home. The father was equally determined. He brought the boy back and with a strong iron chain, tied R to the side of a bed like a dog or a cattle. 'Nothing would keep me in this house,' resolved the boy. He made good his escape at the earliest opportunity and ran to the nearest railway station. In a III class waiting room he robbed a lonely old woman but was caught by another passenger and was handed over to a constable on duty. The court found R a suitable case for detention in a Reformatory School."

We have not described the social background of each boy in detail as there was a great similarity in the family set-up. The reaction of each boy differed since their growth capabilities varied so much.

## II

Recent studies of juvenile offenders provide striking illustrations for the view that each individual reacts in a special way to a situation. The unique reaction is the result of his personality which is stamped by inheritance and conditioned by environment. "In the ordinary affairs of life men differ from each other in a variety of more or less easily recognized ways. The most significant differences in connection with criminal conduct concern varieties of intelligence and wisdom, of perceptive ability and the capacity for reasoning acutely and judging accurately, of beliefs and doubts, of aims and aversions, of the strength and persistency of the instinctive activities, of the value of pleasure and pain associated with the fulfilment or frustration of desire, of the ability to exercise self-control, of temperament and mood, and generally of the manner in which impacts effect behaviour."

A reformatory school discharges a number of inmates every year after giving them training in handicrafts and some literacy. A small percentage of these "expupils" return to jails as recidivists or habitual offenders; the majority adjusts to the social conditions and leads normal lives. The stagnation and leakages in an ordinary Primary school in a town or city prove the truth of this maxim that the teachers fail to recognize the unique individuality of each child.

A family is a more coherent unit than any other social institution. The parents give their affection to all children in the home. However, the children greatly differ in their mental attitudes to each other and to friends of the family. There is the classical story of the Prodigal son in the scriptures. It is only a parable but true to life.

“A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, “Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me.” And the father divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey to a far off country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.” The story goes on to narrate that the young man passed through great hardships. There was famine and unemployment. This waster eventually returned to his father’s home as a Prodigal son. The story moves on to the elder son who was working in the fields at the time of the younger son’s arrival. After his day’s work when the elder son came near the home, he learnt that there was merriment on the occasion of the Prodigal’s return, “the elder son became angry and would not go in, therefore came his father out and entreated him.” The attitude of the elder son is most revealing. He resented and protested strongly to his father saying “These,

many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment, and yet thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends," The two brothers had developed different attitudes and reacted differently under similar conditions. The elder son was conservative and loyal to tradition, but the younger one was an adventurer and a sport.

### III

In a subsequent chapter we shall discuss the role of heredity and environment in the making of a personality. Inherited traits which influence character and produce individual differences can only be studied in conjunction with the realms of environment. As a physical organism the child participates in the beauties of nature. The trees, flowers, birds, clouds, sunshine and ice-covered hills influence the child's life and character. To a child a thing of beauty is a joy for ever. Even in-organic nature, the soil of the fields, the coins and currency, crockery in the home and furniture in the class room, have their influence on the development of a child's growing personality.

As a human being the child meets other persons in the family and the community. His playmates and classmates form the Social environment of the child. He watches the labourers at work and the businessmen in the market-place, the smith hammering iron

and the carpenter cutting wood. The actions and reactions of men are the part of the child's environment which he observes and absorbs.

Equally profound are the effects of ideas and ideals on the life and character of a child. As an intelligent being, the child exercises his mind. He listens to cool words and hot words exchanged between the parents and other members in the family. He notices attitudes and prejudices, smiles and frowns, approvals and disapprovals—in short, his own character is silently and imperceptibly built up by what the child sees and hears in his immediate surroundings. If the home has an attitude of reverence towards God and the family regards worship and morality as essentials of a happy living, the child imbibes that spirit. For the child is not passive. The child's reactions are of greater importance in making his character than his actions. It has been well said, "Man promotes the development of his own person and helps his valuable possibilities to emerge, only if he actively accepts the laws of being, and of his own free will satisfies the demands that are made on him by the worlds of which he is—and must be a member. The physical, social, intellectual and spiritual realms surround a child and the parent, the teacher and the psychologist must join hands to bring into harmony the inner urges and strivings of the child with the demands of environment."

Social Mal-adjustment with its attendant conflicts and clashes will go away if there is harmony in the immortal soul of the child. The roots of an individual's character lie buried in the proper adjustment between inherited traits and the varied outside influences. "A vast back-ground of racial inheritance, including inborn traits, derived from recent ancestors, determines the primary growth-characteristics of every child."

CHAPTER TWO  
**CHILD IN THE FAMILY**

I

Our people regard family as an institution ordained by God. This is a good start ; for if family is divinely ordained, its members—parents and children, servants as well as pets in the household must have their allotted places and fixed purposes. Tradition, customs, wealth, property education and caste combine to give the family in India its social status ; that is the child's social heritage.

A child at birth enters a new environment. Leaving the mother's womb, it breathes in the newer atmosphere of our world. The new environment should contribute to the mental health of the child. A cosy, softly lit and quiet room seems to be the best preparation for the reception of the new-born. A trained "dai" or mid-wife, an experienced nurse should help at the time of child-birth to assure well-being of the mother and the baby. Mortality among women due to child-birth in India is appalling. Superstition and ignorance prevent clean and wholesome service at this critical moment in the lives of Indian women. A sick mother infects

the health and happiness of the new-born child whose greatest needs at this time are protective love and security. Food, warmth and safety from danger come next. Mother's love affords protection and security. "The attachment of the young one to the mother consists in a sense of dependence which gives rise to panic and fear when that protection is withdrawn, and to a dread of solitude. Thus fear may enter into the early life of the child due to feeling of insecurity. The child's sense of insecurity promotes the feeling of insufficiency if the mother cannot hug the child to her bosom. The child expects love and affection and denial gives him sense of worthlessness."

Traditionally a boy is more welcome than a baby girl in an Indian home but to express the feeling that the new-born is unwanted is injurious to the child's future well-being. Too much fondling in the case of the first child especially if he is a boy, has the opposite danger of producing the oedipus complex. A child is extraordinarily suggestable and absorbs the anxiety of the mother even in the first year of life.

A child's situation in the family has a great influence on its emotional development. An only child, the oldest and youngest are usually difficult kinds. The emotional relationship between brothers and sisters at different ages is infinitely varied and subtle. Whether the

new-born is treated kindly or not by other children, will determine the social development of the child. If the child has the feeling that it is neglected and ill-treated, he is, then an unwanted and unloved child. The child is sensitive and if adults act violently, lose temper or express anger and strong dislikes, child perceives it ; showing ill-temper to the child is like ill-treating the child. The child's need for affection is satisfied if he feels that he is important and wanted. Studies show that children brought up without the love of parents walk later, talk later, and their expressions are much less alert. They are more afraid of strangers, and in general, they show a damping down from the level of the children who have been loved.

## II

The physical health of the child in early stages is built up by proper and regular feeding. The right kind of food is the most important single factor in the promotion of health ; and the wrong kind of food is the most important single factor in the promotion of disease, according to Sir Robert McCurrie. "The child fed on mother's milk has a much better prospect for a long and healthy life than has the child who is artificially fed. This child will normally gain in weight, eight ounces a week, during the early months ; after that, about four ounces a week.

The feeding schedules which have found most universal acceptance are :

	<i>No. of feedings a day.</i>	<i>Hours of feeding</i>	
		<i>A.M.</i>	<i>P.M.</i>
First three months	6	2-00	2-00
		6-00	6-00
		10-00	10-00
Fourth to tenth month	5		2-00
		6-00	6-00
		10-00	10-00
Eleventh to twelfth month	4	7-00	2-00
			6-00
		10-00	

The importance of regular feeding of the child is not realized by the average mother in India. A cry from the child is enough to suggest that it should be put to breast! Over-feeding is as bad as under-feeding of the child.

“For babies requiring artificial feeding there is nothing to take the place of milk. The problem presented is how best to adapt cow’s milk to the digestive capacity of the human infant.

The quantity of milk to supply the daily protein required, is one and one-half ounces of milk to a pound of the baby’s weight. Sugar of milk is added in suitable quantity to provide carbohydrate for heat and energy production. Water is also added to the milk.” Throughout the first year the baby’s feed consists of cow’s milk, water and milk

sugar supplemented by small quantities of strained green vegetable soup, egg yolk mixed with the orange juice and small quantity of cod-liver oil. At the end of twelfth month whole milk can be given.

Chart showing what the normal baby should be able to do at various ages upto one year. (See page opposite)

The child after the first year requires food for growth. "Important and often life-long food habits are formed during these early periods, Let the food be simple, well prepared and given in a way to avoid dislikes or finicky eating habits from developing. The less appreciated foods may need to be given first and thus take advantage of the normal desire for food.

A frequent basis for trouble in later years is over-feeding, too frequent meals, eating between meals, the use of table sugar in milk giving of sweets, puddings and other complicated dishes. Keep the food very simple and help the child develop a liking for natural, unspiced foods.

The foods containing materials essential for growth and body building are milk, eggs, whole cereals, and good whole wheat bread with butter, green vegetables, root vegetable fruits and some additional thin cream.

Sweets, condiments, tea, coffee and cocoa should be avoided, as the child is much better without such stimulants."



constant and heavy demands are being made upon all body energies and building materials. The internal storms and stresses of this period may express themselves in voracious appetites or vagaries as to food desires and dislikes.

“Care and guidance are needed, particularly during the earlier portion of this period, to prevent damage to digestive structure and function resulting from excessive eating, improper combinations, unbalanced diet, and lack of essential factors.”

Next to food comes dress for the child. Loose clothes allow free movement to the child. Tight clothes make the child uncomfortable besides acting as check on the growing limbs. The child's body should be kept exposed to light and fresh air both in summer and winter. He needs warmth in cold season but not stuffing with cotton wool. As it grows in size and starts walking, the child should not be dressed as a miniature adult. Choori-dar pyjama and tight Achkan are unsuited even for a ceremonial occasion. Loose frocks for girls and shorts and shirts for boys appear to be the most appropriate dress. Utility rather than elegance is the aim. Clean and smartly dressed and playing about with unhampered movements, such children present a picture of health and happiness.

## III

Play and rest are as important as food and clothing for the child. That will be treated under Education. We must, however touch upon the kind of Discipline that is needed for the proper up-bringing of a child in its early years.

Family is the first community of the child. The child needs a recognized place—a status in this community. Parental authority and discipline which are matters of personal relationship within the the family, must be based on affection, security and mutual respect. In a sense the child becomes a member of a Democratic community.

It is a harmful custom that the elder children are entrusted with the up-bringing of the young children. Some share of the parental authority is thus delegated to elder children in such cases. No one can really be a substitute for the parent in a family. Child has to be treated as a friend and an equal and not inferior. His sense of personal worth is to be maintained. Child resents in-justice and favouritism.

The first requisite of a democratic behaviour is to try to understand the child's viewpoint. His picture of the world is different from that of adults. A child may choose his own colour of the dress, the fruit he likes best, the curtains that please him most and

the guests he would like to invite. He needs opportunity for experimentation in an atmosphere of security ; this is necessary for the development of his personality. It is bad to pamper to his whims but it is infinitely worse to show an attitude of disapproval or discouragement. Mental cruelty is worse than physical cruelty.

The next important consideration is to avoid taking children to functions meant for adults. It is not enough to keep children away from cinema shows meant for adults. The unseemly behaviour of adults on such occasions distorts the child's views on life. "Inconsistency of conduct of adults creates confusion and sense of insecurity in the mind of the child. This weakens sense of personal value or the will to community". There is a story of a mother who warned her little son not to stare at or pass remark about the long nose of the guest of the evening. Throughout the dinner the child sat quietly and silently. At last he shouted in the presence of the diners, "Mother, I shall burst if I do not speak about the long nose of the guest !" There is a loss of mental hygiene in such cases. Mental suffering produces injured and tortured minds.

There should be a balance between leniency and severity in treatment of children. Excessive leniency spoils the child ; excess in severity crushes its spirit. As a rule parents should repose more trust in their

children rather than develop an attitude of general disapproval which is worse than a mere negative attitude about affection. Mistrust is harmful. Child's own distrust, dislike, reserve, obstinacy and lying may be the results of adult mistrust.

The mother should avoid keeping the child a baby by over-protectiveness, nor make herself indispensable for the child thus stopping joy of spontaneous development. It has been well said, "Let the mother watch her small girl with her dolls if she wants to see a reflection of herself."

"Educate the child to feel need for authority. Authority must be constructively built up in the child's soul, and not imposed upon it and love is the only possible architect"

Domestic servants and pets have an important bearing on the mental attitudes of a child. In a certain school a child from a middle class family was admitted for the first time after a lot of coaxing. The parents requested the head-teacher to permit a domestic servant Babu Ram to stay and to keep the child's company in the school for a fortnight. It was so arranged that the servant sat outside the class but in direct view of the child. One day the servant quietly slipped away out of the child's view. When the child noticed it, he shrieked and ran out of the class shouting, "Babu Ram. son of an

owl, where hast thou gone?" The child's shrieks brought Babu Ram back to his allotted place and the class mates of this child enjoyed it hugely. When the Head-teacher asked the child why he called the servant bad names, he volunteered the information, "My father calls Babu Ram the son of an owl, (Ullu ka Patha) and I do the same."

A family that looks well after its pets builds up sympathy and kindness in the hearts of its children. Similarly if there is influence of religion in the family there is an attitude of reverence and respect for others. Statistics in the West show that there is a larger percentage of break-ups in family life in those communities where the influence of religion is the weakest. The children do not develop a genuine feeling for the community where the parents hate each other. A child brought up in a Happy Home will alone develop his body and mind. Family exclusiveness is a drag on the developing feeling for the community.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE CHILD'S PERSONALITY

#### I

The two previous chapters have prepared the reader to look forward to the traits of a good personality. It may be put down as a fact that the first six years of a child's life determine the type of person that he will grow to be. The child is not to be considered as a small adult but a developing organism. The child has its stages of growth and it is no use trying to force development. The child's development follows certain laws. These laws conform to the child's nature. It has been well said, "Teachers and parents are ready to recognize growth in the practical skills but in such fields as manners, morals and competitive school work, the child is often misunderstood. We try to make the child live by the adult concept of what the child ought to do and fail to understand that the child does what he does because of what he is."

The popular meaning of personality is something which enables the person to stand out above others as he possesses some distinguishing features, physical or emotional.

Sometimes personality is confused with character and very often it is confused with external look or make-up i.e. a good personality means a person tall, well-built and well-dressed. Psychology goes deeper than this and defines personality as man's total "social stimulus value." That means the way in which he impresses others. We cannot think of a person or his activities apart from society. One who produces in others intense and vivid responses is the individual who possesses a good personality. He will affect different persons differently. As a stimulus he touches off typical reaction patterns in his associates. He is active; he dominates the less active not by self assertion but by co-operation.

Social efficiency is therefore one distinguishing mark of a good personality. If a child's personality is dwarfed at home or in school, it cannot become socially efficient.

Self-confidence is another trait of a good personality. A child's attention should never be drawn in a disparaging way to a failing for which he is in no way responsible; he should never be allowed to over-hear pitying or dubious remarks about his future, length of life, ability later to earn a living and so on; otherwise he is in danger of losing self-confidence. Loss of self-confidence starts early in the life of the child. "In the most impressionable years of childhood we may have permitted the building of the habit

system of faint-heartedness, "I can't possibly do this." In time this inevitably conditions our nervous reactions to trying situations so that we practise evasion or nervous withdrawal or isolation. There is gradually built up into our personality the dominant feeling of self-effacement instead of reasonable self-assertion."

The habit of co-operating at home and in school is another sign of a good personality. One of the most valuable things for a child to learn is that, unless he considers the rights of others and makes them feel important, he will run the risk of having few friends. If the child has the ability to discern in the behaviour of others the influence of his conduct, he has a priceless social insight. Individualism is a hinderance in the way of social efficiency and therefore must be crushed. Associating with others helps to check too much self-assertiveness. An attitude of give and take is the sure foundation of community life.

Tolerance which is an ingredient of social efficiency, helps to build a wholesome personality. It comes through control of emotions and sentiments. Children are not born with prejudices. They pick these up from their elders. Parents and teachers must heed these words of wisdom, "Do not talk in the presence of children how bad and untrust-worthy all men are and how one must be on one's guard against them. A child cannot develop a

genuine feeling for the community due to it,.....Most important of all, every expression of hatred, whether toward individuals, classes, nations or races poisons the community idea. It is in an atmosphere of love that the child can experience community." There is evil in the world but in children good seems to have priority if it can be captured, And you can capture it if you are sensitive to the signs of growth and if you try to understand the needs and nature of the child.

Sense of achievement is essential for development of personality. Repeated failures are challenges to adults but children get disheartened due to failures. Work must not be represented to the young child as a curse, the years in which he will have to learn and work must not be pictured as a banishment from a happier state of being, rather the acquisition of knowledge, the enrichment of his nature ; all effort and achievement, should be painted in glowing colours. Disinclination to work is to be considered as ill-developed Will to community.

The sense of achievement gives a feeling of satisfaction and happiness. The importance of wholesome emotional reactions in personality development is fairly established. It is for the parents and the teachers to make the approved modes of conduct emotionally satisfying for the child. There should be social approval of child's action.

All children need the encouragement of praise. In order to foster the self respect of the small growing human, it is not sufficient to refrain from persistent nagging or the even more reprehensible general antagonism ; the child's self-respect which is constantly pulled down by various things in his environment, must be helped and nourished by recognition whenever it is justified. It is of great importance that the encouragement or praise is put in a positive form.

The child's personality develops in an atmosphere of sympathy. His environment should be free from antagonism. Constant competition in society has a discouraging effect on some children. They lose self-confidence and become timid and victims of an exaggerated sense of inferiority. To stress too much before the child his smallness and Physical weakness, promotes the feeling of insufficiency and a sense of inferiority.

And finally there is the ability to adjust one's self to new situations. "It is noticed that there is deterioration of personality adjustment in backward children and conversely there is rapid development of personality as progress is made in school subjects." Social adaptation promotes personality.

The characteristic thing about personality is integration of one's temperament, intellect, skill etc. It includes physical, intellectual,

emotional and temperamental make-up and how it shows itself in behaviour. Personality reveals itself in what a person does on the reaction side. A man's perception, memory, imagination, motives, habits, sentiments, thoughts, tastes, interests, style of life and beliefs, these constitute his personality.

## II

A child's personality may be dwarfed at home because of the unimaginative behaviour and indifferent attitude of adults. Love builds personality. A child who is deprived of love does not develop an integrated personality. Given love, the child develops self-confidence ; learns adaptation to life, grows up to be sociable, affectionate and a good companion in marriage, he is healthy minded, strong in will and determined in character. Deprived of love the child falls into a state of anxiety, lacks self-confidence to face life, becomes selfish and self-centred, narcissistic and auto-erotic ; lacks means of identification ; no stable aim or purpose in life except his own self preservation, no guiding principle to co-ordinate and direct his native tendencies. The following case-history is illustrative.

S. is nearly 30 years old ; tall and well-built but shy and nervous. He does not take responsibility, however, small and nothing can move him to take initiative in anything,

He completely lacks self-confidence. His interests are fleeting. He has no regular job or employment but controls indirectly a small business. He does not get much out of this business because he puts very little into it. He is not illiterate but there are not many occasions when he can display his education or put it to any practical use. Being the only son in a household of eight, he has the prerogative of the male issue although his position in the family is second. There is a girl older than S. In the family there is not much love lost between him and other members except mother who has a genuine affection for S. Outside the family, he has a large and influential circle of friends and admirers. He is out to oblige every one who seeks his help and takes delight in attending to other people's work at the cost of personal convenience and family pleasure. He does not care for regular meals and is prone to constipation and piles. There are no ambitions to realize and being a bachelor, he is not worried about his future.

How has he come to possess this type of personality? Here are notes from the diary of the psychologist about his birth, upbringing and life history.

S's mother fell ill at the time of his birth and immediately after child-birth had to be removed to the hospital to spend the period

of confinement there. S has a very passionate father. It is strange that the father did not visit the mother and the child in the hospital during the confinement period except once or twice. The mother and the child returned home and there was usual merry making at the restoration of health of the mother and the child.

The child was well looked after and was active and bright. However, at the age of 6 months he got an attack of typhoid and both the mother and the child had to be re-admitted into the hospital. The father's attitude was the same as before. His visits to the hospital were few and far between. The fever left the boy and he returned home. There was a relapse. The mother and child were re-admitted into the hospital. The father patted the child at home but did not care to go to visit the child in the hospital. The boy got over his illness completely and the family went to Kashmir for rest and recuperation. That was the second year of the child's life.

The father who was a school master left his job and moved to another city securing a similar post. There was comfort and security except occasional rows between the parents. But S did not develop socially and was not taking interest in reading although a tutor had been provided. Other children arrived in the family; a brother was born when S was 7 years of age. The mother was happy

to have the second son but S was not completely ignored. He made very little headway in his studies. In fact he had no love for education or any mental effort. There was physical and intellectual lethargy of the extreme type in the actions of this youngboy.

Two important events are recorded of the boy's behaviour. He cut the nose of a pet kitten with a pen-knife. He also threatened his lady teacher with the pen-knife. He was five years old at that time. He was admitted to a boarding school but made no progress. In fact he would not wash for weeks and had the habit of bed-wetting.

The boy had another attack of typhoid and a relapse. He was dangerously sick at this time but recovered, Another trip to Kashmir restored the physical health but there was a deterioration in the mental capacities. His progress in reading was slow; he was given severe punishment by the father but that made the boy resentful and more backward.

At the age of nine, he moved to his grandfather's place when the father went out of India. In the new school he did not make any headway in his education. In fact he went out of control and played truant from his class. On the father's return after a year this boy was admitted in another school but he mixed with undesirable companions. After some time he gave up education but due to

pressure from parents pretended to be studying. For four years he appeared privately for his matriculation examination but failed.

The boy hardly played with boys of his own age. He would rather join the older people in games. He was treated with indulgence by elders, but he learnt nothing in the way of social adaptation among boys of his own age-group. He became almost a plaything without an independent will of his own.

At the age of 21, S was sent to learn salesmanship, but after six months he returned without learning anything. A manufacturing concern was started but even that failed to interest him. His interest was not abiding wherever he was employed. According to the custom, the family sought a girl and he was engaged. Soon the engagement had to be broken because the girl was not satisfied with the educational and other qualifications of the boy.

S has some other traits. He has a negative attitude to all suggestions for work. He is not rebellious and quietly submits to his father's orders. But he is short-tempered with other members of the family. His interest mainly lies in dressing well, possessing money for charity and a show-off and trying to look big by mixing with those above his own rank.

**The notes by the Analyst**

1. During illness mother used to weep over the child's sick-bed. The boy is full of anxiety and fear imbibed in early life.
2. The boy's emotional development arrested at a pre-adolescent level.
3. The boy suffers from deep sense of insecurity and inferiority.
4. Disharmony of family life.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE CHILD AT SCHOOL

#### I

Going to school for the first time is a novel experience for a child. Some children readily adjust themselves but others develop various types of fears and anxieties. Tuto was  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years old when he was taken to a Nursery Deptt. of a Teachers' Training Institute. He did not like to be admitted, clung to his father's trousers, rejected teachers' advances nor mixed with other children of the class. The father had the boy enrolled and brought him home on that day hoping that Tuto would change his mind and adjust himself gradually. The little boy began to cry loudly as soon as the father showed any signs of leaving him behind. This was overcome by arranging that the domestic servant would stay with the boy in the school to keep company. For two weeks the servant kept Tuto's company in the school and gradually withdrew himself. But Tuto neither mixed with other children nor spoke to any one during the school time. He seemed to be unconcerned. There was no social development beyond the mechanical activities such

as eating lunch together or going out of and coming in the class. The teachers feared that there was a danger of the boy developing a hatred for the school and for education. Tuto took no active part in his education except that the servant was allowed to withdraw.

There was however genuine affection for the boy among the staff. The Assistant teacher was able to win Tuto's confidence but still the boy showed no liking either for his classmates or the class routine. Six months passed. The younger child in the family who was 3 years old by this time, showed a desire to go with Tuto. This proved a blessing, for no sooner Billu, the younger one, joined, Tuto was completely changed. He picked up courage and started mixing with his old classmates. He shed off his shyness and turned a new leaf. Billu was smart and aggressive and helped his brother to adjust himself. Tuto and Billu together made a jolly team and the teacher's report after 2 years was most encouraging.

Tuto's misery for the first six months was due to the parents' neglect in not preparing the child for school life. Every child has a will to power and a will to community. The child wishes that his individuality and his personality be respected. He asserts himself because he possesses a will to power. It is innate, natural and constitutional. It is part

of his make-up. In order to make the child a social being, his will to power must be turned into the right channel and his will to community has to be adequately developed.

“Fear of going to school is sure and certain sign of inadequate preparation for communal life. The child is afraid of the other children ; he fears that he will be unable to win a place among them ; that he will be lost in the crowd and no one will care for him, i.e. that he will receive confirmation of his secret and terrifying sense of his own worthlessness.”

Every headmaster and head-mistress will remember that children show signs of nervousness and anxiety in their presence as they come for admission. A child has a tendency to cling to his mother and hide behind her ; another feels shy in the presence of strangers ; a third leans against a wall or a cupboard on being called upon to make a reply ; yet another takes refuge behind a chair or avert other peoples eyes and so on. The child who is well developed for communal life, stands at his ease with head erect, adopting an attitude that is charming.

The author well remembers the attitude of strict school masters who found this brave bearing of pupils in the Reformatory school so displeasing. These school masters were really inclined to emphasise their own authority. For a pupil to look straight into the

teacher's face was considered defiance of authority.

The proper preparation for communal life includes respect for authority in the child's mind. "The idea of authority must not have become hateful to a child, nor submission to it be regarded as a belittlement of himself. He should have discovered that subordination is a necessary fact of discipline. He must fully understand the nature of social relationship especially his personal relation to adults, including, of course, the teaching staff."

Some other danger points in the development of the child at school, occur at the time of changing a school or promotion to a higher educational establishment. A child who is not sufficiently prepared for such situations will develop, either before the particular situation is met, or when it occurs, certain bad traits, whose strength will vary proportionately with the degree of insecurity experienced.

One hears a lot these days about co-operation between Home and the School. Such co-operation should start before the child is admitted to the school. If the relations between the child and his teacher are to develop on right lines, it is not enough that the child alone be prepared for school life. The personal make-up and conduct of the teacher is equally important. The teacher may give the pupil an idea of coercion by

being dogmatic and pedantic, regarding himself better informed than every one else, intolerant of contradiction etc. Children under such teachers adopt a permanent attitude of revolt. They do not develop the communal idea with other adults. The observance of caste and the opening of denominational schools in our country are great drawbacks as far as the child's will to community is concerned. They weaken the self-esteem of the child or lead to an "absolutizing of the self." In proper training of the child these two extremes are synthesized. Children derive benefit from social life of the class-room or the human contact with one or other of the teachers. The will to community is developed by accepting limitations of personal ambition.

School fellows are a valuable help in the process of education. They make the child sociable. "Unusually timid children, the victims of an exaggerated sense of inferiority and its attendant anxiety cannot establish the necessary contact. Such children are pushed aside, left in the cold, and despised as being proud, stupid or tiresome."

The teacher can intervene through sympathetic behaviour.

## II

The Montessorian technique is to be commended in so far as the preparation of the

child for admission to school is concerned. The child of 2½ years or 3 years visits the "Bal Ghar" or the Children's House with his mother several times before being enrolled. Through these visits child gets familiar with the environment and may watch other children at work or play. But on the day of admission, no adult is allowed to usher the child in the "Bal Ghar". The child must be left alone. It is the child's own place for mixing with other children of his own age. The teacher is one of the class, a 'friend, guide and philosopher.' Once the child has found his place and adjusted to the new environment, there are enough attractions to keep him there.

When should the child's education begin ?

Plato thought that the state should educate children 'before they can understand language and are therefore incapable of appreciating any sort of instruction'; for the first "three years are a considerable part of life to be passed ill or well."\*

The nursery school is based on this idea though it takes children a little later and, while the character is as little set as the body, trains them by the mere attendance at school in the art of living in a community.

It is worth while trying to understand how the nursery school trains children for citizen-

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\*Quotation from Education for a World ADRIFT by Sir Richard Livingston.

ship. The first assumption underlying Nursery education is that "a child's muscle control, his mind, his morals, his spirit grow by natural stages."

"We know that the child takes hold of the world with his eyes before he takes hold with his hands. At about four months he can pick out a tiny pellet with his eyes. At ten months or so he picks it up with his index finger and thumb. At fifteen months on the average, he can put it in a bottle. At one year the infant picks up several cubes, one by one, foreshadowing the development of counting. At 1½ years he builds a tower of 3 cubes, at two years a wall; at three a bridge."

The next assumption is that child's senses are the gates of knowledge and that the training of the senses leads to the development of body, mind and spirit. Therefore, there is need for sufficiently rich environment to exercise speech, hearing, smell, taste and touch. Activity is essential for the exercise and development of senses. Activities are of two kinds, individual and group. Collective activities are arranged first to make children cooperate and feel a sense of security. Individual activity stimulates imagination and resourcefulness of the child; he must be left alone for that. Collective activities are stories and nursery rhymes, songs and games. Individual

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\*Nature and Needs of a Child by Dr. Arnold Gessel.

activities are, building with wooden blocks ; play with sand, threading the beads ; pairing of pictures etc. These purposeful activities are so graded that body, mind, intelligence and will work together through action and movement.

Next come exercises for practical life. There is a whole list of these useful activities, for instance, learning to roll and unroll a mat, carrying a chair, sweeping the floor ; folding a napkin or a duster, pouring of water, polishing with brasso, peeling of potatoes, learning to button a coat or polish a shoe, etc. etc.

The third category of educative activities are termed, Presentation of Sensorial material. The chief sensorial materials are, Cylinder Blocks, Broad Stair, Pink Tower, Long Stair, Touch Board, Touch Tablets, Fabric Box, Sound Boxes, Baric Tablets, Geometrical Cards and Solids, Knobless cylinders etc. etc. These materials train hearing, seeing, smelling, touching, tasting, discrimination of heat and cold, pressure and weight etc. etc. It is found that the children enjoy doing these activities and develop physically and socially. A child who passes from a Nursery school to a Primary school shows greater progress in formal education than a boy or a girl who has had no pre-school training. It is claimed for Nursery education that it makes a dull child to become bright although mentally deficient

children are rarely admitted by the orthodox Montessorian, to a Nursery School.

Here is a case of a retarded child who was given training like a Nursery school child who showed all round improvement.

M was 7 years old when brought to the Child Guidance Clinic. The father gave the following history of the boy :—

M was the second child in the family, the first being a bright girl. In his fourth year, M fell down, with the head downward, from the roof of a house and was unconscious for nearly twenty-four hours. The doctors attended and brought M to consciousness but the boy lost all appetite and would not move about nor speak. M was under treatment for six months and his appetite and speech returned but very gradually. M was physically very weak from beginning and there was deterioration after the fall. M's legs were very thin, there was squint in both eyes and there was a paralytic look on the child's face. He had no control over his muscles, his speech was indistinct, in fact his vocabulary was limited to that of a four years' child. The I. Q. according to Dr. Rice's Hindustani Simon-Binet Performance Scale, came to 56; a very low intelligence indeed! The boy could not count beyond three.

The parents had tried to admit the boy to several infant schools but M would not sit

with other children. He would cry and cling to parents. He could not walk steadily for a few minutes and had to be supported. He sweated in hands even in winter if a chalk or a pencil was put in his hand. When put on a swing, he could not balance even while sitting. He was full of fears and anxieties.

M was given individual attention by the Psychologist and the teacher. A programme of activities was drawn up to train the senses.

Here is a sample page from the records of the child Guidance Clinic ;

1. Building with wooden blocks (10 minutes)
2. Separating painted pieces of wood  
of various colours ... 10 m.
3. Drawing with coloured chalk on  
Black Board ... 10 m.
4. Pink-Tower Play ... 10 m.
5. Matching sticks of various lengths  
out of a pile ... 10 m.
6. Conversation based on stories depicted  
in pictures. ... 10 m.

Rest 15 minutes

### **Physical Exercises :—**

1. Walking between parallel lines .... 10 m.
2. Foot Ball kicking ... 5 m.
3. Foot Ball rolling with hands ... 5 m.

- |                                      |            |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| 4. Swinging and balancing on "Jhula" | 10 m.      |
| Rest 30 minutes                      |            |
| 5. Undressing and oil bath           | ... 20 m.  |
| 6. Washing and bathing               | ... 20 m.  |
| 7. Dressing and combing              | .... 10 m. |
| 8. (Nashta)—refreshments             | .... 10 m. |
| Rest one hour                        |            |

### **Class room attendance.**

M Attended K.G. class with other children one period daily for songs and stories and watched class at play. In the beginning M would be a mere spectator but gradually he joined in walking or playing some game like "Kora Chhapaki", a simple country game where children sit in a circle and two children chase and run round.

With slight variations the programme continued for 3 months—October, November and December—the best months in Delhi. The parents moved over to another station and the boy left in the middle of his training. The final remarks of the Psychologist in Child Guidance Clinic notes are as follows :—

M did not open his eyes when he came but now his eyes open fully. He speaks slowly but distinctly, walks a bit steadily, can sit and stand on swing without any one's help. Takes less time in undressing, bath and dressing.

His vocabulary is still very limited. Cannot count beyond 10. His reaction time

on several items of performance tests has improved. There is an appreciation of colours and some improvement in his artistic and aesthetic sense. He is attracted by pretty faces in pictures and uses his preferences for colours. There is scope for improvement but cannot be expected to compete with other children even after prolonged treatment.

### III

It would be a superficial view of the nursery school if all its activities and programmes were considered only as means of sharpening the senses and training the mental faculties. The nursery school lays down foundations of the training of character and the system has a psychology and a philosophy to sustain it. "Youth is the time when the character is being moulded and easily takes any impress one may wish to stamp on it." Training of character requires a spiritual effort on the part of the educator and not merely professional skill. We close this chapter by reproducing from the Reader's Digest an extract which brings out the remarkable influence of the teacher on the lives of the children.

"Forty years ago a John Hopkins professor gave a group of graduate students this assignment: Go to the slums. Take 200 boys, between the ages of 12 and 16, and investigate

their back-ground and environment. Then predict their chances for the future.

The students, after consulting social statistics, talking to the boys and compiling as much data as they could, concluded that 90 per cent of the boys would spend sometime in a penitentiary.

Twenty-five years later another group of graduate students was given the job of testing the prediction. They went back to the slum area. Some of the "boys" were still there, a few had died, some had moved away, but they got in touch with 180 of the original 200. They found that only four of the group had ever served time.

Why was it that these boys, now men, who lived in a breeding place of crime, had such a surprising good record? The researchers were continuously told: "Well, there was a teacher....."

They pressed further, and they found that in 75 per cent of the cases it was the same woman. The researchers went to this teacher, now living in a home for retired teachers. How had she exerted this remarkable influence over a group of slum children. Could she give them any reason why these boys should have remembered her?

"No", she said. "No, I really couldn't." And then, thinking back over the years, she said musingly, more to herself than to her questionnaires. "I loved these boys....."

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DIFFICULT CHILDREN

#### I

The teacher is apt to lose patience with difficult children. Some mis-behaviours are only passing phases. "A child of four tells fantastic stories—not lying. A child of seven has only a vague concept of property ; that is probably why he steals." Lying of children is usually a product of imagination. Sometimes it is mere romancing or trying to triumph over adults. Real lying by children is due to fear or to escape punishment.

Stealing may have many motives ; heroism or "playing a part" is the child's psychological need. Another motive is to steal things to sell and win supporters. There is sometime a momentary gratification in the possession of a stolen article. Stealing may be an act of revenge. There are rarer cases among children who take pleasure in their wickedness. Clepto-mania or compulsion neurosis occurs in very few cases among children. Masturbation may be a substitute for stealing.

Doing forbidden things is common among children. In stealing as in the case of all dis-

obedience, the inducement is that at the time of the action, one feels oneself greater and more powerful than the person issuing the order. Lack of recreation and leisure time occupations is another cause of children's misbehaviour. Absence of religion, emphasis on materialism, lack of a sense of values and insight into the science of good and evil.' There are some more causes of mis-behaviour among children.

The usual list of children's mis-behaviours, runs like this : Lying, disobedience, laziness, defiance, sulkiness, vulgar talk and behaviour, an inclination to madly reckless pranks, pilfering, etc. etc. Statistics of juvenile offenders reveal that eighty per cent find their way before courts of law due to stealing. To arrive at a correct diagnosis of a child's misbehaviour, the psychologist takes into account the historical, instinctual and mental factors. The common instincts are ; acquisitive, sexual, gregarious, aggressive, parental etc. These inner urges differ in individuals due to bio-chemical factors. Degree of control over their inner urges also differs with different people. Inherited traits, like the constitutional qualities, influence character. A child may inherit anti-social tendencies. Among historical causes are escapades of childhood and accidental factors. Mental factors are the most important e.g. mental defectiveness and mental disorders, Mental defectiveness

signifies an arrested or incomplete development of mind ; some minor mental disorders involve a partial change of personality. "Prolonged psychological stress produces abnormal mental reactions in normal persons. Crime may result if the tendencies of individual and the environmental conditions together, outweigh the resistance which can be opposed to them." It is not our intention to introduce legal terms in discussing deviations in children's conduct.

Crime among adults and mis-behaviour of young boys have this in common : both show lack of discipline and moral training ; their general attitude towards law-breaking in the community is one of secret approval. If desire for primitive satisfaction is denied, adults as well as children crack under the strain. Children deserve sympathy because of the immaturity of their minds and bodies.

Young offenders who find their way to a Reformatory school, mostly come from broken homes. Sixty per cent have lost either both parents or at least one. Bad companionship, overcrowding of living rooms, working at early age among dishonest and immoral people and a general loss of community, are some other causes of children's misbehaviour. These factors coupled with poverty lead children to crime ; but the boys from middle and upper classes who are pervert and abnormal in their behaviour escape the eye of the police. That

is because of the disparities in wealth and power in our country. In a moment of crisis when the veneer of respectability is shed, the real character of the individual is made known. The business man who practises black-marketing; the government official who is corrupt and the adulterator of food, they were children at one time. Their anti-social behaviour is not acquired overnight. An insatiable desire to accumulate wealth—to hoard or spend—an inordinate craving for power, these are perversions. Their origins are in the individual make-up as well as in social conditions. Moreover, nature of conduct approved by Government and the people, have a profound influence on the young children. To promote mental health of child, we must study the child's nature and his needs, in some detail.

## II

We have noticed that each child has a unique set of growth capabilities.\* Their capabilities need proper environment for their unfolding and development. The family and the school are two main agencies to provide suitable environment; that a child's muscle control, his mind, his morals, his spirit grow by natural stages. Too much cannot be expected from children. A child is not an adult but a developing organism.

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\* See Appendix II.

“Each part of a child’s nature has to grow ; his sense of self, his fears, his affections and his curiosities ; his feelings, good and bad, towards mother, father, playmates ; his sex and his sense of humour. We must not lose faith if at the age of two and a half, the child grabs a toy from his playmate ; if at four he calls people names ; if at six he suddenly becomes aggressive in word and action, with contradictory impulses of violence and of affection. Many of these stormy episodes are normal.

“At seven and eight a child develops a new appreciation of fairness, of honesty. He begins to think in terms of right and wrong and of good and bad. At ten he becomes interested in social problems and develops an embryonic civic as well as personal conscience. The ages of five and ten are periods of relative equilibrium. At five a child has found his place in the world and at the family table. Ten is a golden period for planting, liberalizing ideas and attitudes which prevent narrow racial and religious prejudices.\*

Some aspects of a child’s nature can be studied by parents ; some needs can be met easily at home. No child, unless he is ill, would prefer to be lazy, inert and passive. He is active by nature and a congenial occu-

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\*Based on Dr. Arnold Gessel’s book Nature and Needs of a child.

pation, some purposeful activity, contributes to his happiness and development. Play materials, sand and brick activity, songs and stories are the means of developing imagination, concentration and self-expression. Habits of diligence, perseverance, neatness and fair-play can be formed through these activities.

We have already explained the twin tendencies of the will to power and the will to community. The child wishes to dominate its environment. Too many prohibitions will make the child a rebel. He must be saved from the feeling of inferiority and frustration. He must not be thwarted but allowed freedom to move and act.

The child is gregarious, he likes to mix with others, share in common play and participate in group activities. The only child in an exclusive family runs the risk of losing the joy of sharing with others. Working in common leads to common feeling.

The child is receptive. A healthy child is keen to observe and learn. His curiosity must not be damped. He gathers knowledge of the outside world by manipulation and unless he is shown the correct way of doing things, he will learn the wrong way. He needs guidance.

Child is imitative. He is influenced by the behaviour of adults. Save the child from hearing foul language and seeing nervous and

excitable behaviour of adults especially acts of sexual nature. The child must be saved from vicious surroundings.

Child is sympathetic. It feels for the beggar that comes to the door, the wounded dog excites its pity; people in distress even in a "film show" move children to tears. This feeling should be cultivated by keeping pets such as cats, dogs etc. Let a child have an occasional visit to the children's surgical ward in a hospital. Love of nature—plants, flowers and birds, helps in developing sympathy. Love of neighbours is a conscious achievement and is worth developing.

Child is inquisitive. It wants to explore and to know things. Child's questions should be answered correctly, evasive answers create suspicions and the child loses confidence in adults. It is bad to rebuke a child if it asks an inconvenient question. Sometimes a child breaks its toy to find out what is inside rather than to be destructive. Sex knowledge arouses curiosity. The facts of sex should not be hidden but taught to the young. Guidance and not discouragement is needed.

Child is constructive. The child displays its constructive tendencies when it is given materials to play and build. If the child cannot get opportunities to construct, it will become aggressive, bully and destructive. His nature is enriched through effort and achievement. Through constructive work and play, child

expresses itself and also develops imagination. Painting is a good hobby for constructive and imaginative achievement.

Child is suggestible. The educationist can mould the character of the child by presenting lives of great and noble men in history and literature. If adults express fear in the presence of the child, it imbibes fears. On the other hand, if adults are calm in a crisis, child develops that attitude of mind. A "bossing" father creates feeling of insecurity in the mind of the child.

There is a real danger to the mental health of the child if the trait of suggestibility is exploited beyond a certain limit.

P. was a college student, hard working and well behaved. In the last University examination he had secured a very high position and was working hard to excel himself. A month before the final examination, there was a sudden change in the boy's attitude towards studies. As a student of science he had accidentally come to know that some other class-mates had done better in the practical examination. That was against P.'s expectations. The feelings of defeat, frustration and despair came upon him and fearing that he would not be able to maintain his previous record, he decided to give up study and take rest. He told his father that he was utterly confused and that he did not retain anything of what he read

out of his text-books, and that there was no hope of his passing. The father knew a psychologist friend and consulted him about P's problem. The father made it clear that his own counselling and advice had made no effect on the boy's determination not to appear in the examination. The father was anxious that P. should take the examination and expected the boy to score very high marks. Like a parent who takes a sick child to the doctor and wants to be assured about speedy recovery. P's father did not wish to take risk of failure.

P. was the victim of the father's ambition. The father constantly told about his own success as an administrator, a writer and now a businessman. The suggestion was subtle and it had the opposite effect to the one expected by the father. "If a person grows up in an atmosphere of competition with incessant references to the achievement of others as a standard and as a goal ; and if by reason of external or internal considerations, he is unable to attain such a standard, his self-confidence and self-esteem are seriously threatened. Not only, therefore, is he unlikely to scale the heights of achievement which tower before his mind's eye, and for which he is objectively unsuited, but he will also achieve less than his real possibilities allow."

Fortunately for P the psychologist was able to restore his self-confidence. The boy took

his examination and came out almost at the top in the University. He is now studying Civil Engineering in one of the Government Engineering Colleges and maintains a steady record of progress in Theory as well as in Practical Course. He is reported to have excelled in competitions in games and athletics which is an additional achievement for P.

## CHAPTER SIX

### BACKWARD CHILDREN

#### I

We have already seen that children differ from one another in habits, aptitudes, character traits and in intelligence. A good deal of research has been made in measuring "Intelligence—that general capacity which is innate in each individual, and which governs all these mental activities concerned with *thinking* and *knowing*, even when they are applied, not only in the more confined sphere of the subjects commonly described as intellectual', but also in the broader field of practical work where the practical activities depend upon thinking and understanding."\* Every parent and every teacher knows that a dull child has a low intelligence and that he cannot expect to keep pace with more intelligent and bright children in the class. But even a normal child's progress in the class work can be retarded 'due to absenteeism, ill-health, or physical weakness, unfavourable home circumstances, peculiarities of temperament, and, perhaps, of unsuitable teaching.' Such a retarded child would be called a

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\*Experiments with a Backward class by Miss Taylor.

There is an interesting account of "Experiments with a Backward Class" written by Miss E. A. Taylor of Manchester, U.K. She obtained data about the pupil's intelligence ratio, home conditions, physical health, School attendance, interests and hobbies and "as details gradually accumulated to build up a case history for each boy, one fact became increasingly apparent—the problem offered by every child was emphatically an individual problem; the present position of each was the direct result of his own particular past history, different in large or small measure from that of all other boys." She discovered contributory causes of backwardness and adopted new methods of educating backward children. We have already discussed the Activity Method for small children. Miss Taylor combined this method with the psychological process of identification. "The activities described came into being from the suggestions and ideas of the boys themselves and by the combined energies of teacher and class, it was possible to translate them into useful and acceptable vehicles of education, revealing the potentialities inherent in even dull children if given the opportunity to display and to pursue their natural bent, and to follow a curriculum which takes into consideration their particular needs and adopts itself to ascertained interests." Naturally dramatics, letter writing and history

provided the topics of study with emphasis on reading.

## II

There is a relationship between backwardness and undesirable behaviour. Sixty per cent young delinquents are backward. As a result of special survey at the Reformatory School, Delhi, it was revealed that (a) ten per cent boys from the urban areas had some schooling before their admission into Reformatory, that (b) these semi-literates were irregular in their attendance in their previous schools that (c) they made more rapid progress in learning handicrafts in the Reformatory than in class subjects. Generally, all the boys of the Reformatory preferred handicrafts—tailoring, smithy, shoe-making, carpentry, gardening etc. to reading and writing. Verbal tests had very limited appeal for these boys.

Extra-curricular activities were most popular among these boys. They played all the field games like hockey, football, basket ball, volley ball etc. ran relay races and performed P.T. and musical drill; they put up “plays” and folk dances, joined scouting and cubbing, learnt First Aid to the injured, helped in wards with the sick and cooked food in the kitchen. But there was not much enthusiasm for 3 R's. Class work remained dull and un-interesting for these boys; may be, the modern methods which emphasise activity and a study of the child's

interests and bent of mind, could not be introduced in a Reformatory School where the teachers were ill equipped and poorly paid!

It was noticed that one way of removing backwardness from among the young delinquents was to afford them opportunities of exercising their talents. Workshop hours were busy and uninterrupted; parades and games created no headaches for the staff; but leisure time and study hours were pregnant with all sorts of troubles! There were pilferings, quarrels, defiance of authority and sex offences during these quiet hours! All these individual difficulties had their relation to backwardness.

Referring to class work of backward boys, Miss Taylor says, "It was a difficult matter to make the class pull together; there was no unity of spirit between teacher and taught; but only a vicious circle of cross-purposes, frayed tempers, and punishments, leading back to a still more obstinate lack of interest." Every teacher of the backward boys will readily agree that to teach the boys without reference to their natural reactions or inclinations, without allowing any scope for their own initiative, keeps them "passive when they should have been active, dull when they should have been enthusiastic and barren when they should have been creative. Thus natural impulses were stifled and found their out-let in rest-less behaviour and

talkativeness, in-attention, and boredom.”\* Stereo-typed and orthodox methods of teaching and a curriculum full of intellectual subjects cannot help the backward child's personality to develop.

Some causes of backwardness can be removed at home and others at school. It has been proved that auditory defects form a far greater bar to school progress than visual defects. Motor defects also gravely retard the progress of children. Of all the special motor disabilities formed among children, that which interferes most widely with the ordinary tasks of the class-room is left-handedness. Left-handedness is rare among bright students. Left-handed children are awkward in the house and clumsy in their games. They fumble and bungle. The speech defects also cause backwardness.

Intelligence is innate and inherited and one cannot interfere with it, but we can create conditions in the home which are conducive to the development of child's intellect. Intellectual and cultural atmosphere prevailing in the home affects the education of the child. Attention, memory, observation and good habits of study are possible to develop under a good teacher. Success and achievement create a sense of confidence and every task is undertaken in a

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\*“Experiments with a backward class” by Miss Taylor  
p. 18.

spirit of vivid enjoyment and vital enthusiasm. The teacher of the backward children has to take real and unfeigned interest in their activities so that these boys would behave naturally and reveal spontaneously where their instructive interests and their real abilities lie.

We are working for a Welfare State. The State must try to remove poverty which contributes to backwardness in children. Low income of the parents, continued malnutrition, insanitary and over crowded rooms, epidemics and petty infections, all these have some part to play in the causation of backwardness. Mental progress pre-supposes normal physical growth of the child.

The school Medical Service can remedy some of the physical handicaps which interfere with a child's mental progress. Tonsillitis is known to retard physical and intellectual progress of the child ; so does chronic catarrh. Glandular defects, rickets, defective teeth have to be set right by the physician. However, where backwardness is due to some emotional or temperamental causes, the child must be taken to the Child Guidance Clinic. All sorts of mal-adjustments and tensions are due to emotions. The school can do something about the matter by removing unnecessary stimuli and by directing the expression of emotions into channels of social acceptability. An unimaginative teacher can, through his

own bad example, turn a normal child into a Backward child.

T. started going to school at.....the age of six. It was a single-teacher Lower Primary school in a slum of a provincial town in the Panjab. T's father was a cook in the British regiment and although illiterate, he could speak English fluently. His ambition was to give his son English education so that his educated son would start a canteen or coffee shop for that regiment.

T. was physically strong for his age but the teacher found him slow of wits. Besides, there was a slight speech defect which gave other boys a chance to tease T. However, his progress in class was normal and he was promoted to the next class in due course. The teacher liked him because T was handy in preparing for the teacher the "hukka."\* T's house was near the school and the teacher found it economic and convenient to send T. to fetch "hukka" daily during the school hours.

It became a daily routine that T should fetch the "hukka" and tobacco for the teacher. The more interesting part of the routine however was the lighting of the "hukka". A whole cow-dung cake had to be burnt to fill and refill the "chilm"\*\*\* at least thice during

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\*The pipe the Indian farmers smoke.

\*\*\*"Chilm" is an earthen funnel to be filled with tobacco and burnt coal or cowdung. It is part of the HUKKA.

the session. This could not be done on the school premises as the teacher would lose his job if he was caught smoking his "hukka" or preparing the fire for the hukka. It had to be done away from the school and T naturally was the fittest boy to do that for the teacher !

T's mother did not like her little son to be made a "hukka" server and often scolded the boy. T would then try to avoid the mother and procure burnt cowdung or live charcoal from the neighbours. The situation became pretty intriguing sometime as the neighbours were tired of T's demands. He would often spend time in search of fire and tobacco while others were studying. This honorary work gradually became a part of school routine and he was obliged to devise means to procure tobacco and coal or cowdung through unfair means.

The boy's progress in studies was maintained due to help given by a cousin who was a class ahead of T. Next year the boy's position was at the bottom. T. had now developed some more friendships with other boys who played in the street. "Hukka" duty gave him opportunities to mix with them. There was less interest in education and he soon discovered that arithmetic was too difficult for him. T. dropped away in the third year of his school career as he could not pull on with the class in one important subject.

Research in the field of educational backwardness has proved that a backward child generally suffers in a subject or two. The dull children, on the other hand, suffer in all the subjects. If there is careful planning of school time-table, the extra-help in one or two subjects can be given to the backward children. Time-table will have to be elastic and not rigid. Even special classes can be started for the backward children in a school.

Some people advocate the segregation of the backward by providing special schools. Special schools will be educationally sound as these children will grow according to their age, ability and aptitude. These schools will require special staff who would be required to give their affection to these children. They will need new technique of education and a new attitude to the task. They cannot be content merely to dispense knowledge, or to train in skill, for teaching is nothing less than a creative art and the teacher a creative artist working in the most fascinating medium in the world.

In the United Kingdom there is a bifurcation after the child has completed what may be called the Primary School stage. If each backward child is given the suitable test of intelligence and aptitude in our school at the age of 13, we can also divert these boys into more practical jobs. We must remember that

the backward child is not so deficient as to be entirely without ability or useful qualities. His abilities, however, tend to lie outside the field of the more intellectual aspects of school work.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE

#### I

We have seen that when young children are placed in a markedly superior environment, they show improvement in behaviour and emotional control. The intelligence ratio also indicates improvement in certain cases. This is true at least during pre-school years. Therefore, education should be treated as guidance at that stage. As the child enters the elementary or primary school, it needs guidance in the formation of habits and good morals. For instance, regularity in routine, promptness in meeting school engagements, obeying school rules, cooperation with others for the good of all the school enterprises, should form a part of the child's education. Success in school work and happiness in learning would result from good habits.

Educational Guidance deals primarily with the pupil's success in his educational career. For instance (a) how to study (b) using the common tools of learning (c) adjusting school life to these activities (d) regularity in attendance and performance of school tasks, (e) learning to speak, to inter-

view, to compose in writing, to use library, to take examinations, and making the important educational decisions at each of the many 'forks in the road.' Guidance for these abilities is Educational Guidance.\* "The school should help children to discover for each that path of learning, the pursuit of which will contribute most to the successful carrying on of these life activities most advantageous to the individual and to society." Guidance should cover all the life activities of the pupils. Those who prefer work to study (backwards), they need individual attention, diagnosis of difficulties and much individual counselling.

The success of School Guidance depends upon the right attitude to study. It has been observed that proper motivation, co-operation and morale help to decrease the learning time, increase the disciplinary values and lead children into the willing acceptance of more and harder tasks. Pupils learn habits of idleness and in-attention because the tasks are so easy that they offer no incentive to real effort. Some pupils are confused, strained and defeated because the work is over their heads. There is a lack of proper motivation and morale in the class room. Next to ability, interest, cooperation and morale are important for success in school work.

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\*Educarion as Guidance by J. A. Brewer.

Teaching pupils 'how to study' is the most difficult part of educational guidance. There are three main directions *viz.* technique of the process of study, emotional satisfaction and study habits. We shall discuss each of these in some detail.

Technique of the process of study involves some understanding of children and a knowledge of the psychology of study. To tell children to concentrate or read over and over again and to memorize the text, these are not real methods of study. They do not train pupil's, ability to visualize. The present system of assessment of children's achievements is through examinations and cramming is the method of passing these examinations. Unless the system of examinations changes, good habits of study cannot be inculcated or encouraged in our pupils. Besides, the subject matter of studies (curriculum) should help pupils to organize, extend and improve their individual and cooperative activities. The school should tell the pupil about the purpose, method and character of each course. All guidance should involve and lead to self-guidance.

Morale is the starting point for initiating the technique of study. The child should *want* to study. All the mechanical or outward features of the study process will fail unless the child has the desire to study. Prepare the child and build up its morale by showing that

he is part of a larger world—that adults are studying everywhere. If the child is in a position of *wanting* to study, we can, as a next step, diagnose his individual needs. Samples of educational work can then be used as a basis for discovery of abilities and interests. Tests\* and measures are used in the West for diagnostic purposes. A small beginning can be made in every school by adapting Western Tests to our own needs and situations.

Some children, on admission to school, are not ready to read. They should not be put on reading, otherwise it will be a disaster. They should be allowed time to be ready for reading. "The general dislike for school expressed by children who fail, has its origin undoubtedly in the unhappy first learning experiences of the primary grades. This attitude is perpetuated in the other grades, wherein inappropriate materials and methods of instruction lead to failure attended by emotional tension. Children who have subject disabilities display various degrees of fears, timidity, nervousness and self-consciousness."

Some laboratory or experimental methods form a part of the technique of study, for instance, (a) how to visualize for spelling and arithmetic, and "audilize" for music and foreign languages. (b) The children should suppress auditory imagery for silent reading and should

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\* See appendix I for list of tests.

practise rapid reading and the inspection of printed matter, through skimming. The correct way of taking notes, and the time spent on each exercise, can also be an item for experimentation. Methods of cooperative study should be taught early in a child's educational career. Recreation, care of the person, wholesome thinking and acting—these form the hygiene of study, and are necessary to guard against mental and physical fatigue which interferes with the process of study. Only satisfied learners will wish to do home work.' It should be a part of the study habit to get the main points of a lesson through taking notes or without the books.

Recent experimentation shows clearly that reading difficulties are almost always accompanied by emotional states or personality disturbances which interfere progressively with the learning process. Teachers must, therefore, seek the motives underlying children's deviations in behaviour which are related to subject difficulty. What led to failure in reading might have been a suggestion from some one that it was difficult to read. "The result of educational guidance will be seen in boys and girls who think of their education as the centre of their activities and see the relation between learning and living. Such pupils should achieve an attitude of thoughtfulness, and a habit of searching for higher forms of knowledge and morale in all they undertake."

## II

Educational Guidance is incomplete unless the pupil's 'subject difficulties' are remedied. One hears the common and chronic complaint that a child is good in reading but poor in spelling; learns history well but neglects arithmetic and so on. Before any programme of remedial instruction is drawn up, the causes of that 'subject disability' should be diagnosed.

We must recognize that the school can be a force in creating mal-adjustments. The school must emphasise success and minimize failure. Poor readers are not low in intelligence. "Most poor readers are sufficiently bright to read satisfactorily if appropriate and attainable reading goals are provided and their acquisitiveness is soundly motivated." This pre-supposes that a child's interests and needs have been studied, his intelligence ratio ascertained and in the light of these two factors, appropriate instructional material selected.

It must be regarded as a serious handicap that there is dearth of suitable reading material for those children who show deviations in behaviour due to subject difficulties. We have already emphasised the relation between emotional states and learning processes. There is a story of a hungry child who was thinking of food rather than learn history.

A small boy was inattentive in the class and the teacher wanted to pull him up. "Hari" she said, "I have told the class the name of the first Moghul King of India. Can you tell me who he was." The boy did not reply. He had no interest in the lesson. In the morning he had learnt from his mother that some friends were visiting them at noon and she would prepare his favourite dish for lunch. He was at that very moment imagining the guests eating the dish with a relish while he himself was being forced to learn. His thoughts were wandering elsewhere. His interest lay in the food at home.

It must be clearly understood that those pupils who cannot master reading or arithmetic are academic failures and the remedy must be sought in proper adjustment at school. "Poor reading ability has come to be considered a remediable developmental condition resulting largely from improper or premature instruction." If the substance of education (curriculum) has no relation with the interests and basic drives of children, the progress will be very slow indeed. Mentally retarded children need individual attention and curriculum suited to their physical, mental, educational and emotional motivations. An inflexible curriculum or unattainable standards are inappropriate for them. "The reactions of the emotionally immature child are possible primary causes of reading disability."

Investigators have found that teachers usually respect highly those traits in children which make them docile robots in mechanical instructional routine. "Some of the traits highly esteemed by the school are unhygienic and harmful to personality orientation. The tendency of emotionally unstable teachers to influence undesirably the mental health of their pupils has been reported. Teacher is the outstanding factor in the mental hygiene situation in the school." The teacher should not pass along to children the burden of his own emotional immaturations and disappointments. Those responsible for the guidance of young children ought to be willing to undergo continual self-scrutiny and consciously endeavour not to pass along any undesirable reactions. There are two obligations on the teachers, firstly, to define the sort of emotional behaviour children ought to acquire and secondly to provide situations in which children will have the chance to behave in the desirable ways.

Remedial teaching is necessary because there are large number of subject difficulties in our schools. Most children seriously retarded in 'subjects' can be helped appreciably.

An effective programme of remedial instruction must aim toward change in the *whole child* and his adjustment to his in-and-

out of school environment. Intelligent instruction must seek to reorient him in more successful and happy living. To provide better orientation, it is essential to study a child's way of adapting himself to life. Hence, one must explore his activities, his problems and his dominating interests. Through these avenues, one may achieve some understanding of a child's need and difficulties in making successful social adaptations." Our primary aim must be to work toward improving instruction in all areas of education in order that children may find increased relevance, mastery and enduring satisfaction in their works.

Here are some suggestions for remedial reading programme :—

(i) Interview with the parent to find out the type of reading matter available in the home and the attitude of parents towards books.

(ii) The books previously read should be ascertained.

(iii) Interview with the child informally to understand his problems and attitudes, to establish a friendly, sympathetic teacher—pupil relationship and help in suggesting reading material suited to the child's individual needs.

(iv) Get the child to read orally and silently and give him chances of frequent oral and written expression.

(v) Correct typical errors in oral reading, faulty vowel or consonant usage ; addition or omission of sounds ; the addition, substitution, or repetitions of words or phrases and reversal of words in part or whole. "These and similar specific difficulties may be corrected generally by calling the child's attention to them (without over-emphasis) by setting a correct model in pronunciation and phrasing, and by stressing the necessity for getting meaning from each reading unit. Good reading can be stimulated also by creating real audience situation in which natural oral expression and reading are demanded." Reading should be viewed as a thinking process demanding the use of creative intelligence in situations closely associated with the development of the growing child.

(vi) Free reading from a rich offering of books and magazines containing simple stories keeping with the child's diversified interests.

### **Arithmetic and Number work :—**

(i) Detailed and complete analysis of children's proficiency in the many aspects of arithmetic computation and problem solving to be made.

(ii) Children's specific difficulties classified and they are to be directed to "drill" in the appropriate material.

(iii) Take a notebook and jot down the major difficulties of the child, call it "My

Trouble Book” and explain to the child that if he would overcome, he will succeed.

(iv) Emphasise the meanings of numbers, number combinations, and number usage.

Children should be led to insist upon an understanding of the processes which they employ in problem solving; and teacher should instruct children in the rationale as well as the mechanics of arithmetic.

(v) “Busy Work” should be discouraged and quality of work rather than mere quantity emphasised.

(vi) Arithmetic should be emphasised only where the child has sufficient maturity to enable him to succeed with unproductive or tedious and wasteful effort.

(vii) The syllabus of arithmetic to be so prepared that the problems set have a relation with children’s needs and experience.

The basic purpose of remedial teaching is to provide a series of carefully guided educative experiences leading to wholesome sequence of growth and rehabilitation in school children.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION OF THE CHILD

#### I

The term 'Physical Education' includes P.T., drill, physical jerks and "such matters as the causes and effects of fatigue, the use of space, and the planning of the school day, as well as such matters as the preparation and serving of the school meal, all aspects of the school medical service, and the general cleanliness and seemliness of the school. It is concerned with each child as a growing individual (especially with the result of his response to what is done for him), and with the school (including the parents) as a community, it includes not only direct teaching, but also the ceaseless endeavour needed to produce an environment which provides opportunities of many kinds."\*

In a previous chapter we have 'visualized' the growth in movement of a child from his birth to a year. We must continue the study of the children's movements and growth in order to observe and understand children. Observation of children's movements clearly

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\*Physical Education in the Primary Schools (Part One), H.M.S.O., London.

shows their immaturity or precocity, steadiness or hastiness, lethargy or resilience. Some of the important factors which affect the development of movement are :—(1) inherited characteristics, (2) Environmental influences, although it is misleading to separate heredity and environment because in practice their interplay is so complex, that it is difficult to disentangle the genetic and social factors.

Movement is the sign of a child's maturity. In our country children start 'standing up and walking about' at the end of the first year. If the occurrence is delayed, there is concern lest this should signify retardation, if precocity is shown, there is pride in a 'forward' child.

Movement reflects personality. Movement is not simply an affair of strong muscles and supple joints. In describing a person's walk as 'characteristic', we are less concerned with pace or length of stride than with the quality of his movement, in which we discern something of the quality of his personality. One is struck with the grace of walking and bearing of the village women in India when they walk with pitchers full of water on their heads.

Some of the inherited characteristics which influence movement and growth are, tendency towards tallness or shortness, a tendency towards a certain build and towards certain qualities of temperament. We might call this 'family likeness.' But variations exist,

specially at adolescence when there is a period of rapid growth. Children of very short parents tend to be short, but taller than their parents, those of very tall parents tend to be tall, but shorter than their parents.

It has been observed that there are differences in boys and girls in their movements and growth. Children at the age of four tend to be chubby, while at seven they tend to be comparatively skinny. Even tall girls can not compete in climbing with short boys, may be, their arms and shduldgers are less powerful. In climbing trees both boys. and girls show agility. Boys' throw is better than that of girls, but girls excel boys in repetitive rhythms, as in skipping. "The development of movement may be affected by tallness and shortness, by body build, and by sex. These are all patterns of growth which are laid down before birth. There is a further pattern which is regarded as innate—the temperamental pattern. There are very many shades of temperament but we are familiar with such extremes as lively and placid, cheerful and gloomy, and discern them in others by behaviour in which quality of movement is a significant characteristic".†

Effects of environment are seen when we realize that height of a child is also dependent upon nutrition, that is, not only quality and

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†Cit. opp.

quantity of food but the capacity of the child to assimilate and make use of the food he eats. A starving child is thin because his food intake, both in quantity and quality is below a certain level ; but two children may be fed on the same diet with very different results : one may become fatter and perhaps rather sluggish while the other continues to be thin and fiercely energetic. Children in countryside who live an open-air active life are comparatively more hardy and quick than children living in congested area of a city.

Adequate clothing is as important as food. Assimilation of food is dependent on the function of the skin in regulating the loss of heat from the body. The skin of a constantly over dressed child is prevented from functioning properly. On the other hand an inadequately dressed child may be drained of vitality, even when adequately fed. It is a fact recognized by every work-man that the clothing hampers skill and hinders activity. Children like the freedom which results from removing their clothing.

Both lack of sleep and poor sleep sap vitality and are a source of listlessness. Thus food, clothing, open air living, adequate sleep affect the child's movements and growth. To provide these in adequate quantity is to ensure proper growth of the child.

Normally a child in India stands and walks in the first year ; in the second year he can run and in the third year, climb but still likes to crawl, creep and roll, sit and squat on the floor. A three-year-old finds great difficulty in catching a ball ; he may be able to unbutton, but not button up his clothes. Grasping is easy ; to let go is more difficult, kicking a large ball is possible but kicking on the run is beyond him.

Most boys appear to be more exploratory than most girls ; girls are more repetitive than boys. Boys leap, race, chase, climb and scramble with great zest and participate in competitive and group games when they reach the age of ten. They like to ride, swim skate, camp, make fire and build huts. That is the age when they are getting ready to join the cub pack. Girls also compete with boys in these games when opportunities of "mixing" at this age are provided. At this age there is proper coordination of hand and eye ; their vision will be normal and their dexterity will have made great strides. Use of a pen instead of a pencil and a sense of rhythm appears. "Where, as in large families, and in small mixed rural schools, boys and girls are accustomed to collaborate, the differences between them are often very much less marked."

There is no doubt that there are stages of growth (3, 6 and 10 years) but each child does not conform to a set-pattern. "It is

unlikely that any child we know will conform to any one of the various stages of growth described. At any age there will be children who have advanced far beyond the average level, others who are far behind.”\* A study of stages of growth gives us perspective, we are reminded of the progress made by children in the long process of growing up, of the large advances made, and of the different opportunities needed. There are all sorts of children at every level, and few of them show even development in all directions.

## II

We have hinted at the restrictive quality of the children's clothes if they are of the traditional style. Today children wear clothes specially designed to meet their needs, and, in thus equipping them, we show that we realize that childhood has its own pattern which is shaped and followed, not by little men and women, but by children. Similarly the pattern of children's movements is different from that of adults. In negotiating a short distance a child may walk, run, leap, jump, swing and climb. Unlike adults who make use of movement for utilitarian purposes, it is sheer act of running, leaping or climbing that children love. A wide space will often set them off, skipping, hopping, running and shouting, whirling their arms and performing

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\*Physical Education in the Primary School (Part I)  
H.M.S.O., London.

all sorts of curious antics. Movement is used often to play out an idea, they become some body else, alone or with others it is a means of make-believe.

Children of both-sexes enjoy climbing a tree. It makes them more versatile. "In climbing a child finds his way round an awkward angle, up a place where a long stretch is necessary and along a branch where he must wriggle full-length. He begins to know more about trees and about himself, and he gains new realizations of height, width, depth, weight and resilience."\* That may be one reason to grow more trees in a school.

Movement stimulates, imagination. Children ride on stick horses, they construct buildings out of a pile of timber. They express themselves in dance or drama. Movement is used for exploration and gaining new experiences, to find out the possibilities of a new tool, or of a fresh arrangement of familiar things but they need guidance.

Children love to repeat a movement as they do a sound. Some children seem to be more repetitive than others; some hardly pause for repetition at all, but are constantly shooting off in new directions. Generally speaking, the younger the child the stronger is his need for repetition of the same routine, the same story, song or rhyme; and the more

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\* Cit. opp.

he is likely to repeat himself. Moreover, repetition gives children the sense of security.

Exploration and repetition help in the growth of rhythm. Some children play with a ball unceasingly and almost automatically, others use their skill to invent new games. The over-repetitive child has to be urged out of his routine and the over-exploratory drawn back to necessary repetition. Where unnecessary repetition is enforced, there is no growth, but boredom, where there is too much change, restlessness, indecision, and insecurity are likely to appear.

Some people and some races express themselves freely and colourfully, others are more impassive. Expression suggests liveliness and feeling, but it also implies form. Children should be helped to 'grow up' to express themselves imaginatively, whether in speech, colour or movement. Children are sometimes so absorbed in an activity that they remain intent on their occupation, undisturbed in circumstances which would make it impossible for most adults to concentrate for a moment. Absorption is probably due to the complete identification of the child with the situation; he has become part of it, and it has entered into him. "When children are absorbed in acting out an idea among themselves, then movement may be fluent and eloquent; but if they are placed on a stage and required to act to an audience, their movements are

likely to become stilted and awkward. This embarrassment has two sources—self-consciousness, and the fact that movements designed to convey meaning to an audience demand a technique which is remote from children's mode of movement."

Fear gives children greater speed or agility or it brings a child to stand-still. Fearfulness usually limits us in every way. A dependent child is very restricted in movement. On the other hand, a child who receives insufficient care and who feels insecure may be wild and jerky and may develop stunts in order to show off and attract the attention he craves.

Fatigue, poor eyesight and deficient hearing are possible causes of clumsiness. We tend to be clumsy or have an accident when we are placed in a situation to which we are not adequate. Some children "are accident prone". Adults can help children to be calm or fearful by their behaviour. Parents and teachers should watch the growth of their children through movement. Movement in return must be studied as a reflection of the child's growth. One helps the other.

We have already discussed the activity methods used in a Nursery School. The children are constantly in and out of doors and are engaged in natural movements of running, climbing, swinging and throwing. Young children learn much by seeing and

hearing, but perhaps most of all by doing things. Shapes are not only seen but must also be handled, and attempts must be made to fit or build them together ; colours must be used, tools tried out, materials smoothed, squeezed, patted or pressed. The Basic system of Education in our country must make use of the results of the scientific study of movement. In many schools in England the education is of such a kind that "the teaching spaces are more like work shops than the traditional idea of a class room, and many 'subjects' are worked out in movement, speech, manipulation, measurement, and construction as well as in terms of reading, writing and doing sums."

We have already mentioned fatigue as a factor in Physical Education of children. Children need the expansive opportunities of big and vigorous movement of all kinds to overcome the cramping effects of fatigue brought about by reading or writing for too long a spell. Normal vision develops slowly, and the link between fine movements of the hand and the focussing of the eyes on small objects at close range can only be established very gradually. In an ordinary infants' school in India where children squat on the floor of a dingy room in a crowded lane, with unsuitably printed books or for stitching with an ordinary needle and thread, the cramping effects are very great indeed !

So far we have not touched upon the need for organized activities like mass drill or physical jerks and P. T. The Physical Education of the present day has emerged from the observation and study of the needs of growing children. It is concerned with each child as a growing individual. Physical education can help children to develop their full powers, but this process may be severely hindered by under-nourishment, indigestion, constipation, lack of sleep, and illness.

In an ordinary school there is usually one period a day for games or physical training. Its object is very limited *viz.* providing an anti-dote to unsuitable class room regime. The more rigid the constraint in the classroom the more violent will be the explosion when space and the opportunities for movements are available.

Children feel satisfied by doing a job well. Skill is the result of such satisfactory movements. But skill alone is not sufficient. Children become versatile. They like to widen their experience and make it rich and varied. They become expressive as well as dexterous, graceful as well as strong, agile as well as steady. They are aware of quality in movement and enjoy and appreciate it either for its own sake or as a means of doing something effectively, whether in a game in the use of a tool, in representing some character or in expressing some idea.

Children learn by exploration, by repetition, through creation, and through their contact with each other, with their teacher and with other adults.

It is often difficult to distinguish between children's work and their play. Their activities do not fall into clear categories. Play in water will lead to swimming and play with balls develop into major games. Enjoyment of movement for its own sake, and as a means of impersonation, are the forerunners of dance and drama respectively. Climbing, swinging, leaping and feats of various kinds form P. T. for children under eleven.

Our rural schools are in a much better position than urban schools. They have wide spaces ; they have plenty of indigenous games and invent more to meet their needs. The question of expense does not hamper their programmes.

“Games demand flexibility of thought and action—an ability to meet with and enjoy the unexpected. The competitive element adds zest and stimulates endeavour in a manner which is exhilarating and helpful, so long as the idea of ‘play’ is not forgotten. In games also it is possible to enjoy a relationship with others which is perhaps peculiar to the playing field.”\*

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\*Cit opp.

Swimming has some additional advantages. Children who find it difficult to achieve satisfaction in other fields of movement sometimes come into their own in the water. Movement in water has a different quality from movement on the ground or in the air and demands a different kind of effort,

All movement has an expressive quality whether we intend it or not. In movement regarded as an art its expressive character is the uppermost in our minds, because this reflects its imaginative quality. Hence dance and drama are thought of as artistic movements. Dance is an overflow of feeling, energy or excitement. It is enjoyed for its own sake—for its quality, shape and pattern. "It seems important that we should help children to enjoy as rich an experience in movement as we do in language, where we try to help them to widen their vocabulary to use language flexibly, to write and speak expressly."\*

Movement is also used to teach the elements of music such as the different time rhythms, recognition of varying intensities of sound, and recognition of pitch variation, and of phrasing. Dramatic movement is apparently the overflow of the energy or emotion which comes into being in moments of exhilaration. There seem to be two ways in which we can try to help this dramatic

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\*Cit opp.

instinct of children to grow into something which has vital quality. The dramatic play of children seems to be of several kinds. One kind is largely imitative, and in such play, events which have been experienced, or people who have made an impression, are woven into dramatic scenes or impersonations, often strongly realistic but coloured by the peculiar interests and points of view of children. Such plays have a compensatory value.

Another kind of dramatic play is more exploratory and inventive in character, "Without any properties at all a child can by means of sheer quality of movement suggest the inherent character of such varying subjects as a tree, a fish, an elephant, a house. Children seize upon the strange fantastic characters of the old fairy tale and, in what seems like effortless play, a new dramatic form takes shape. The inspiration may come from the movement itself, so that stealthy creeping suggests being a Red Indian, stamping the feet becomes the action of a giant, bouncing up and down on a chair suggests a horseman, As teachers and parents we should provide the means of experience through materials—stories, pictures, properties, a dressing up box, and if possible, space. Through such actions grows an understanding of the quality of movement needed to express character—for instance, the variability of pace, strength and direction in these movements which indicate—an elusive character or the sustained

strength, pace or direction of a monumental character.”\*

A P.T. lesson is concerned mainly with the grammar of movement; it will include movements which have a compensatory or remedial purpose such as throwing, hitting, dribbling, running and leaping, and it will include opportunities for agility on all sorts of apparatus. In using repetition in order to establish a technique children may be described as working with a grammatical purpose. Grammatical movement implies practice in diverse forms of movement which are held to serve as a basis of healthy living, and of the enjoyment of skill in various fields.

Movement is the means of educating the senses and affording sensual pleasure and it should be borne in mind even in the case of very small children, “we cannot make a sluggish or ailing baby enjoy muscle pleasure by setting him on his legs before he is willing to walk. We have to recognize that one child has greater possibilities of pleasure in movement than another; but we can see to it that every baby is left as free as possible to use his limbs. For instance, there must be periods in the day when the infant wears no constricting napkin so that he can kick as much as he pleases; the toddler must race along on his own account when he wants to and not always go walking hand in hand with

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\*Cit opp.

his mother, and any impulsive movement, whether it is a movement of running or shuffling, snatching or hanging, should be tolerated unless there is good reason to stop it. And this because the child cannot develop full muscle pleasure from a movement which is frustrated."\*

Muscle pleasure is at the root of a baby's movements of the limbs. By nourishing movement of children we build their personality, by frustrating we dwarf not only the children in body but in mind and spirit. We shall discuss the character building qualities of movement—Drill, P. T. games—in the last chapter of this book. The reader will find excellent material on the subject in the two parts of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, publication, "Physical Education for Primary Schools."

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\*On The Bringing Up Of Children—Kitabistan, Allahabad.

CHAPTER NINE  
**MENTAL HEALTH OF THE CHILD**

I

Mental health consists of the ability to live happily with other human beings without being a nuisance to them. One has to accept limits imposed by bodily equipment and yet become a productive member of society. The foundation of mental health rests on heredity. But heredity supplies only the raw material. Life experiences mould human personality. "The stage on which the first few years of living are played, may be just as important as the stuff of which the actor is made."\*

A description in psychological terms of a mentally healthy person can be:— One whose memory, attention and perceptive ability, as well as his reasoning and power of judgment, are able to deal with his requirements as an individual member of society in which he lives, whose instincts and emotions are controllable, whose motives and intentions are able to be organized along socially acceptable channels; who is able to adjust

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\*Mental Health by J. H. Preston.

himself to social requirements inspite of difficulties and changing values, and correct as well as perceive his faults so that he is integrated with his fellows. In short, one who is free from the usually recognized forms of mental defectiveness and mental disorder and is socially adjustable.

It is not proved that children directly inherit mental illness. We believe only in a tendency which may be increased or decreased by what happens as the child lives. Today the most widely held view is that poor heredity does not form an absolute and final barrier to mental health ; on the other hand, the best heredity in the world cannot guarantee mental health in the face of serious accident or drastic mishandling. Even where heredity sets limits on mental health ; these limits can be modified. "Ability in art, music, literature and dramatics may travel in families but in such cases, we must never lose sight of the powerful effect of example, training and the incentive to follow in the footsteps of famous parents. The same idea holds for such matters as bad temper or inability to do arithmetic....Such traits seem to be 'contagious' rather than hereditary,"\* The attitude of parents towards physical handicaps of their children is very important. "A girl wasborn without the left hand. Her arm came down to a wrist and then ended in a

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\*Mental Health by Preston.

smooth stump. She was pretty, vivacious and intelligent. One can understand what a shock this deformity must have been to her father and mother. They handled the situation wonderfully. There was no attempt to cover it up. She did not wear a long left sleeve to hide her stump. She was taught to use it just as much as possible. No one made her feel ashamed or sorry for herself. She would show her arm quite naturally and was rather proud of what she had learned to do with it."\* Her case serves as an example of family attitude compensating as far as possible for physical handicap.

There is however, one mental defect which education and training or even medical care has not been able to eliminate so far ; that is 'feeble-mindedness.' Even non-hereditary factors such as birth injuries and serious infectious diseases occurring in infancy, may cause feeble-mindedness. Institutional care is the only remedy for mental defectives. In our competitive society they do not live happily or productively, In an institution for the feeble-minded they are among their equals and can live happily. But that is an extreme case.

A child who has frequent bursts of misbehaviour should be considered carefully from the standpoint of health and hygiene. Children who are 'underweight,' or those who do

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\*Mental Health by Preston.

not get adequate sleep, enough food and exercise, get easily tired and become naughty. Toxaemia, pyorrhoea and septic tonsils, unhealthy condition of the stomach, anaemia, etc. make the child irritable and nervous. Bad physical postures or lack of sunshine and fresh air in class rooms or sleeping apartments create round shouldered and flat chested children. "When the spine is straighter and the shoulders back and the chest more expanded, much of the timidity and uncertainty of the nervous subject departs." If the bowels are kept clear, and the muscles relaxed, if there is deep and full breathing, regular and systemetic physical culture exercises, bath and daily wet rubs for the skin and plenty of out door physical activity, there is, a remarkable improvement in mental hygiene. Oil bath builds body and is soothing for nerves. "Turkish Bath" works on this principle.

Fear is the greatest danger to a child's mental health. Parents and teachers should be constantly on guard to note the signs of irrational fear reactions in the child. Irrational fears should not be allowed to develop. It is easy to teach children to act in certain ways by instilling a fear of consequences, but that is a negative sort of character training. The ideal is to make the approved modes of conduct emotionally satisfying for the child. Teachers should help the fearful child to gain in self-confidence by affording the child

opportunities for gaining success experiences. Fear takes the form of shyness or embarrassment. Fear accompanies rebellion in children. Unsociability, unadaptability and loneliness are symptoms of nervousness and fear. Even when a child's personality functions well, social pressures and environmental influences may create inner conflicts. This is true because the child cannot, by himself, alter his environment and must look to adults for its amelioration and the removal of undue pressures and burdens. All emotionally disturbed children may be regarded as sick children. The parents only know that the child is causing them inconvenience. They do not know that he is suffering. The anxious child obtains gratification by being sick or can replace his neurotic suffering by an organic disability such as dizziness, vomiting or stuttering and convulsive attacks.

Fear visible or invisible, is present in all difficult children. All situations involving a feeling of helplessness, of impotence, give rise to fear. Fear lurks in the back ground of all the experiences of small children.

Children turn some of these fear-reactions into an instrument of power. For instance, the child wants some one to accompany him into a dark room ; child cries out in sleep or has terrifying dreams. Bed-wetting is a fear-reaction of the child.

All children desire attention. The child who is ignored when he is well behaved, may find himself the centre of attention when he spits out his oat-meal, or uses a swear word, or pinches the baby.

The child who has temper tantrums, is trying to get attention. Ordinarily, such children should get no attention when there is a tantrum. Scolding is of little value, as it gives the attention the child wants. In all dealing with children, gentleness of voice and of action produces the best results.

The child who constantly says a 'no' to everything may be trying to get attention. Many little children go through the negative period. It may be partly an imitation of parents who frequently say 'no' to the child, or it may represent his first feelings of independence of action. In most children this negative phase will pass when they discover that it is not gaining them attention.

Threats are usually made by adults to frighten children into doing something. "If you aren't good, I'll call the policeman." "If you don't stop crying, I'll go away and leave you," are threats of the worst type. None of these things would a mother really think of doing. She is not only frightening her child but lying to him.

It is a mistake only to issue orders ; one can also explain to children what is required

of them and the reasons. Further, one can and should request them to do things as a favour or a kindness and thank them for their compliance.

## II

We have already explained that a child's fundamental needs are (a) sense of security, (b) need for recognition or status and (c) need for love and affection. A child who feels insecure or ignored or unwanted can never grow to be a mentally healthy child.

Both parents and teachers are guilty of inflicting injuries by wrong use of Praise and Reward and Punishment.

The use of praise and rewards is often more important than punishment. Praise and rewards, however, must not be dealt out unthinkingly. If every trifling deed is praised, praise loses its value, just as punishment does, when carelessly used. Rewards especially must be guarded. In families where the reward system is carried to an extreme, the children expect to be paid for every thing. Children should not be paid for doing the everyday things that they should do anyway. The use of rewards to help a child establish a habit or to overcome some difficulty, is quite a different matter.

Bribing should never be resorted to. The mother who meets her little problems in this

way is sure to have more serious ones to meet later. How futile and weak it seems when we hear Mrs. Ram saying to baby as he struggles with the barber, "Hold still, Baby, I'll buy you an ice-cream if you let the barber cut your hair" or "If you let the doctor look in your throat I'll buy you a new toy." "I don't want to—I don't want a new toy," replies Baby. Bribes seldom work.

A powerful and worthy incentive, if wisely employed, is the child's fear of disapproval by a respected adult if he acts badly. Fear of disapproval is different from fear of punishment which is injurious to mental health.

The old Jewish proverb, "Spare the rod and spoil the child," is not altogether out-moded. There could be no greater mistake than to dispense with punishment in a child's upbringing. Even small children know the essential connection between wrong doing and punishment. Therefore, punishment must be just and proportionate. The child should be conscious of his guilt; one must be satisfied that the child was conscious of wrong doing otherwise instruction rather than punishment is necessary. The idea that punishment should be heavy or light according to the amount of harm done, is wrong. The possibility of the standards of right and wrong varying to suit the social situation is too subtle for the child's understanding. To children it seems only fair that

a single act of wrong doing shall receive a single punishment.

Punishment should be intelligible to the child, There is a general loss of confidence if the child cannot understand punishment. Almost all conscious lying originates from fear of punishment. Punishment may be recognizable as a demonstration of confidence. We punish or admonish as we believe that the person concerned is capable of improvement. Humiliating punishment must be avoided ; it destroys self-respect. Corporal punishment invariably has the effect of destroying self-respect of the child. Therefore, punishment must be Reformative rather than Retributive or Deterrant.

### III

We have tried to understand the nature and needs of children and traced their stages of growth. Education, guidance, tender care of body and mind of the child have occupied our attention so far. We have presumed that the proper cultivation of emotions enables a child to live a happy and useful life in society. Sciences like pedagogy, psychology and sociology, each has a contribution to make in the development of a child's personality. In a way we have been driven to think that there is a 'determinism' in the upbringing of children. Elaborate analysis of human motivation made by sociologists and psycho-

logists, appear to deny all freedom of choice and responsibility to the child. How shall we resolve and reconcile the view-points of the moralist's with his free will and the social scientist with his psychological determinism? The synthesis is to be found in the ideal of life and character we want our children to attain. "Character means for us courage, truthfulness, trustworthiness, a sense of humour, independence, fair-play, public spirit and leadership.....They are the qualities necessary if men wish to live together in a society.....But these by themselves do not complete character. Above all we need a sense of direction. We do forget it, if we are content that our school should merely impart knowledge, develop and discipline the intelligence, train character in the narrow sense. They must also be places where the mind is enriched by the right vision and where the ends of life are learned.\* We call this as moral education. To quote Professor Whitehead, "Moral education is impossible without the habitual vision of greatness." Mere character training in the narrow sense could be carried out by a drill-sergeant; courage, endurance, fair-play, discipline, could be learnt on a parade ground. There is something more to character training than this. "The most indispensable viaticum for the journey of

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\*Education for a World Adrift by Sir Richard Livingston.

life is a store of adequate ideals, and these are acquired in a very simple way, by living with the best things in the world—the best pictures, the best building the best social or political orders, the best human beings. Knowledge of the first rate gives direction, purpose and drive: direction, because it shows what is good as well as what is bad; purpose, because it reveals an ideal to pursue; drive, because an ideal stirs to action.”\*

Indian history is replete with lives of great men and women. India’s literature is rich with stories of heroic deeds. History and literature provide the vision of the best and we should make use of these for the moral training of our children. “Whatsoever things are true, what-so-ever things are honest, what-so-ever things are just, what-so-ever things are pure, what-so-ever things are lovely, what-so-ever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things”, wrote St. Paul.

Think on the seed ye spring from ! Ye were  
made
 Not to live life of brute beasts of the field,  
 But follow virtue and knowledge unafraid.†

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\*Education for a World Adrift by Sir R. Livingston.

†Inferno, by Dante.

## CHAPTER TEN

### **MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD.**

#### I

We have discussed the physical growth of the child and the way his mind develops through various stages. We have seen that normally mental development and physical growth have a certain correspondence ; for instance, a child of one year should stand up and walk and take interest in his surroundings. We cannot force the rate of progress, it must be a gradual unfolding and development.

In our study of the child we have emphasised the roles of heredity and environment. In this last chapter we shall see how these two factors determine the moral development of the child. Our approach to the problem of character training will be mainly psychological for we believe that all moral and social problems originate in the soul of man. A moral struggle involves a conflict between two opposing impulses and from this conflict, physical or moral disorders may arise. Society forbids stealing and killing because man has an instinct which submits to the social demands.

We must reiterate that no child inherits bad temper, sex perversions or nervous habits from the parents. These character traits come to him through environmental influences. Fusion of environmental factors and inherited instincts conditions experience. When instincts are repressed, they may produce disorders of conduct in the child. The instincts constitute the raw material out of which our lives and characters are built.

The foundations of our character are laid in childhood "Abnormal conditions of mind are determined much more by the atmosphere of childhood than by any shock. These influences usually work by way of suggestion. All functional nervous diseases originate in childhood, that is to say, without criticism. He is especially impressionable to suggestions from his mother or father, adapts their mannerism and responds with the same emotions to the same stimuli."\* This brings out one important factor in the upbringing of the child, viz., the general attitude of the parents, and the way in which the ordinary details of life are conducted. The mother's spiritual and emotional relationship to her child is more important than conscious planning of the child's life. Experience of a congenial home fosters the desire to produce a similar home.

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\*Psychology and Morals by J. A. Hadfield.

We must remember that feeding is the first experience of satisfaction to the child. Happy sucking is the beginning of a child's further dealings with the outside world. Difficulties of weaning and excessive thumb-sucking are the result of unhappy sucking. The way in which the baby is handled even from the time of delivery from the womb is bound to leave impressions on his mind. Mothers often do not realize that a tiny baby is already a human being whose emotional development is of the highest importance. A mother who both feeds and nurses the child establishes such happy relations with him as would enable her child to make happy relations with others. She gives him a start in social development.

The next item in the care and bringing up is the attitude towards a child's excretory function. Mothers who get disgusted about the child's delay in keeping clean or insist on the child emptying his bowels at a particular time every day interfere with the child's control of his physical and emotional needs. If the child has a satisfactory weaning, his excretory functions will be easily controlled.

A child who is disturbed in sleep develops anxieties; if he witnesses parental intercourse, it is a jealousy provoking disturbance. Children display in their play the relationship of their parents, behaving like man and woman. The whole personality of the child develops

round the idea of what a parent should be. By sustaining an ordered pattern in the physical care of the child and in our own ways of feeling and behaving towards him, inevitably these things strengthen his belief in the goodness of his own life and his own ability to love and create.

Parents see some emotional disturbances during the first three months of the child's life. It has been found by some that during that period the baby makes more gestures of distress than he does of pleasure. Children play with their genitals. It gives them satisfaction. The mother should not interfere nor should she stimulate the sexuality of the child by too much hugging, kissing and caressing especially after the child has been bathed. Genital feeling and bowel sensations influence child's early mental development. We know that oral and genital feelings are more acute than other bodily sensations. Sexual gratification of some sort is a normal element in a healthy mental attitude at every age. Any serious difficulty "in connection with the development of the child's sexuality will be manifested in several ways, such as prolonged moodiness and unhappiness, inhibition in games and learning, prolonged defiance, or on the other hand, passive goodness, obedience and docility".\*

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\*On The Bringing Up Of Children, Published by Kitabastan of Allahabad.

Children are not expected to have strong character. There are many subsequent stages of maturity. It is however, a psychological discovery that at the age of three the child gains self-consciousness and makes a distinction between "Right" and "Wrong", "Good and Bad." To the child an action that brings happiness and completeness is the 'right choice' In wrong choice there is an inadequate stimulus.†

Without confusing our reader with the distinction between Ethical good and the Right choice according to psychology, we may observe that character training is possible from the age of three years. Researches in psychology have revealed that "the craving for completeness and self-realization urges us from the mere exhibition of our lusts and passions, and impels us to moral endeavour and the development of character. An ideal is necessary to determine the direction of our character but the ideal is above the child's mental horizon and so we try to give the child right habits, sentiments and dispositions. These are essential ingredients of an Organized Self and its activity the Will. In the case of children we help in their moral development by teaching them to obey higher biological laws. The morality

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†I am indebted to Prof. Hadfield's ideas on child's character training as given in his book Psychology and Morals.

proper to every age is the fullest development of the emerging psychological functions and instincts characteristic of the age of the individual.”\*

“There is no time in life more important for psychological development than that between the ages of three and four, when self consciousness emerges ; as there is no time more important for ethical development than the age of idealism in later adolescence. In the earlier period, a child forms its attitude to the world, whether of fear, pessimism or the feeling that the world is ‘easy’, ‘hard’ or ‘unjust’. But what is of still greater importance is that at this stage the child forms its attitude towards itself. At the age of three, a child first looks at itself and this first impression of itself is destined to remain throughout life and determine the character of individual. This early conception of ourselves, which tends to be of an extravagant nature, is therefore, repressed, and forms a complex which we call a phantasy.”†

Those whose character suffers from self-importance ; those who are dogmatic, resent criticism or blame ; those who are intolerant and regard themselves infallible ; those who are conceited and have a cynical attitude towards their fellows or show a domineering temper ; those who are given to excessive

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\*Cit, opp.

†Psychology and Morals by J.A. Hadfield.

self-display and jealousy or have a feeling of self-righteousness and become censors of others, or are self-willed ; their character is the result of Self-Phantasy of child-hood.

If, on the other hand, the child is brought up with kicks and curses, his character is developed along the lines of inferiority ; he suffers from timidity of character, servility and self-distrust, having accepted the role of inferiority. Phantasies inhibit moral endeavour. It is only through proper upbringing of the child that he can be saved from Phantasies of Superiority or Inferiority.

Some moral disorders can be avoided by the right use of the instincts of children. If a child's instincts are over stimulated or suppressed and starved or are prematurely stimulated, there is trouble in later life. Bitterness of character may be produced by a disappointment ; a sexual assault may produce timidity, hysteria, or sexual frigidity. Such occurrences are particularly liable to cause permanent defects if they occur in child-hood, and if they are repressed and forgotten"\*

We must consider the importance of good habits in the building up of child's character. But before discussing the role of habit, the reader should understand how dispositions and sentiments build a child's personality.

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\*Cit opp.

The door-way of child's knowledge of outer world is his sense-organs. Some objects give the child pleasure as the sensations from these are pleasant. The child's emotional disposition to that object is one of liking. Similarly, some ideas act as adequate stimuli and the child's attachment to these ideas have a pleasant emotional tone. The most dominant of all our sentiments embody our ideals or aims in life, for it is to these that most of our emotions are particularly strongly attached and it is these that dominate our will.

"The first object of all education, intellectual as well as moral and religious, is the formation of right sentiments and dispositions *i.e.* the attachment of emotions to the right objects, ideas and persons. A liberal education will secure that our emotions are attached to ideas such as "Playing the game", "loyalty", "a sense of honour." These qualities, adopted as conscious sentiments in school days, become the accepted dispositions of our manhood'.\* Sentiments should be converted into dispositions so that the child's *will* works spontaneously in the right direction. There is no sentiment in life more valuable than that which sees in difficulty an obstacle to be overcome and mastered, and in which the hard task calls forth our courageous emotions.

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\*Psychology and Morals by J.A. Hadfield.

If, however, our emotions are attached to wrong objects, we then, form in our unconscious mind complexes, which effect our conduct adversely. Repression of instincts and impulses and presence of complexes weaken the chil'd moral habits; for habits are spontaneous and spring from unconscious motives.

Habits are derived from two sources, dispositions and complexes; bad habits due to repressed morbid complexes, good habits as the result of accepted dispositions, Behind and beneath every habit is an emotion, the arousal of which determines the habit. "No good habit is worth much unless it be backed by a large and healthy emotional disposition. The experience of the cure of moral evils by religious means supports the theory of emotional origin of habits."\*

To base habit formation on the principle of drill, repetition or routine, will defeat its purpose in the long run. If mere routine were a reformative influence, all those who pass through penal institutions would show the regularity of their life after discharge. Our experience of After-care of Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society confirms the emotional basis of habits. One cannot make a man of an individual emotionally a child, by telling him to "be a man"; he is lacking those qualities that make for virility.

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\*Cit. opp.

Prof. Hadfield speaks most eloquently of the place of the ideal in the moral development of the individual. He writes, "The ideal is the most potent factor in the determination of character and conduct, for the ideal alone is able to stimulate the will and so to organize all the instincts into one harmonious whole. Without it the individual is left to the chaotic influences of the conflicting instincts, with it the personality is wedded together towards one common purpose. The ideal is that, the attainment of which produces completeness and self-realization. It is at once that which stimulates the will to activity, and that which determines the direction and character of activities,..... To possess an ideal or purpose in life is therefore the necessary condition of a strong will and of a stable character. What the will requires for its strength and development is not training but inspiration."

This brings us to the question of religious education of the young. Truth is not discerned intellectually, it is discerned spiritually. "Infinite, eternal and unchanging truth cannot be apprehended in its fullness by the finite mind of man which can only grasp, at most, some small aspect of it limited by time and space, and by the state of development of that mind and the prevailing ideology of the period. As the mind develops and enlarges its scope, as ideologies change and new symbols are used to express that truth,

new aspects of it come to light, though the core of it may yet be the same. And so, truth has ever to be sought and renewed, reshaped and developed so that as understood by man, it might keep in line with the growth of his thoughts and the development of human life. Only then does it become a living truth for humanity, supplying the essential need for which it craves, and offering guidance in the present and for the future.”\* This need not discourage teaching of religious truth, “Religions have helped greatly in the development of humanity. They have laid down values and standards and have pointed out principles for the guidance of human life.”† Jawahar Lal Nehru recognizes the influence of religion ; only he wants dynamic minds to interpret the teachings of our ancient heritage.

A great American thinker Mr. Walter Lippman in his address to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, criticised the system of prevalent moral training of the youth. He said, “There is no common faith, no common body of principles, no common moral and intellectual discipline. Yet the graduates of these modern schools are expected to form a civilized community, They are expected to govern themselves. They are expected to arrive by discussion at

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\*The Discovery of India by Jawahar Lal Nehru.

†Ibid.

common purposes. When one realizes that they have no common culture, is it astounding that they have no common purpose ?”\*

Our composite culture has a quality that moulds our thoughts and aspirations for a civilization which is spiritual in its outlook and purpose. “We can never forget the ideals that have moved our race, the dreams of the Indian people through the ages, the wisdom of the ancients, the buoyant energy and love of life and nature of our forefathers, their spirit of curiosity and mental adventure, the daring of their thought, their splendid achievements in literature, art and culture, their love of truth and beauty and freedom, the basic values that they set up, their understanding of life’s mysterious ways, their toleration of other ways than theirs, their capacity to absorb other peoples and their cultural accomplishments, synthesize them and develop a varied and mixed culture ; nor can we forget the myriad experiences which have built up our ancient race and lie embedded in our sub-conscious mind.”† That should be our ideal of Indian citizenship. If we fail to attain, the fault lies with social and educational institutions. Mr. Walter Lippman’s criticism of American education is largely true about our own education. He

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\*Quoted by Sir Richard Livingstone in *Education for a World Adrift*.

†*The Discovery of India*—J.L. Nehru. Cit opp.

thinks that there is a vacuum in American educational system which ignores moral training of the young. Explaining the causes of this lack of moral stamina, he says, ".....we reject the religious and classical heritage, first, because to master it requires more effort than we are willing to compel ourselves to make, and, second because it creates issues that are too deep and too contentious to be faced with equanimity,.....for the more men have become separated from the spiritual heritage which binds them together, the more has education become egoist, careerist, specialist and asocial." Talking of the spiritual side of education, Sir R. Livingstone says, "The efficiency of a community will depend on its technical and vocational education, its cohesion and duration largely on its social or political education. But the quality of its civilization depends on something else. It depends on its standards, its sense of values, its idea of what is first rate and what is not, The vocational and the social aspects of education are essential, but the most fatal to omit is the spiritual aspect, fatal, because its absence may be long unperceived, and as with an insidious disease, a state may suffer from it and be unconscious of its condition till the complaint has gone too far to cure. And this spiritual element is precisely what we tend to ignore."

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\*Quoted by Sir Richard Livingstone in Education for a World Adrift.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### **PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS IN CHILDHOOD\***

*by*

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Hardly a day passes without the morning paper carrying a story of a road crash or a drowning tragedy or a burning incident in the kitchen. It is not without a sense of shock that these accounts are read and yet most people tend to regard accidents as something unavoidable in the crush of civilized living with its accent on speed and dependence on mechanical contrivances. "Accidents will happen," they say as if in deference to an inexorable Fate.

This outlook must, however, change. Today accidents have become a serious, and often leading, cause of death among children and teen-agers in several countries. And when we add injury and permanent disablement to death, the problem becomes colossal ; for each fatal accident there may be 100 to 200 non-fatal accidents, according to various estimates.

Recent trends have indicated that in some countries more pre-school children are killed

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\*By Courtesy of *The Statesman*, New Delhi.

by accidents than by all other causes combined. The World Health Organization recently published a report on the accident statistics available from 21 countries, including the U.S.A., the U.K., Japan and a number of European countries. The report showed that in 1953, in the 21 countries dealt with, 8,415 boys between 5 and 19 years of age died from infections and parasitic diseases, compared with 13,414 in the same age-group killed in accidents. That gives a ratio of 159 accidental deaths for every 100 caused by infections and parasitic diseases.

The higher proportion of accidental deaths is explained partly by the fact that successful preventive and control measures have tended to cut down disease-mortality figures. Now the point arises ; can accidents be prevented like the infectious diseases ? Can the strategy of prevention—based on the concept of disease as interaction of host, agent and environment—be applied to accidents ? Are there patterns in accidents which can be regarded as typical ?

The W.H.O. report analysing accident statistics from 21 countries brought to light a number of interesting points and suggested that preventive measures against accidents have as urgent an importance as those for general protection of health.

The report indicated that while traffic accidents accounted for a large percentage

of deaths, the combined mortality from other accidents in most cases was far higher, depending on factors of age and environment. For instance, up to 96.4% of infants who died accidentally in their first year of life were victims of suffocation (44.8% in their cradle and 22.1% from choking with food and other objects).

According to the report the most dangerous accidents, apart from road accidents, are falls which, in some countries, are responsible for up to two-thirds of accidental deaths: drowning, which may account for up to one-third; and poisoning; which in some places accounts for nearly one-fifth of all accident victims.

Children between one and four years are the main victims of poisoning and of burns; the age group 15-40 is most liable to machine accidents, and that between 15 and 25 to damage from firearms. Accidents involving fire mostly affect children between one and ten. Accidental falls, on the other hand, are more frequent causes of death in people of 60 and over.

In 1953 the report said, accidents of all kind in the 21 countries were responsible for between 2.4% and 7% of all deaths registered for both sexes and all ages. Accidents caused from 3% to 9% of all male deaths while for women the figure was between 1.4% and 4.8%.

Transport accidents caused between 0.4% and 3% of all deaths, while accidents from other causes were responsible for from 1.6% to 4.5%.

A comparison of these rates brought out interesting points for investigation. In some countries, deaths from transport accidents were higher than those caused by other accidents. For every 100 transport accident deaths among men, those from other causes were 98 in the U.S.A., 94 in Sweden and 87 in Australia. On the other hand, quite a different picture was presented by the corresponding rate for other accidents from some other countries: Australia 280, Japan 224, Scotland 158, Switzerland 125, England 117, and Denmark 106.

The data was too meagre to allow for conclusions to be drawn or to plan any preventive procedures but the report served to emphasize the need for a systematic study of accident facts. Obviously, before effective measures can be taken, the facts must be known. How many accidents? How serious are they? What is the material agent? In what circumstances do they occur and to whom do they happen? Without the answers to these questions it is hard to know whether it is more urgent, for example, to guard against children eating aspirin or to increase traffic controls near schools, to encourage the

manufacture of non-inflammable clothing or to teach children to swim.

These issues came up for discussion before the W.H.O. Advisory Group on the Prevention of Accidents in Children which met in Geneva in June last. The specific purpose of the group was to study the methods of compiling accident statistics as a basis for preventive measures and to consider some preventive measures and particularly how their usefulness can be assessed.

During the groups' discussions a number of interesting facts were brought to light in regard to childhood accident patterns in various countries and possible means of prevention.

Lack of playing space for children and general overcrowding in cities result in children playing in the streets, where many get hurt. Attention was drawn to this danger particularly as it exists in Germany, the Netherlands and Britain. Figures for the Netherlands show that the traffic-accident rate for school children is greater during the summer holiday months.

Investigations by the Paris police into some 1,500 accidents involving child pedestrians indicate that in most cases (77%) the children are "responsible", usually by stepping off the footpath without paying due attention

to traffic. An analysis of the figures by age (1-15 years) shows that the older the children, the greater is the proportion of drivers who are considered to be at fault.

Traffic statistics in Germany show that the following ages are particularly dangerous : 4 to 5 years, when children begin to acquire independence ; 12 to 13 years, when they start making more use of bicycles in traffic ; 18 plus, when motorcycles come into use. In England, the dangerous cycling age is somewhat lower (about 10 years) and in Sweden, some years ago, there was an outbreak of bicycle accidents among five-to-six-years-olds. That the bicycle presents a serious risk is shown by figures from the United States of America. where, in an average year, bicycle accidents will result in 500 killed and 44,000 injured, Education of parents and children may help to reduce such accidents. Legislation also offers possibilities here,

In Norway, regulations are about to come into force that prohibit protruding ornaments on the front of cars and metal shades on headlamps. In accidents where, without them, only confusion would have resulted, these accessories have in fact led to severe cuts and perforations.

The interesting suggestion was made that mechanical safety devices should be introduced which would make it impossible to drive cars

once the fluid for the hydraulic brakes had leaked out,

In Norway, a girl died while being brought to hospital after she had swallowed a few drops of liquid out of an almost empty tin. The tin bore the trade name of a new insecticide but gave no information on how the product was made up. Had the doctor who saw the child known that the insecticide contained phosphorous, he might have been able to save her life.

An attractive-looking mothball was swallowed by another girl in Norway. She felt very ill, but after a while seemed to recover and asked for something to drink. She was given a glass of milk (usually considered safe). The milk rapidly proved fatal, because the mothball contained a fat-soluble poison. Again the container gave no information on the composition of the product.

In Britain, many medicines—harmless and not so harmless—can be bought with no other inscription on the package than "Take as directed." Risk would be reduced if the wrapping of dangerous substances gave clear warning of danger; named the poison involved and possibly also mentioned the correct antidote to be given in case of accident.

In Sweden, some special types of poisoning stand out. On the one hand, there are dangerous medicines (barbiturates, for example); on the other, there is tobacco,

small children being poisoned by chewing or swallowing cigarettes or cigarette butts. Why should Swedish children be especially prone to this rather particular kind of accident? The answer is perhaps that in Swedish houses there is no obvious place for disposing of cigarette butts (such as an open fireplace), that low tables, about 50 cm high are fashionable, and that many mothers smoke cigarettes. The baby is naturally attracted to mother's things particularly when the mother is out of sight.

The open fire-place whatever role it may play in preventing tobacco poisoning, contributes to many burns in Britain. Girls are comparatively frequent victims because of their clothes, which catch fire more easily than the tighter fitting clothes of boys. In some homes in Britain, the gas ring tends to get placed on the floor—an obvious danger to children. Even in modern kitchens that have gas or electric cookers, the house-wife may put a saucepan or the kettle of hot water on the floor, because there is no other convenient place to put it. The old-fashioned kitchen range thus had its advantages. The handles of pots and pans that are left sticking out from the cooker are dangers that are well known, but apparently not well enough known. The attention being given in Britain to the risk of burns is witnessed by recent legislation which sets forth the safety

standards to be observed in heating appliances on sale to the public.

The group reached the conclusion that most accidents to children can be prevented. Reliable statistics on fatal and non-fatal accidents can be important tools in preventive work. Such statistics help to arouse interest, point the way to intelligent action, and provide a measure of results achieved. Reducing accidents in Europe by half, it was felt, would be a realistic goal. This would be comparable to the success already achieved in reducing infectious diseases in childhood, the group said in its final report, which advocated high priority in public health work for prevention of accidental injuries.

*N.B.* Children play in streets and get hurt for lack of play-fields. Even where parks are set apart for children, accidents happen because of unsuitable play equipment. Supervision of children's play is a safeguard against mis-haps.

School buildings with high staircases are a danger-point. Children cannot negotiate these easily and fall down.

Hawkers with exposed edibles catering to school children spread not only infectious diseases but create problems of class discipline. Proper health education should help to prevent physical and "mental" accidents.















