REVISED EDITION

Consider the Children

HOW THEY GROW

PARENTS' MAGAZINE says *(of the first edition)*:

"*Consider the Children* is an amazing combination of common sense, insight and experience — which is tantamount to saying it has everything. . . . This is an especially good book for mothers. . . ."

By ELIZABETH M. MANWELL
AND SOPHIA L. FAHS

CONSIDER THE CHILDREN
— How They Grow

By Elizabeth M. Manwell and
Sophia L. Fahs

Revised edition

Research and experimentation in the field of child development during the last decade have provided important new insights in the psychology of growth. These new insights have brought about significant changes in the procedures of dealing with young children. That is the reason for a revision of this book, which has become a standard work in the ten years since the appearance of the first edition. The present study is addressed to everyone to whom the development of "the whole child" is important.

Primarily this volume is concerned with the sound development, emotionally and psychologically, of the child up to five years of age. The authors are particularly interested in the study of how children actually do grow most wholesomely in their religious development — a field of inquiry which the great universities and foundations have practically ignored in their experimental studies. Indeed, most general books on child development have also ignored the religious phase of the child's growth — or have given only a few traditional remarks to it.

That is a lack which this work seeks to supply. As the authors say in their Foreword to the Second Edition: "Whatever else this book may do, the authors hope that it may lead to a better understanding between professional leaders in general education and psychology, and professional leaders in our churches and synagogues. We send this book forth with the conviction that the beginnings of religious experience lie deeply imbedded in the child's everyday emotional and active living, and that the nature of these experiences should be dis-

(*Continued on back flap*)

CONSIDER THE CHILDREN

How They Grow

Consider the Children

HOW THEY GROW

Revised Edition

By

ELIZABETH M. MANWELL

and

SOPHIA L. FAHS

with an Introduction by Abigail A. Eliot

THE BEACON PRESS · BOSTON

First Edition, Copyright 1940

THE BEACON PRESS

Revised Edition, Copyright 1951

THE BEACON PRESS

Second printing, August, 1953

Printed in U. S. A.

Contents

Introduction
(*to the first edition*)

BECAUSE IT IS WRITTEN by Elizabeth Moore Manwell, a mother of young children who is also a specialist in nursery school education, and by Sophia Lyon Fahs, an outstanding leader in religious education, this book will attract the attention of both nursery school and church school teachers, as well as of parents of young children.

In practical fashion appropriate to a church nursery group the book presents the picture of the developing child in the nursery school years and his education according to approved nursery school standards. It tells how to organize and plan a church nursery group according to these standards. But more than this it gives the authors' philosophy of the development of the spiritual child and suggests how this may be nurtured at home or in the church school.

My own belief is that the spiritual child is developing twenty-four hours a day, three hundred and sixty-five days in the year. With this point of view the authors of this volume agree. What, then, can or should the Sunday morning group session do to help in this process? Has it a special part to play in these earliest years? I believe it has, and with this, too, the authors of this book agree.

Between them Mrs. Manwell and Mrs. Fahs have a background whose appropriateness for the task could not be excelled: intimate, extended, firsthand contact with young children individually, at home, and in groups, close acquaintance with what science has so far contributed toward our knowledge of child development in the early years, thorough understand-

ing of all that has been done in religious education, wide experience in thinking and feeling creatively in the field, deep spiritual insight.

The book challenges us, as well as informs. To parents who vaguely, or more definitely, feel that religious education should begin in the early years it will bring a challenge. To specialists in nursery education who have not considered the value of such education in the church school it will suggest new opportunities. To those of us who have worked with the youngest children in a church school it will come as a bright light upon the path we are trying to tread. We shall not always agree with the authors' statements; we may wish to go farther or less far in some particulars; but questions it will rouse in us — questions which each would covet the opportunity to discuss (as I have) with the authors, to meet their challenge with further challenge, to find (as I have) how deep is their sincerity, their humility, their faith.

ABIGAIL A. ELIOT

January, 1940

Foreword

(*to the revised edition*)

JUST TEN YEARS AGO the first edition of this book appeared. During the time since then the authors have felt the impact of research and experimentation done in the field of child development. As a result of the new insights gained we have been changing in certain important ways our procedures in dealing with young children. Also, with the added years of experience, we have been rebuilding our general philosophy. Since this book is still being depended on by large numbers of parents and nursery and kindergarten teachers, however, we have been persuaded to rewrite those chapters and sections where our changed points of view really should make a difference.

Furthermore, the first edition was written primarily for teachers and parents of preschool children who are related to our churches. In spite of this religious slant in the first edition, we have been delighted to find that the book has been so widely used by leaders working in so-called "secular" institutions, and by parents of differing faiths, as well as by many who have no religious affiliations at all. We have, therefore, written this revision with this larger constituency in mind. Indeed, we have addressed ourselves to all those to whom the development of "the whole child" is important.

The changes we have made, however, have not led us to delete from the book the consideration of those problems usually thought of as being peculiarly "religious problems," such as questions regarding God, prayer, death, and religious ceremonies. In fact, the chapters dealing with these subjects have been enriched, and we have added a special chapter in which

the basic nature of religious experiences in the life of young children is examined, as was not done so fully in the first edition.

To us the mental and emotional health of young children and their spiritual or religious health are interdependent: each must be examined in the light of the other. This goal we see as primary, and we regard the imparting of the teachings of any sectarian group as secondary. In fact, to our minds such sectarian teaching is better postponed in the education of young children until they are beyond the ages with which this book is concerned — namely, children of five and under. The first five years of life are the golden years for making sure that children *experience* those basic feelings that are at the root of any spiritual living.

This enlarged audience has led us to omit entirely the last two chapters of the former edition, in which practical hints were given to parents and teachers working in our church schools. These practical suggestions, adequately and more fully expressed, are now to be found in a book entitled *Martin and Judy for Parents and Teachers,* by Josephine T. Gould. This is a practical guide for use with the Martin and Judy stories.

As a result, then, of these ten years of growing and changing, the authors have rewritten about one-third of the book. Certain portions present ideas different from those presented in the first edition. Other portions present our thoughts more fully than they were set forth before; while still other portions have been omitted entirely. No doubt more revisions will be needed as the years continue to go by. The next time, however, we hope that someone else will write an entirely new book on this general subject, and that by then the child's religious growth will have been more carefully studied than it has been to date, as an integral and living part of his total personality structure.

After ten years of significant advance in the study of child

development it must still be said that experimental studies of how young children actually grow or might most wholesomely grow religiously have been almost entirely ignored. It is as if the great universities and foundations, and the leaders in education and psychology regarded religion as something unchangeable which needs no special re-examination. Religion seems to be thought of as something that may or may not be added to a child's experiences according to a parent's preference: something to be taken cognizance of now and then, but which really is inconsequential in its bearing on the child's personality. One is given the impression that many educators regard religion as a series of rituals such as the saying of prayers, the singing of hymns, or participation in religious ceremonials, which they think have no important meaning to either the child or the adult population. It would seem that religion is lightly thought of as something a child will have to discard anyway when he is grown, so the less meaning it has the better. In most general books on child development the religious part of living is ignored or passed by with a few traditional remarks, and in most of the books written specifically for religious workers the religious teachings presented remain quite untouched by modern psychology.

Whatever else this book may do, the authors hope that it may lead to a better understanding between professional leaders in general education and psychology, and professional leaders in our churches and synagogues. We send this book forth with the conviction that the beginnings of religious experience lie deeply imbedded in the child's everyday emotional and active living, and that the nature of these experiences should be discovered and analyzed. Some beginnings retard and even dwarf mental and emotional development. Other beginnings nourish growth. Whichever they do they are of the deepest importance.

This book belongs with a set of four juvenile volumes,

published by the Beacon Press, which embody in concrete form for children the philosophy of spiritual growth which this book explains in theory to adults. These other books are:

Martin and Judy In Their Two Little Houses, Vol. I, by Verna Hills.

Martin and Judy In Sunshine and Rain, Vol. II, by Verna Hills and Sophia L. Fahs.

Martin and Judy Playing and Learning, Vol. III, by Verna Hills.

Martin and Judy Songs, compiled by Edith Lovell Thomas.

A fifth volume is the practical guide especially prepared for church school teachers and parents, entitled *Martin and Judy for Parents and Teachers,* by Josephine T. Gould.

Although *Consider the Children* can be understood quite apart from any of these other volumes, yet its meaning is made clearer in the light of these books for children in which the philosophy is implemented. In these juvenile volumes are stories and songs based upon some of the most universal of all childhood experiences which, we believe, have in them the germinal elements of spiritual living: the experiences that awaken religious sensitivities and social appreciations. We hope, therefore, that parents reading this book will also read to their young children these stories of Martin and Judy.

Many people have encouraged and helped us in the writing of this book, and again in revising it. We wish to express our gratitude to all of them. A few we feel we should specifically name:

The Rev. W. W. W. Argow of the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore; the Rev. Gene Bartlett of the First Baptist Church, Evanston, Illinois; Dr. Abigail A. Eliot, Director, Nursery Training School of Boston; Miss Rosamond Praeger, Director of Early Childhood and Parent Education of the Syracuse Public Schools; Mrs. Marion E. Faegre, Consultant in Parent Education of the Children's Bureau, Federal Security

Agency, Washington, D.C.; Mrs. L. P. Gould, Director of the Church School of the May Memorial Unitarian Church, Syracuse; Mrs. Barbara P. Griggs, Acting Chairman, Department of Family Life and Child Development, College of Home Economics, Syracuse University; and Dr. Reginald D. Manwell, Professor of Zoölogy, Syracuse University, for reading all or parts of the manuscript.

We are especially indebted to Miss Ruth Perry, Director of the Nursery and Kindergarten Department of Riverside Church, New York City, for sharing with us her invaluable experiences with children as we were struggling for the philosophy explained in Chapter XV.

We also wish to thank Dr. Lois Fahs Timmins for writing Chapter I for us, since she has been able to speak not only from the point of view of an educator, but also as a mother who is practicing her theories with her two young children.

Unceasingly, through the years, we have been undergirded, criticized, and encouraged by the members of the Curriculum Committee of the American Unitarian Association, and by the Editor in Chief of the Beacon Series in Religious Education, the Rev. Ernest W. Kuebler.

ELIZABETH M. MANWELL
SOPHIA L. FAHS

March, 1951

CONSIDER THE CHILDREN

How They Grow

1

Spiritual Beginnings in Infant Emotions

> The love that is kindled at home expands itself over the race of man.
>
> — ASOKA, EMPEROR OF INDIA
> 274-236 B.C.

A CHILD'S SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT is usually thought to begin when he first sets foot within the doors of an organized church school or synagogue, or when he is first taught to say a prayer. Actually, the foundations of the child's spiritual health are laid even before he is born. They are to be found, first of all, in the emotional maturity of the parents, in the soundness of their own personal and social relationships, and in their acceptance of the experience of childbearing and child care without fear or resentment and with enthusiasm and devotion.

Young parents who wish their children to have the best opportunities for physical, mental, and spiritual development will begin before marriage to work to solve their own emotional problems, to improve their own education regarding child development, and to clarify their own points of view on how character grows. In primitive societies, where social patterns remain unchanged through many generations, it is quite safe for parents to deal with their children in the same

---

NOTE: This chapter is the contribution of Dr. Lois Fahs Timmins.

ways their parents did before them. But in a society that is as complex and changing as our own, where new ways of child nurture are being experimented with, tested, and reported on in books available to all literate parents, it would seem dangerous not to prepare oneself to join intelligently in these changes — as dangerous as to drive an automobile with one's children in it without first learning the techniques of safety.

What, then, is it, so importantly different from the ways of our parents and grandparents, that is now being advocated by students of children's behavior? And what are the reasons for these changes in attitudes and practices?

The newer philosophy is called the "developmental theory," since its tenets are based primarily upon the knowledge of child development which experimental psychology has yielded. Let us attempt to see how the application of this developmental point of view is affecting the attitudes and practices of parents toward their babies, even during the earliest months of life. Let us also examine the workings of this newer philosophy alongside the old "disciplinary theory," or the philosophy of "habit training," for it is only when one sees the new alongside the old that the extent of the changes involved can be understood clearly.

To believers in the developmental theory, the primary aim of parenthood is to give each child a warm feeling of security, and to build up in him a sense of well-being, happiness, and accomplishment.

Most parents through the centuries have undoubtedly loved their children. Yet it can hardly be said that to give emotional security has been their primary aim. Under the disciplinary theory, parents have been taught that too much love leads to "spoiling," that children should, above all else, be led along certain "right" paths, that good habits should be fostered early, and that bad habits should be inhibited at their first appearance. It has been said that when the parent's will

and the child's will conflict the child should be made to follow the parent's will with prompt obedience, whatever the cost in emotional wear and tear upon either adult or child. With the developmental approach, however, much of this age-long fear of spoiling children by loving them is slowly disappearing, and parents are being freed to express their enjoyment in their children, and the love they naturally feel toward them.

Dr. Charles Aldrich, a pioneer in pediatrics, summed up his experiences with "spoiled" children when he wrote: "I have never seen one [spoiled child] who was spoiled because his parents consistently planned his life to meet his basic needs. In my experience most spoiled children are those who, as babies, have been denied essential gratifications in a mistaken attempt to fit them into a rigid regime. Warmth, cuddling, freedom of action, and pleasant associations with food and sleep have been pushed out of the way to make room for a technique. The lack of these things is so keenly felt by the time babyhood is past that such children have learned their own efficient techniques of whining and tantrums as a means of getting their desires. In this way is fostered the belligerent, fussy, unpleasant personality of the typical "spoiled" child, who insists on undue attention because he has missed this fundamental experience. A satisfied baby does not need to develop these methods of wresting his efforts from an unresponsive world."[1]

Building emotional security begins when the mother first takes the newborn infant into her arms and lets him know that he is wanted and loved. Basic is the belief that the infant's cry is not a random wail or a symptom of the baby's selfishness, but an expression of pressing physical need which should be satisfied. The mother's problem then becomes one of learning to understand the meaning of her infant's cry, and of meeting his needs as they arise, rather than following a

---

[1] Numbers refer to Acknowledgments and References at the end of the book.

pattern of a certain number of regular feedings per day, with naps and diaper changes at set hours. This flexible point of view is sometimes known as the "self-demand theory," and with it the mother can recognize the infant's new abilities as they appear, and can change her own way of doing things so that she helps her child to grow.

In this conviction regarding the importance of emotional security the mother has the support of many scientific studies. Case records from quite a few child guidance clinics have shown the tragic results in the warping of personalities that have come about when children have felt deprived of the security of mother-love. Pediatricians also have joined with the psychologists in studying what happens, even during the first few months of life, to babies who are not given enough mother-love.

Dr. Margaret Ribble reports a study made of a number of infants who had to be kept in the hospital beyond the usual week or ten days after birth, and who consequently received no affectionate mothering. Although the most meticulous physical care was given to these babies, and although none of them had any organic disease, they quickly developed unhealthy symptoms. One such infant failed to gain in weight, was generally inactive, had a cold and flabby skin, wrinkled and wasted arms and legs, enlargement of the head in proportion to the body, a round and widely flaring chest, and an enlarged liver. These symptoms later disappeared when consistent motherly care was given, but the emotional life of this infant had already been deeply and perhaps permanently damaged.[2]

In seeking the satisfaction of his basic physical needs the infant turns to his mother, who represents to him the only expression of the outside world that he knows. He finds a friendly world if his needs are promptly satisfied. In addition to prompt satisfaction of basic physical needs, mothering expresses itself in many other ways — by giving the baby fre-

quent changes of body position, holding the baby in the arms and providing close physical contact. Further, it includes the whole gamut of small acts which show consistent love of the mother for the child: the physical contacts of feeding and bathing, fondling, caressing, rocking, singing, and speaking.[3]

Some modern hospitals are already acting upon such findings as Dr. Ribble's. Babies who are believed to be suffering from lack of sufficient mothering are specially cared for. The letters T.L.C. are put on the baby's chart, meaning that the nurses in charge must give ten to fifteen minutes of "tender, loving care" to the baby after each feeding.

As the newborn infant grows to toddler, to two-year-old, and then to nursery school age, consistent love from parents continues as the single and most important factor in the child's emotional growth. By loving her baby consistently throughout his period of helpless infancy, the mother teaches her baby to love, and creates the emotional beginnings needed in developing the capacity to love. Affection and social approval from others in the family, and from those in the child's nearby social world, later contribute their part to emotional security and personality development. This emotional security is, then, the first fundamental necessary to make possible spiritual growth.

The second fundamental, from the point of view of modern psychology, is an understanding of the child's natural schedule of development in which change is the characteristic; and the direction of change is more significant than specific achievements or behavior at any level. The child is a dynamic human being, who changes day by day, and while he moves almost inexorably toward adult behavior, he seems to insist on doing it in his own way and at his own speed. Any attempts by parents to prod, threaten, or punish the child in an attempt to urge him to grow up at a speed other than his own, seem to bring few positive results, and often stimulate rebellion which inhibits progress.

This point of view implies a denial of the common conception of habit training. Things done in childhood do not become habits unless the needs these activities satisfy persist into adulthood. On the contrary, the child of ten who is indecisive is the one who was not given sufficient opportunity to make up his mind between the ages of one and three, when the first discernment of alternatives is learned. The adult who always has to have his own way may be one who was prohibited from having his own way before he was five years old, and so was unable to move on to a more mature level of emotional response.

A child's behavior patterns at any particular age are regarded as natural parts of his exploration into an expanding material and social world. It is expected that these patterns will change as the child's abilities and needs change. The parent attempts to understand what the child is trying to accomplish, and to appreciate how natural and valuable his intentions are. Whatever particularly annoying or inconvenient activities he may engage in during one stage of his development, the mother can relax, or at least is not usually alarmed, because of her assurance that in a brief time the child's behavior patterns will be different. The new behavior may not be any easier to accept, but the type of annoyance or inconvenience, at least, will have changed.

From a developmental point of view, for example, crying is not a habit to be broken by teaching the infant he will not get what he wants by crying, but rather an expression of need which should bring the mother promptly, if possible, to the baby's side to discover his difficulty. Because a twenty-two-month-old girl eats salad with her fingers, throws bread at people, and stuffs a whole piece of chocolate cake into her mouth at one time, it does not mean that she will do the same thing when she is eating in a college dormitory at twenty. Night feedings, thumb suckings, and drinking from a bottle are expressions of needs which will disappear. Using the toilet

will come as a natural result of watching others when the adequate physical development provides the necessary inner control. Table manners, politeness, honesty, and neatness come with time, and with being surrounded by others who themselves exhibit these traits, and who respond appreciatively to the child's attempts to do likewise.

Actually, what we have meant by "habit training" is forcing a child, by one educational method or another, to accept and practice adult standards of behavior, or at least adult concepts of how a child of a given age should behave. Frequently these arbitrary standards have been quite out of keeping with our present knowledge of average child development, and more often than not, have been out of keeping with the development of any particular child.

A good example of this is the adult attempt to "train" a child to be generous. We frequently see parents attempting to get a one-year-old to share his toys with another child. According to our present knowledge of child development, a one-year-old has no concept of possession. He will play with one of his toys, and will scream madly if someone tries to take it away from him. However, in a few minutes he will be playing with a playmate's toy, and will exhibit the same fervor in retaining it if someone tries to take it away. Even at the age of two the concept of possession is still very vague. A two-year-old will say "Jimmy's car," "Jimmy's bus," "Jimmy's tree," without much discrimination between that which belongs to him and that which belongs to someone else. Frequently he will claim possession when he only wishes that it were his.

How is it possible to give away, or to share something which you are not aware of owning? Our ideas of generosity and many other "character traits" must be rethought in terms of our knowledge of child development.

Moralistic concepts of child behavior affect parental attitudes, even towards babies. How often we hear it said, "What a good baby!" By this the adult speaking usually means that

the baby is not asking for food at an unusual hour, or howling for a clean diaper in the middle of the monthly meeting of the Ladies' Aid. As someone has wisely remarked: "When a child first learns to walk we all stand around and loudly praise his accomplishment, but when he first learns to make up his own mind we say 'Bad boy!' " It is still all too easy to think in terms of "good children" and "bad children."

With the developmental philosophy we eliminate, therefore, from our minds this placing of adult moral judgment upon the behavior of babies and children, and in its place we learn to accept their behavior as it is at any particular age, with the understanding that the standards to be used should be based on the particular child's mental, physical, and emotional development.

A mother who follows the self-demand theory of feeding does not think of her baby in terms of "good" or "bad." When the baby cries he is not "bad" but hungry, or tired, or constipated, or lonesome, or sick. When he is quiet he is not "good," but full, rested, relaxed, and emotionally and physically secure.

When a toddler empties all the bureau drawers it is an expression of need for exploration. When he dumps water all over the bathroom floor it is an expression of need for manipulation. When he hits baby sister it is aggressive behavior expressing jealousy. For doing any of these things the child should not be punished or called "bad," nor should he be praised or called "good" because he refrains from doing them. The solution to these problems lies not in punishment or praise for behavior exhibited, but in meeting the needs expressed by the behavior.

A third fundamental for spiritual growth is supplied when parents show a democratic appreciation of the importance of each individual child. With this philosophy even the newborn infant is a person with certain rights and privileges, who in his own way can express his own needs and provide his share of satisfaction and happiness to others in the family.

Each baby is recognized as a human being, different from all others. The mother accepts the fact that the baby has his own ways of eating, sleeping, and eliminating which must be discovered and accepted. Baby care becomes a process of sensitivity, discernment, and co-operation between mother and child. In a home where this democratic philosophy prevails children have their rightful place as equal members of the family. What a baby wants is usually what is good for him to have, and unless there is some strong reason to the contrary, the parent is wise who yields to his spontaneous demands. The small child is not expected to conform to the patterned regularities of adult life in the home. His own interests at the moment, and his understanding of time concepts are taken into account when moving him from play to meals, bath, or bed, and he is given time to adjust to the new activity at his own speed. Obedience as a virtue in itself is discarded.

Situations which place the child in direct conflict with the parents are avoided when possible. Often the request can be phrased in a positive manner. Instead of saying "no," alternatives may be proposed. Interests may be shifted to new activities. Foreseeing situations often allows for an easy, relaxed approach which eliminates conflict. In the rare instances when, for safety's sake, obedience is necessary, it should be asked in such a way that neither parent or child needs to "lose face" in the process of remaining safe.

A home should not be one for adults only, but a home where the planning and organization of schedules and possessions are done with consideration of the children as co-members of the family. Tragedies to material possession — broken toys, glasses, or dishes, marred furniture, torn books, soiled clothes — are all unimportant in relation to what happens to the child and to the family through their experiences together. Breakable objects, work materials, and all other articles which must not be touched by the children should be placed, if possible, out of their reach. Writing on walls

can be avoided by providing large areas of brown paper tacked to the walls at working levels for the child. If the child is allowed to go outside after a heavy rain he is not to be blamed if he walks in all the puddles, and returns with his clothes covered with mud. Clothes, like all other material possessions, were created for use, and their purpose and function must be kept in mind. We are frequently very inconsistent about our possessions and their value. Children are sometimes punished for breaking a dish which could be replaced for little more than the cost of an ice cream cone. A home should be a living space for people, not a museum for things.

These, then, are ways of thinking and acting on the part of parents that provide the fertile soil in which children grow in body and spirit: providing emotional security for the child and the accompanying sense of accomplishment and individual importance; a willingness to let the child grow at his own speed and to restrain the desire to impose arbitrary adult standards upon him; and, finally, a democratic appreciation of the value of the individual from the day of his birth as a member of the family "with all the rights and privileges pertaining thereto."

Once a study has been made of this developmental point of view, certainly including home discussion and perhaps outside group discussion, and its basic tenets have been understood and accepted, the problem remains of applying the theory in the day-by-day home relationships with one's own children. This is by no means the easiest part of the whole experience.

It has been said that whatever point of view the parents choose to accept, the most important element of that point of view is its consistency. Children who are thoroughly rejected sometimes, and warmly loved at other times, or who are punished frequently without logic or justice, have a good start towards becoming neurotic adults. Yet it would probably be difficult to find any child who lived in a completely con-

sistent parental environment. Many factors contribute to our failure to work through a day-by-day consistency with our children.

Some parents still have not completely resolved their intellectual point of view into a unity. Some mothers, for instance, feel like giving their babies more attention than they give, but refrain because of their outdated psychological concepts or because their physician advises them otherwise. They say, "It hurts me to hear him crying like that, but I don't want him to get spoiled." Other parents unconsciously fall back upon concepts of strictness and discipline when they say, "I spank my child only as a last resort, or when it is a question of danger" — as if the theory worked better when the situation was more dangerous, or when used as a last escape instead of a first approach. Doubts will arise when a choice has to be made between the urge to begin "habit training" and the new idea of responding sympathetically to the child's expression of his immediate needs and desires.

In addition, there are our own problems to surmount. We are frequently too tired or too busy to deal with a child patiently. Perhaps our own emotional attachment to a certain object makes us respond violently when it is broken, whereas we would accept quite calmly the breaking of a similar object for which we had no such liking.

Often our own behavior is an attempt to fulfill our own emotional needs, or to compensate for what we feel to be the deficiencies in our own childhood experiences. The husband takes out on his children the resentment he feels against his wife, or the wife demands an undue dependency from her children because her husband does not give her the affection she requires. Parents who have always faced poverty try to provide their children with everything, or parents who have been given everything become unduly strict with their children, believing they should learn to make their own way in the world.

Frequently, husband and wife disagree on educational policy, so that in their combined behavior they fail to achieve consistency. Sometimes it becomes the mother's function to provide love and the father's function to do the disciplining, or vice versa. A child was once asked what happened in his home when he was "bad," and he recited the familiar sequence of events as follows: "First I do something bad. Then Mommy tells me Daddy will spank me when he gets home. Then Daddy comes home and he spanks me. Then I go to my room and cry. Then Mommy hears me crying and comes into the room and asks me 'What's the matter?' " This is an example of a home where the functions of love and discipline are clearly divided between the father and the mother, and where there could be no consistency except in the endless repetition of this process.

Furthermore, the results of research in child development and modern educational thought have penetrated but shallowly into our cultural behavior. The pressures of long-accepted customs and ideologies are still strong. Parents attempting to follow the newer methods of education will have to face a constant stream of comments from well-meaning relatives, neighbors, and friends, such as: "What! You pick up your baby every time he cries? You'll certainly spoil him!" "A child of his age still drinking out of a bottle? Why, it's the silliest thing I ever heard!" "Wearing diapers at two? He ought to be ashamed." Parents will have to develop a conviction strong enough to withstand considerable social pressure and criticism, and be able and willing to uphold their point of view.

Despite the difficulties in achieving unity in a developmental point of view, and despite the problems involved in putting it into consistent practice day by day with our children, the fine art of child care is worth struggling to learn. Upon our success, in practicing the wisest procedures our generation knows, depends the physical and emotional health of our

children, and upon their emotional health depend their future possibilities for spiritual and religious growth.

When later religious instruction is given, when the child's horizons broaden, and he learns of the larger reaches of his world, when he hears adults talk of a God who in some way is over all and in all, what he will absorb out of what he hears will depend on the emotional shading in the picture of his world that he has already made and accepted. If the child feels that he is fighting against odds in combating too severe parental authority, he may accept belief in a stern and arbitrary God, or he may rebel against all religious beliefs as a handicap. If he feels small and inadequate and ashamed of himself, he may accept as reasonable a kind of God who will confirm his pattern of deep guilt feelings. If he is, however, happy and outgoing and courageous, he may be able to think through the religious confusions he discovers in his community, and to work out a religious philosophy of life that will further establish his courage, and brighten his growing love for others. In a very real sense the beginnings of religion are to be found in the emotional flavor of a baby's first environment, and in the warmth and happiness of his early childhood experiences.

Whatever may be our own professions of faith, if we seek the fullness of life for the whole child we stand together on common ground regarding the fundamentals. We should, therefore, feel sufficiently secure in our aims to profit by an exposure of our differences, and to work out together the difficult changes we need to make in the art of parenthood.

2

Developmental Tasks During the Nursery Years

I am persuaded that a man without religion falls short of the proper human ideal. Religion, as I use the term, is a spiritual flowering and the man who has it not is like a plant that never blooms.

— JOHN BURROUGHS

WE MAY BE NOW AGREED that a child's emotional hungers take precedence over all his other needs; and the greatest of all these is hunger for consistent and understanding love. Parents who wish to provide this kind of affection will try to understand and accept the natural schedules the child chooses for his growing, and they will unfailingly respect him as a person in his own right. These three emotional needs have sometimes been spoken of as the three "A's": affection, acceptance, achievement.

Although these emotional needs are especially urgent during babyhood and early childhood, some satisfaction of the basic wants seems to be necessary for all individuals throughout all of life. The difference between young and old is not a difference between basic emotional needs, but rather a difference in the kinds of task we set for ourselves in order to satisfy these needs. Some degree of initiative — some dynamic, inner urge — is required of each individual if these fundamental

wants are to be met. Even in the baby's first moments, there appears this dynamic quality. Perhaps unconsciously, but nevertheless with apparent directness, the newborn child sets for himself the tasks needed to meet his needs. With the successful accomplishment of one of these developmental tasks, he moves on to another, and so he grows in physical prowess and in mental and spiritual power.

Dr. Havighurst has defined a developmental task as one that "arises at or about a certain period in the life of the individual, successful accomplishment of which leads to his happiness and success in later tasks, while failure leads to unhappiness in the individual, disapproval by society, and difficulty with later tasks. . . . When the body is ripe, and when society requires, and the self is ready to achieve a certain task, the teachable moment has come."[1] These tasks differ as the individual advances in years, and they range all the way from learning to clasp a bottle in early infancy, to learning to keep a job in early adulthood, accepting responsibilities for parenthood, and learning to face pain, loneliness and the frustrations of limited strength in old age. During the early years, the child's own initiative in setting these developmental tasks outweighs the influence of society in determining their character. It is because of the modern psychologist's deep respect for the wisdom in nature's own schedules for growth, that such great care has been taken to study the spontaneous activities of babies and young children. It has become a basic assumption in all recent studies of childhood that by understanding the meaning of the spontaneous tasks young children set for themselves, the educator or parent discovers his soundest guidance in dealing with the child.

These developmental tasks are many and varied, but they seem to have at least six important aims. These may be outlined as follows:

1. To learn ways of physical locomotion and agility in bodily movements generally.

2. To achieve skill in the use of the hands, in particular as a tool for learning the nature of the world, for manipulating and creating things.
3. To learn to talk.
4. To establish friendly relations with other children.
5. To hold the affection and support of adults without surrendering the felt need for independence.
6. To work out some understanding of the nature of the world and to find some set of values to live by.

The young child does not undertake these tasks in the order named. In fact he works at all of them simultaneously, although with different emphases at different stages of his maturation. It is comparatively easy for parents to observe a child's advancing steps toward bodily agility and control. They expect the child to advance from turning the body in the crib, to raising his back, to sitting up, to standing, to crawling, to walking, to running, and to skipping.

This urge to use his limbs the child makes plain at birth, as anyone will testify who has tried to put dry clothes on a baby whose small feet are pumping like the arms of a windmill in a gale. Today's parents are encouraged to create the conditions that will make it possible for the baby to do these gymnastic exercises he so apparently wants to do. Light and loose clothing, space enough for turning and kicking, and later for creeping and running are recommended. Toddlers are given pedal toys, low steps for climbing, boxes and bridging planks to jump from and free spaces to run in.

Safety, of course, must be provided for, but within the necessary limits most parents plan for a child's physical freedom to the extent that seems possible. Small apartments crowded with adults' belongings, and incessant auto traffic on the streets make many restraints necessary. Nevertheless, most parents recognize their children's need for these activities and wish to make them possible.

There are, however, times when the playpen is necessary —

when noise and racket are forbidden by other adults, or mother and father have not the patience to accept their own frustrations. It is then that it becomes easy to believe that the quiet child is the good child. It is in facing such dilemmas that parents need to be assured of the grounds of their point of view so that they may find a solution of their problem that will result in as little thwarting of the child's basic need for activities as is possible.

The case of Larry is to the point. Up until his fourteenth month, Larry had been a sunny child. Then, as it were, all at once he began to be cross and fretful. His parents tried to explain the cause by coming teeth; but could find no tangible signs of physical disturbance, no fever. One Sunday afternoon his parents took him for a drive, primarily to give his mother a respite. They visited a recently abandoned airport and went into an empty hangar. Larry, who had just learned to walk a few steps alone, stood for a moment looking at the vast space around him. Drawing a deep breath of excitement, he clutched his father's finger and began to walk. This he kept up for nearly an hour. His face took on a contented eager look. On the way home he chuckled and played.

When he reached home he grabbed his mother's hand and walked her around and around the living room. At bedtime his parents tucked in a tired but contented child. The next day, with patience born of understanding, the mother cleared several intervals of time in her day so that she could give Larry the support he needed in his walking. With pride and eagerness he walked around and around every room. From then on his irritability began to disappear. He was no longer a baby, helplessly frustrated by his inability to get about, but a person of achievement, with this basic urge satisfied.

It is through such experiences as these that character develops. If we agree with Dr. Albert Schweitzer[2] that reverence for life is at the heart of religion, then those who honor and accept these basic developmental tasks children set for them-

selves and who help children to achieve success are the true spiritual leaders. Religious education is far more than the teaching of graces to say, bedtime prayers to repeat, or the learning from Bible stories. It concerns itself with all the processes of a child's growth, and must provide at each age level the opportunities to achieve those developmental tasks that the child feels the need of accomplishing.

The child's urge to develop skill in the use of his hands as a tool of manipulation and discovery is another developmental task that begins early and continues long. The moving pictures taken under Dr. Gesell's supervision at the Yale clinic give striking evidence that in learning to grasp and use his hands the child is impelled by a life force similar to that which leads him to walk. Upon this developmental task the baby starts at once after birth. He waves his arms as well as his legs to express his emotions. He clenches and unclenches his fists, grasps and clings to things which touch his hands. Then comes the epochal day when he perceives his own hand for the first time and discovers that he can make it move as he watches it, thus entering into a new high of self-awareness. Swiftly follow the days when he shakes his rattle at will, reaches for or rejects his bottle of milk or fruit juice, and finally picks up a toy with thumb and forefinger.

With his hands the child learns to feed himself, dress himself, defend himself, express his hostilities and return his parents' petting.

With his hands he learns to feel and to distinguish between hard and soft, hot and cold, light and heavy, wet and dry, smooth and rough, near and far, high and low, small and large, pleasant and painful.

With his hands he learns to grasp, and to release, to push and to pull, to build and to tear down, to accept and to reject.

With his hands he experiments in block building, in painting, modeling, sand play and hammering. As he nears the school years he learns to print and to write, and from then on

he can move to the many marvelous skills which the human young alone can learn.

Again it is through such experiences as these that character develops. Three-year-old Becky illustrates the point.

Becky came daily to the nursery with her thumb in her mouth. Having asthma, she was often choked up and uncomfortable. Because she could not play outdoors in inclement weather, and because she often had to have the doctor come when the spasms were worst, Becky was naturally timid and often worried. In the playroom she would sit listlessly, thumb in mouth, waiting for a teacher to read to her. From time to time, a staff member gently suggested playing with some of the materials the other children were using, or she would draw other children near Becky at the table where the clay lay. Now and then Becky would touch a piece of clay or she would manipulate it a little. Gradually but slowly, she showed more interest, until one day near Easter, she made a nest, six eggs and a mother hen brooding on them. Becky's eyes shone. Both hands were muddy with clay up to her wrists. Her voice lost its weariness. The teacher encouraged her to show her work to the other children, and to her mother at noontime. During the weeks that followed, Becky's thumb was less and less a means of consolation. Instead her hands became creative tools for work with clay, with crayons, with paints, with wood, until she became a self-confident and socially accepted person whose thoughts were freed to take interest in the world around. Through these experiences Becky grew not merely in manual dexterity, but in her spiritual stature, in her belief in her own worth, and in her desire to be friendly toward others.

Another important developmental task which young children undertake is to talk. How difficult this undertaking must be for a child, no adult can surmise. That the average youngster of three is able to acquire a vocabulary of about a thousand words must be attributed in no small degree to the encouragement parents give their children in learning the art of speech.[3]

The modern parent who feels free to enjoy her child begins encouraging speech even with the baby just home from the hospital. She does not bathe the baby silently, but laughs with him, makes sounds for him to hear, sings to him. We have seen a baby as young as six weeks repeating in delight the very vowel sounds the mother has made. More than this, parents today are encouraged not only to talk with their children, but to talk slowly and distinctly, to shun baby talk, and to repeat names of things over and over whenever the child's attention is drawn to these things. The modern parent does not hurry the child in his learning the art of speech, nor does she make fun of his crude efforts. She tries to understand and she responds to what he says. She sympathizes with him in his struggling, she knows how thwarting it must be not to be able to say what one wants. She does not scold, if his inability brings on a temper display. She experiments with her child by trying to guess what he is saying; and, if at all practical, she tries to grant his wish.

Fortunately, young parents are now living in an era when it is considered permissible to let young children use words which express their feelings of hostility as well as their feelings of good will. The modern parent is not alarmed by the occasional outburst: "I hate you!" "Run away! I don't want you!" or even "I'm going to kill you!" We are learning from the play-therapists that one clue to a child's innermost feelings is to be found in his speech, and that if we close that channel by our disapproval we may never have a chance to get at what is really disturbing him.[4]

Thus we see that the child is impelled in all directions to grow up; but, being inexpert, he does many things in his efforts which are either socially unacceptable, dangerous, or at least bewildering to the adult and often frustrating. As the adult tries to guide this behavior he is almost sure to arouse some major or minor feelings of hostility in the child, which may lead to aggression. These aggressions may, in turn, call

out similar feelings in the adult. Such interplays of emotion we now regard as normal and a part of healthy growth, but we realize that to keep them healthy we must do our utmost to understand both the child and ourselves. If we can remember to think of the child's behavior as evidence of pressures caused by his growing, rather than as "wrongdoing," we may become more accepting and more self-confident in our permissiveness.[5]

The last three types of the six primary developmental tasks are the most difficult to observe and consequently the hardest to deal with from the developmental point of view. We have reference to the child's efforts to make friends with other children, his experimenting to find out how best to balance his independence over against his dependence on his parents, and his exploratory efforts to work out some larger understanding of the nature of his world and to find a set of values to live by. These are developmental tasks in which the child's emotions are directly involved. The child himself is quite unconscious of what he is trying to learn. He does not say to himself before playing with Jackie: "I am going to find out how to make Jackie my friend." Rather he is impelled to want companionship, and quickly senses whether he is touching something warm or cold, and his own emotional temperature rises or falls.

Anthony was a three-year-old who, upon his arrival at the nursery school, seemed to feel hostile to adults and children alike. Each time he was even slightly bumped he would strike fiercely at the offender. There were days when he needed a special adult by his side just to protect the other children from the fierceness of his tempests. But the adult took a friendly role, not a punitive one. When she saw his small shoulders tense and his fists raised to strike, she would draw him to her gently and say: "I know how you feel, Anthony. You feel you must hit someone. Would you like to hit this tom-tom instead as hard as you can?" Then, after his rage had subsided, she would add: "Donald is sitting in the fire truck. Would you like to roll this hose over to him? Donald may want a fireman."

There were weeks of these patient attempts to help Anthony feel that he was understood and accepted by his teachers, and admired for his skills by the other children. We can appreciate this teacher's delight when one day, some twelve weeks after his entrance into the group, he was sitting in the sandbox with several other children, and she heard him say to them thoughtfully and cheerily: "You know, I'm nice." "I'm nice, too," said Betsy. "So am I," said Nan. It remained for Lisl, the most sensitive child of the group, to express her awareness of what Anthony's remark meant to him. With an approving, joyous smile she said radiantly, "We're *all* nice!"

Such an achievement in happy social relations and in each child's awareness of his own personal value is of the essence of spiritual development. But this was achieved here not by pointing out to Anthony how naughty it was for him to want to hit and hurt, nor by holding up to him for admiration other children who were gentle and kind. Anthony was not isolated from the other children until he was ready to be "good." No Bible verse such as "Beloved, let us love one another" was taught. Nor did the teacher illustrate unselfishness by telling the story of Abraham's generous gift to Lot. Anthony was not asked to pray and ask God to help him to be good. The teacher's whole philosophy was based on her belief that, if she could see behind Anthony's hostilities, she would find that he really wanted to feel he belonged with friends; but because of misunderstandings at home he had been so often rebuffed that his resentments over being rejected had piled up within him. Anthony needed a friend who would respect him and who could show understanding of the naturalness of his disturbing feelings. With such a person beside him to help him, Anthony was slowly able to like himself and with this assurance to like others also.

It is hard for most of us to accept the fact that the child learns best his ethical standards through his own experimentations in social relations. In order that these learnings may lead

to emotional health, adults must provide an atmosphere of understanding love and respect, just as sunshine and the proper foods and opportunities for active play are needed to make possible the child's physical growth and health. We speak of a child developing rickets because of lack of vitamins in his diet. Should we not with equal understanding assume that a child who has become hostile and aggressive is one who has lacked the feeling of security in his social nourishment? Or that the child who does "wrong" may never have had adequate encouragement when in his early years he was fumbling toward desirable behavior?

It is in dealing with social or ethical behavior that the contrast between the old "disciplinary" or "habit training" philosophy of child care and the developmental theory is most in contrast. It is comparatively easy for parents and teachers to note and accept signs of children's immaturity in body and mind and to encourage them in the developmental tasks which they set to achieve physical and mental skills. What adult would slap a child for stumbling or falling, or who would punish a child for not talking plainly? These matters do not traditionally call for a parent's moral judgment.

But when a child experiments to see how far he can assert his independence of his parents, he is likely to be met with rebuke. "Do what I say. I don't want to hear any talking back." The ancient law "children, obey your parents" has conditioned generations of adults to regard any infringement of this principle as morally weak. Or if the child in his play does not share his toys, he is likely to be called "selfish." Such attitudes have long been sanctioned by religious authorities. They are not easily changed. Many indeed think that to change from the way of teaching general principles of "right" and "wrong" to the way of learning "morality" by experimentation, would mean to lose what is of most worth in religion. To modern child therapists, however, the loss of the rigidities of the Puritanical way of inculcating virtue makes

possible the finding of greater spiritual values, and in the end may bring a more friendly society. There must be regulations, of course, for disciplines are inherent in all healthy and resilient growth. But when regulations are necessary, the adult will help define the channels by which the child may seek to express himself, rather than thwart the basic drives themselves.

This newer point of view leads to a true respect for immaturity, both in the child and in the adult. The old ways developed an attitude that is still very common. The child is made so aware of the gap between his accomplishments and those of someone older that he becomes discouraged at his own limited achievements. The strain of competition with older brothers and sisters, and the resulting feelings of inadequacy lead to irritation, tenseness, resistance and jealousies.

Contrasted with the child who lacks self-confidence is the one who is aware that while others excel him in some ways, on the whole he has established a good reputation for himself. He expects to make mistakes. Everybody does. Mistakes are not pleasant to face. Sometimes they make trouble and suffering. But some good can always come from a mistake for a mistake gives one an opportunity to learn better. Thus even so-called "moral" infringements can be faced without leaving permanent feelings of self-depreciation and self-distrust.

The sense of unworthiness is confused, moreover, in the minds of many with humility, and is thus accepted as a religious attribute, but we do injustice to the goal of spiritual living in accepting this association. Spiritual growth implies that a person glimpse his own touch of greatness.

This concept that step by step the child learns his social controls and ideals through his own experiences in play, and the realization that his toys are his library and his playroom his social laboratory — these new insights have brought to pass the great differential contrasting modern and conservative homes and schools. From this point of view immaturity

is good. The rosebud is not evil because it is not yet a full-blown rose. No gardener desires to scold, punish, shake or do violence to a rosebud because it has not yet opened. Rather he addresses himself with patience to providing the best possible environment for the unfolding of the bud. Just so in dealing with the child.

Having done whatever seems possible to provide an environment for the child that is rich in experiences of growth, there is a further step that parents and teachers may well take even during these preschool years to help the child gain some perspective on his own growing up. This may be done, first of all, by helping the child to compare or contrast his own todays with his own yesterdays. A few moments may be given to the beginnings of reflection on his own progress, not in comparison with others, but by comparing himself of a short while past with what he is in the present. The new things discovered or the new things done may be talked of at the close of the day. Children's achievements in their social relations, as well as their gains in physical prowess, may be commented on and sometimes even celebrated. These comments, however, should call the child's attention to the concrete techniques he used in his play that brought the happier feeling of friendliness, rather than express praise for the child in general terms of goodness or kindness.

In the nursery group, there are opportunities also to help a child clarify in his mind the relationship between older and younger, and thus to help him to keep a happy poise between undue pride and discouragement as he sees himself maturing. The doll corner is a rich source of learning as well as for enjoyment. The fun of playing house, of caring for the dolls, of dramatizing family relationships are of enchanting interest for both boys and girls during the preschool years.

In some groups, it has been found that a low bulletin board or scrapbook displaying pictures of parents or even grandparents when they were babies or runabouts is of great interest

to the children. These show that parents were once themselves children. Such a collection of pictures may even be supplemented with an occasional display of little dresses, suits, shoes and toys belonging to the parents when they were small.

In the home the child may be allowed to look at the family album. His picture as a baby and Father's and Mother's baby photographs may be placed side by side. Grandparents may be encouraged to tell stories of what Father was like as a little boy, or some of the things that Mother used to do. In this way the child may come to think of himself as someone going through the same process of growth through which his parents have gone, thus giving him a sense of kinship with the parents whom he so much admires, and who now seem so tall, so competent, and so remote from childish mistakes.

It takes more patience and understanding to be a gardener than to be a tailor. The tailor cuts the cloth according to a prepared pattern and places the completed garment upon the child's shoulders. The gardener nourishes what is already growing, trusts in nature, and allows the creative forces to produce a new and unique life by the slow process of growing. Religion "is a spiritual flowering and the man who has it not is like a plant that never blooms."

3

Expanding the Child's Society

And an old priest said, Speak to us of Religion.
And he said:
Have I spoken this day of aught else?
Is not religion all deeds and all reflection,
And that which is neither deed nor reflection, but a wonder and a surprise ever springing in the soul, even while the hands hew the stone or tend the loom?
And he to whom worshipping is a window, to open but also to shut, has not visited the house of his soul whose windows are from dawn to dawn.
Your daily life is your temple and your religion.

— KAHLIL GIBRAN

ALTHOUGH THE VERY EARLY HOME LIFE determines the fundamentals of the child's spiritual growth, this question arises: at what age is a child ready for wider social contacts with a group of other children? Should he enter a weekday nursery group or one meeting only once a week in church or synagogue? Or should the child attend both groups? On what basis may a parent assess the probable value of a given nursery group for his child?

These important questions can best be answered if first we review in our minds some of the chief needs and interests of children of two, three, and four years of age. From the point of view of the children's social interests, are they ripe for

entering an expanded society? If so, into what kind of a group, in what sort of place, and under what type of leadership?

The Two-Year-Old

At two years the normal child can walk alone, and can climb up stairs and down, but is unsteady and still needs a broad base. He has a small vocabulary, chiefly in nouns and verbs, and often has difficulty making himself understood. His sentences are usually no longer than three or four words. He is likely to speak in a monologue form, and many of his questions seem directed toward establishing personal relations between himself and another person, rather than to gain information. In a year's daily observations of two-year-olds in their nursery groups at the University of Iowa, it was found that two-year-olds spent seven out of every twenty minutes watching, and that each talked as much when he was alone as when he was with a group of other children.[1]

At two years the child shows an eager, exploratory interest in his environment, but because of this very eagerness to explore everything, and because of his delight in each new discovery, his interest shifts rapidly from one object to another and he is easily confused by a large amount of social stimulation. Even though there are other children in the room, he plays alone a great deal. He is interested in other children, but content to watch them for considerable lengths of time. His contacts with them are inexpert and clumsy. He may push and slap to gain his point. He reacts readily with rage and tears at being frustrated in his desires. A study made in Toronto has shown that two-year-olds in group play have emotional outbursts four times as often as do four-year-olds.[2] In his effort to care for himself, as in using the toilet, in washing his hands, or in putting on his wraps, he needs patient supervision and some assistance

Recognizing, then, that two-year-olds are at the general stage of development briefly outlined above, is it desirable to

have them join a nursery group that meets regularly five mornings a week or a church nursery group meeting once a week? Although no rule applicable to all two-year-olds can be made, it may be said that the trend today is toward postponing until three years of age the entrance of a child into a nursery group that is not a part of the child's immediate neighborhood or home. As Dr. Katherine Read expresses it, most children "seem to need three years in which to 'live out' the period of depending on parents, to achieve sufficient security in the home, and with their parents, to be ready to belong in a school group and to identify with the adults outside the home. Taking this step too soon may distort growth just as much as failing to take it when the time is ripe."[3] This advice is especially applicable to children living in comfortable and happy homes. Even for children less privileged, however, social agencies recently have been trying to provide foster day care in private homes, whenever possible, for two-year-olds whose mothers must work outside the home, rather than to set up nursery schools.

In some communities it is possible for a group of parents to organize a co-operative play group in the backyard belonging to one of the families. Two-year-olds need to be out of doors daily and their safety must be provided for. The average mother cannot easily spend as much time from her housework or other indoor responsibilities as is needed to provide supervision alone. If two or three mothers can take the responsibility in rotation all concerned will be blessed.

Perhaps one yard will be chosen as being central or larger or safer than the others, or two or three adjacent yards may be thrown together. One couple may finance the simple fencing, another the building and painting of a large sandbox, while another may provide some large, strong, well-planed packing boxes and planks.

There should not be more than five or six children in a group of such young children, with perhaps each mother going

out two days a week, and, if possible, two mothers at a time. The group may well be set up only for fair weather. Although the plan may not be easily worked out, yet all the very real effort it takes will seem more than worth while in the joy and growth such a plan makes possible for each child. Parents will be surprised to find how much insight and pleasure they themselves gain from working with their neighbors in planning and supervising such a group.

Some one mother has to initiate such a plan, and her success will depend largely on how she begins and how cordially she is able to solicit the co-operation of all the parents concerned. If it can be done, some effort should be made in order that the group of parents involved understand one another's points of view regarding child care. Perhaps a friendly "study group" can be started to meet once a week at a definitely scheduled hour, to read, and to discuss the best modern thinking regarding the bringing up of children. In this way higher standards governing the care of the children may be promoted and consistent practices with the children developed.

As the possibility of such a backyard play group is discussed, it may be that the mother of one of the nearby neighbor children will refuse to join. "My boy's all right playing on the sidewalk. . . . He knows I'll give him a licking if he crosses the street. . . . I haven't time to go out there and watch a whole morning." One's first impulse in the face of such an attitude may be to go ahead and form a play group without this child. But what will it do to this child and to the children of the co-operating mothers if through the months to come he is left alone on the outside of the fence looking in at the four who are happily playing there? The only healthy solution would seem to be that the co-operating mothers share the extra responsibility involved in including the one uncared for child. If this is done, however, it is hoped that the mothers will not carry feelings of resentment at the injustice of the

situation or harbor pity for themselves, but that they will find their recompense in the greater happiness of all the children. In a neighborhood as in the world at large, it is indeed true that "every child is my child."

The Three-Year-Old

The three-year-old child can usually climb stairs without holding to the railing. He is not so easily enraged at physical restraint as the two-year-old, perhaps partly because he has gained more resourceful techniques for adapting himself to cramped quarters. His vocabulary has increased to nearly a thousand words — still, however, concrete terms — but we find the beginnings of inflection and more complex sentence construction.

The attention span is a little longer at three than it was a year previous, though many studies indicate that it still averages only about eight minutes. The three-year-old is still very active, manipulating, investigating, exercising, constructing, dramatizing. He slaps and pushes less, but he is still inexpert in his social techniques, and he is normally still in the stage of trying to satisfy his own wants and urges rather than of considering the feelings of others. He needs a tranquil and secure environment before he can distinguish clearly enough between persons in the room to take first steps toward friendships. Studies have shown that the three-year-old in his relations with adults is at the peak of resistance, conflicts, and food refusals.

The three-year-old's sense of time is still very vague. Lewis, at thirty-six months, has just three divisions in his expressions for time — "soon," "right now," and "yesterday" (or "a big yesterday" for two days previous or last week or last Christmas or last summer). Anything happening further back than when he was born is apparently quite inconceivable. Nor is the concept of distance any more distinct in his mind. In a nursery group one day, several three- and four-year-olds were digging industriously. Some twelve inches down they reached

an old piece of pipe. "We've got to China! We've got to China!" was the eager chorus.

Some parents of three-year-olds may still prefer the naturalness and inexpensiveness of the neighborhood group. Others, particularly those who, because of the presence in the home of a baby, or some other factor which deters them from setting up their own play group, may look for a professional nursery school. Many will begin to think of enrolling their child in their church or synagogue nursery group. Before making a decision, it will be well to ask certain questions. Is there space enough in the room and are there enough playthings so that your child may be physically active, and yet occasionally may stand apart and watch the others without such close personal contact that he must push and slap? Is there the minimum of thirty-five square feet of space for each child as recommended by nursery school authorities? Does the nursery provide for health examinations so that your child will not be unnecessarily exposed to contagious diseases? Are there enough adults so that each child may have the care and guidance he needs in coatroom and lavatory, or must he be hurried along as part of a large and regimented group to be washed and dressed like a helpless doll? Is the group small enough so that your child will not feel confused? Can he feel himself an important member with a few friends whom he can come to know? Or are there five- and six-year-olds also in the group who are likely to control the activities, leaving the two- and three-year-olds to follow or merely watch and perhaps become overstimulated?

Lastly and most important of all, with what objectives is the nursery group planned? If it be in a church school, it will be wise to learn the kinds of stories, pictures and songs being used. Are they within the understanding of most three-year-olds? If the program is centered largely around a service of worship, will the three-year-old understand what he is asked to do? Can he, who is accustomed to speaking usually to one

person only and even then has some difficulty in making himself understood, comprehend what is said to twenty or thirty children? How long should a child, whose nature still urges him to be active most of the time, be asked to sit and listen?

Even though weekday and church nursery schools at their best may have much to offer children of three, it is equally true that a poorly planned group may do harm. Parents should hesitate long before sending a small child to a group which will regiment him, treat him without deep respect, frighten or confuse him. Surface aspects are often misleading, especially in what may be called "religious education." It takes a discriminating adult to recognize what is good and what may be harmful in a given experience for a small child. Although the number is growing, it is still the unusual church or synagogue nursery class that has the large room space that is important, the play equipment for the young children's normal activity, and the needed number of skilled nursery school leaders to give to these small children an adequate mother-substitute relationship. These are particularly needed where the time between sessions is long, and therefore the adjustment of the child to strangers is slower.

The Four-Year-Old

The four-year-old has acquired more skills in social relations during the added year of his age. In habits of self-help he needs far less attention from the teacher. His group play is more likely to be planned and organized by his peers. He can include a larger number of children in his play and the personalities of the other children have more reality to him. He has more skills in manipulating materials. He can stay at one project for a longer period of time, though still his attention span for listening is quite short.

In many other ways, however, the four-year-old has not changed much in his basic needs. He still delights in and needs boundless general activity. He is inept in his attempts to lead

others. He is curious about things in the here and now, but he has only confused ideas of time and distance. He still becomes overstimulated easily. He does not yet understand the orderly working of cause and effect in nature and tends to personify inanimate things, or to assign some personal cause to a natural event. We watched a four-year-old boy building a tower within the playhouse in a nursery group. The space being small, he kept accidentally touching his tower and knocking it over. Each time he did so, he turned swiftly to the nearest child, said fiercely, "You trash," and then went on with his rebuilding.

Minimum Essentials for All Preschool Children

We see then that for all preschool children, it is important that there be space and room arrangements for vigorous and spontaneous play. A well-ventilated room, perhaps thirty by twenty-one feet, is needed for eighteen children if the standard requirements are fulfilled. A nurse or someone capable of examining the children regularly in order to protect them from the oncoming of contagious diseases is important. The child's needs for expansion of personality cannot be adequately met unless there are materials, tools, and equipment for creative activities in such fields as music, painting, modeling, block-building, doll play. For growth in habits of self-help, there are needed low hooks or lockers for the children's wraps, low shelves for their supplies, low arrangements for toileting. For growth in continued security, teachers are needed who show the same individual kindliness and understanding which the children's mothers give, and who encourage the children in their own problem solving. For growth in friendships, the activities need to be planned for small informal groupings.

These minimum essentials[4] are to be found in most weekday nursery schools of professional standing, even in those carried on with a limited budget. These essentials can also be maintained, and are, in many church nursery groups. Many others,

however, are still meeting in dingy and cramped quarters, with play equipment permitting only very controlled forms of activity. Where the session is a brief hour or hour and a half, the program is likely to be patterned after the usual adult stereotypes, permitting little child initiative.

Until communities, social agencies, churches and synagogues are prepared to spend more generously of their financial and spiritual resources for enriching the lives of small children, and preparing their leaders for more intelligent child guidance, parents who sense the need for higher standards will hesitate before entering their children in these nonprofessional nursery groups. The challenge under these conditions is to parents: for them to be instrumental in creating better nursery group experiences for the children of the community. One well-informed, enthusiastic parent can do much to mobilize the latent resources in his church, synagogue, or community in building a nursery environment of excellent standards. Many parents have found that such a vision is contagious.

Even when a church or synagogue nursery group of high educational standards is available, there still remains an important question to be answered: What are the values for these preschool children in joining a group meeting only half a day once a week? Speaking after considerable practical experience rather than as a result of careful research, we have found that many children from three to five have been benefited even by the short weekly group experience. The child's horizon has been expanded at an age when he is most ready to respond. Through being introduced to a group beyond the confines of his own home and neighborhood, he has discovered new standards of self-help and new social techniques. He has caught new ideas for creating and constructing things, and he has gained new and better concepts of himself, leading to feelings of greater security and courage. The child has found joy in making new friends. In short, he has become a person of greater importance.

Many parents, also, have gained through their children's experiences. They have watched successful, positive methods of child guidance, such as encouragement, wholesome praise, giving reasons simply and clearly, allowing harmless vents to hostilities, relaxed and gentle relationships. They have seen that teachers do not need to slap, spank, raise their voices, or be harsh, in order to win co-operation from a child. They have noticed how a child is patiently given time to work out his adjustments; they have observed that teachers can be permissive toward antisocial behavior when the other children are not directly harmed, and at the same time be firm in checking behavior that brings danger to the group and does the child no good. Teachers who have thought through the implications of the developmental theory have been able to explain to parents why permissiveness does not "spoil" the child, and how it is possible to be firm without building up hostile feelings and buried resentments.

Since the church nursery meets but a few hours a week, it may recognize even more frankly than do some weekday schools that only through the parents can the basic educational needs of the child be met. Thus, it may try more seriously to help the parents, and to permit them every opportunity possible to look to the nursery session as a highlight for their own learning as well as for the pleasure of their children. Since most church schools must be largely parent co-operatives, as contrasted with nursery groups run by a specialized staff on a tuition basis, the parents, through this very need to share the responsibilities of the school, may be in a more expectant attitude for learning all they can from the experience.

Moreover, parents who enroll their children in a church school have, to an extent, made a certain decision. They want their children to have something that is called "religious education." Their conceptions of what this may mean will vary greatly, but we can assume that at least they are searching

for high values for their children. This is a rich resource to depend upon.

Perhaps most important of all, the church is one of the few institutions in our society which includes the whole family in its fellowship. A little child may find delight in the nursery, his older brother and sister can enjoy the young people's program, and his parents may take part in the adult activities. Each one, whatever his stature, finds status and fellowship. Friendships between whole families are made through sharing in the varied church projects, and these friendships often last through the years. Families help each other in time of sorrow and stress, as each faces in its turn these universal tragedies of life.

Thus when a church or synagogue offers its best to the small child in the nursery, it may be laying the foundation for relationships with him and his family for years to come. There is no adequate measure of the constructive stabilizing influence upon the personality of the child. The church nursery school of high standards has a challenging opportunity.

> And an old priest said, Speak to us of Religion.
> And he said:
> Have I spoken this day of aught else?
> Is not religion all deeds and all reflection,
> And that which is neither deed nor reflection, but a wonder
> and a surprise ever springing in the soul . . . ?[5]

There must be readers who have been feeling as did the priest that thus far in our presentation religion has been left out. Must all learning in a nursery group, especially in one carried on under religious auspices, be so casual, based entirely on the spontaneous play of little children? Is there no time in the program for some direct religious instruction, some religious stories, some prayers and songs or simple rituals? If not, what is the difference between the secular and the religious

nursery school? These are necessary and important questions to consider, but we ask your patience. Let us take them up more fully in the later chapters in this book.

In the meantime, we reiterate what we believe to be deeply true. All growth is a religious experience. The bases for mental or emotional health, and even for religious health, are the same. The child's social and ethical development should follow the same slow course of growth as his physical and nutritional progress require. We believe that even his religious faith should also grow in a similarly natural way. For religious understanding we must wait with patience for the growth of comprehension in the child. The three- and four-year-old needs the simplest of explanations, with the way left open for his own wonderings and questions. For spiritual depth and insight we must give the child time to mature through experiencing for himself the delights of rich and poignant living. To hurry past the beginning steps and experiences and on to verbal acquaintance with adult religious ideas and adult forms and rituals beyond the child's grasp and appreciation can only confuse or make rigid his thinking. Religion as a tailor-made garment will soon be outgrown and discarded. Religion as a growing seed will come to its own maturity.

4

Awakening to the World of Nature

Out of the coming of spring, dancing sunlight, bright flowers, the song of birds, a gurgling, splashing brook, a blustering wind, or the scurrying of little woods animals, children read a message of happiness. And this, I believe, is natural, cosmic happiness. It is perhaps in manifesting this quality that children show, more than any other way, that they and nature are one.

— BERTHA STEVENS

FOR THE CHILD'S PHYSICAL GROWTH we do our utmost to keep him in the out-of-doors, where in sunlight and in pure air, by seaside or in meadow, in the garden or by the brook, he may grow naturally and simply, as other living things grow, to which he is so closely akin. The mental and spiritual growth of the child also needs this close relationship with nature for its development. Urban living may encourage a kind of mental alertness which gives the child facility in responding to intelligence tests, but the reasoning developed may lead to a sophisticated point of view and a thoughtless attitude toward the efforts involved in securing the benefits of life. The artificiality of living apart from the out-of-doors seems to deplete men's spiritual resources, and to rob life of much of its elemental ruggedness and native understanding.

Most weekday nursery schools spend as much time outdoors as the weather permits. Church nursery leaders also might

well have more out-of-door sessions for the children, instead of "instructions" in rooms which are sometimes crowded, dark and commonplace. Who can predict the learnings that might take place were children in small groups permitted to feed the birds or the squirrels in the park, to run in an open field with and against the winds, to lie on the grass and look up at the clouds, to listen to the sounds of rustling leaves, to watch the ripples and the colors in some little pool, to see a mother bird teaching her young to fly, or to watch ants building an ant hill? With no immediate instruction, with no quotations from the Bible spoken, the experiences themselves, entered into with the wholehearted abandon natural to young children, would be warm with the thrill of enjoyment and vital with an outgoing curiosity. Little by little, out of many such direct experiences as these, should grow in the child's inner life what Bertha Stevens so wisely calls a "cosmic happiness." What sounder foundation could one lay for a vital belief in a cosmic God?

The wonder of the world seems naturally to take hold of young children, provided the adults with whom they associate are still sensitive to this same wonder. Children are thrilled by sights which have long since become commonplace to adults' eyes — a beetle crawling across the walk, or a spider's web on a lilac bush. In the Martin and Judy volumes,[1, 2] the children watch in quiet wonder the white snow falling, and love to make footprints in its soft flakiness. Judy's first real experience with a gorgeous sunset is a glorified moment. Little children need many such times of gladness, not only because of the immediate joy that such experiences bring, but also because they build into the soul a certain strength that makes it possible later in times of disappointment or tragedy to face undaunted the world of immutable laws.

Willingness to take the universe straight, and to acknowledge one's relative position with regard to the great immutable forces of life, is a sign of mental health. Conversely, the

neurotic is characterized by an inability to accept the neutral justice of life; he develops an attitude of self-pity because he cannot modify natural laws for his own comfort. Just so the little child can easily acquire the habit of flouting his small world — he may smash his building in a rage because his tower, carelessly piled, starts to tumble; he may kick the stool over which he stumbles, or throw the doll on the floor if it "won't" cry as it should when squeezed. To accept with good grace the laws of nature is an art which no individual, however adult, ever fully learns.

Some thoughtful readers may well ask: "Well, if you do not let the child blame his blocks for falling, are you not causing him to form a habit of blaming himself?" Our answer would be that we wish him to learn *neither* to "blame" the blocks nor himself, but rather to let the incident challenge him to find out a new way, a better way, by which he himself as a free agent can build so well another time that the blocks will not need to fall down.

Another question which a student of the newer procedures may ask is: "If you do not permit the child to express his frustration at falling over the stool by kicking it, are you not preventing him from expressing his hostility in a harmless way and even forcing him to express his feelings on persons instead of things, or, worse yet, forcing him to retain hidden resentments which may accumulate or boil over later?" To this very valid question we suggest this answer. We do not advocate preventing the child from kicking the stool. Rather, we would be entirely permissive toward his doing so. If we were near him, we might even try to reflect by words his feelings to him by saying, "When you fell it hurt, and now you feel like kicking and kicking that stool. Lots of us feel like kicking when we get hurt." But — and this is our main point — when the child's emotion has thus been expressed outwardly (instead of internally through perhaps a tensing of his digestive system) and he finally subsides, it is wise to say to him: "But

after all, kicking the stool now doesn't take care of next time. Where can you and I put it so that next time none of us will fall over it when we start to run again? When we put the stool in the right place nobody falls over it."

In Volume I of the Martin and Judy series, three stories are included in which the children begin to sense the control of nature as being in some way beyond the powers of human beings. The first story, called "Off to the Duck-Pond," emphasizes the fact that the forces of nature move quite independently of our special desires. Sometimes they bring pleasure; sometimes they bring disappointment. We should be prepared to accept our turn at each. In a second story, "Wishing for Rain," we find the children still wishing for the rain that would fill up their duck pond. Here the thought is added that the forces of nature are greater than the powers which human beings possess; the fact that rain is beyond human control. Finally, with the story, "Five Little Ducks All in a Row," the long-awaited rain comes, and the children find their pond and in it their ducks. One of nature's cycles has been observed. The children are given their turn at gladness.

In Volume II of the same series is a story entitled "Blow, Wind, Blow!" and in Volume III, "The Littlest Picnic." In these stories the greatness and power of the winds and storms and the littleness of men are contrasted, and the thought is added that all mankind shares this sense of inadequacy and dependence — and also a yearning to understand. In *Martin and Judy Songs,* the songs, "Whoe-ee! Whoe-ee!" "Hark Thunder Growls," and "Rain" have been prepared to highlight these experiences.

In addition to these challenging experiences of facing the impersonal workings of nature's laws, there is another need young children have: to learn the difference between animate and inanimate things. This learning is facilitated by the special fascination that almost any kind of living creature has for the young child. The young robin trying to fly or the young

chick struggling out of its shell will hold a group of small children spellbound. A child seems easily able to identify himself with other small creatures, who like himself must try and try again to find new ways of doing things. He senses a bond between himself and other young beings who need to be taken care of, as contrasted with adults who seem so sober, so certain, so capable, so wise. In response to his mother's question, "Why do you like baby animals better than grown-up animals?" a seven-year-old answered: "Well, you see, baby animals play the way they want and not just the way they think they ought to." Such keen interest surely should be conserved and utilized in planning for child development.

But the young child also easily identifies himself with non-living things that resemble living creatures in form. The two-year-old child will talk to his toy dog or Teddy bear as vividly as to an adult; the three-year-old often shows as much concern over tucking in her doll for a carriage ride as if it were a living baby. Who can say that this concern is recognized by the child as imaginative play? We have no evidence as yet indicating at what age the child becomes sure that one group of loved objects is alive while he merely *pretends* the other is alive.

The writer once had the experience of taking individually some eighty children, ranging in age from two to six years, to a university museum to study the children's expressed responses to a new world of interest. We found that there were many children among the five-year-olds who either took it for granted that the stuffed animals in the show cases were alive, or else who were so eager to discover whether or not they were alive that they talked to the animals. Some even tried to pat them, or wished to feed them. Dr. Piaget of Geneva speaks of the phenomenon of animism among very young children, and of the childish conception according to which they endow moving objects with an activity of their own.

This tendency of the little child to animate his universe is

similar to the experience of the race and it still appears among primitive people. Indeed, even in our own culture group, there are individual adults who still vaguely feel that some objects about them are animated. This is manifest in such superstitions as avoiding the thirteenth chair, opening an umbrella only outdoors, throwing the apple peel over the right shoulder, and also in some formal religious practices. Even though such instances as these may seem illogical to the minds of many who have grown up under religious training free from many mystical rituals, yet who among us can claim complete emancipation from the impulse to kick the obstacle against which he has stumbled, or to slam the open drawer against which he has hurt himself, or to blame the scissors which are "always disappearing"?

This, being true of adults, is even more true of little children. While the child's mind needs time and leisure for growth and maturity of concept, greater happiness is certain to come to the child if the occasion for unnecessary confusion is lifted from him. The contented, expressive "Oh," or "I see now," which all of us hear little children say when they have asked a question and have been given a satisfying answer, is all the encouragement we need to continue helping them to set their houses in order

A group of stories has, therefore, been prepared to guide the child in his understanding regarding living things. In Volume I of the Martin and Judy series, the first of these stories is "Baby Sister and Sarah the Doll," where Judy weighs and measures her doll each time her mother weighs the baby, and finds that Sarah, the doll, does not really grow. In "Baby and Dolly Go Riding, Riding," Judy learns that bumps do not really hurt dolls, and dolls do not cry.

The purpose in such stories, however, is not to rob children of their delight in imaginative play. This impulse to imagine inanimate objects as alive is a valuable asset for the child's enlargement of feelings and should not be discouraged. But to

lead children to recognize such imagination as play rather than as representing reality should not lessen the pleasure but rather lead the way to an even freer use of the imagination. Perhaps a warning is appropriate. Parents and teachers should not hurry the child in his acceptance of the distinction between the animate and the inanimate things. It may take some children four or five years, and even longer, to reach a consistent and clear distinction.

The purpose in leading a child to think about the difference is a more positive one: it is to develop in the child a growing awareness of the significance of being alive, of being born, of growing and learning. This Mystery of Life is the basic intangible fact of our existence. The yearning to grasp its meaning is the eternal religious quest. To help children to see living creatures in contrast to man-made likenesses of them is one of the ways by which they may catch a feeling for this mystery.

In Volume II of the Martin and Judy series there are three stories, "Martin Goes to Kinny's Farm," "Something New in Judy's Yard," and "Something New in Martin's Yard," in which this intangible mystery of being alive is especially suggested. The two children puzzle and question regarding the chicks, the ants, and the spider. In noting the surprising powers of these small animals, a child may sense something of the mystery in his own aliveness — a "wonder part" beyond the comprehension or the making of any man. Indeed, in story after story in all three volumes of Martin and Judy, the "wonder part" in many things is spoken of. Many of the songs also are related to such experiences.

In any nursery group, then, children may well be given many opportunities in the out-of-door world with the forces of nature and with other living creatures. When they have glimpsed creative life in so small a world as a spider's web or an ant hill, when they have humbly faced the greatness and blessing of wind and rain and sunshine, when they have sensed the bit of the "wonder part" in a few life forms, then and not

till then are they mature enough to conceive worthily of a Creator of all. Whether God be named to these children or not may perhaps be of minor significance. It is having the experiences themselves that is important, provided that these are rich in emotional tone and that the thinking about them is sound. These experiences would seem as essential to the spiritual growth of young children as are food and sunshine to their physical development, or the security of parental love to their emotional stability.

After the children have had these challenging opportunities in directly experiencing nature, the adult leader of a nursery group may find many ways of making the experiences more meaningful through encouraging the children to relive them indoors. Songs and piano music to accompany the children's rhythmic play are rich in possibilities. The falling leaves, ducks swimming, rain falling, playing in the wind, walking in the snow — all these the children may express in movement, each according to his own feelings or interpretation.

Pictures also will give supplementary help, showing scenes from nature or portraying children in action. Such pictures may be borrowed by the teacher from library or museum, they may be bought by the school, or best of all, they may be collected by a committee of mothers and filed by them in some orderly way in the supply room where they may easily be reached whenever needed.

Easels, paints and brushes, clay, and finger-painting materials will be needed in order to give many avenues of expression to children of varying aptitudes and temperaments. Free choice should be given the children for the themes of their painting or sculpture. Some may never elect a subject related to the story told by the teacher. For the younger children it is particularly important to encourage spontaneous expression of any real interests, whatever the subject.

In homes where mothers tell and retell the stories of Martin and Judy to their children and sing the songs, we suggest that

now and again they add similar stories and songs of their own, built upon their children's own experiences. Mothers, too, may have phonograph music or songs and dances which they play on the piano to supplement interest. They may mount in removable frames appropriate pictures for their children's rooms. They, too, may have easels, plasticine and finger-painting materials for creative expression. They may even be on the alert for their children's spontaneous poetry and songs, indicating their new interests.

In closing, we return to the fact that the attitudes toward nature shown by parents and teachers will do far more than anything else to lend significance to what children learn. If the adults themselves are sensitive to the great mystery within all existence, if they accept with grace and frankness the laws of nature, if they have keen awareness of the out-of-doors, a delight in it, and a sense of oneness with it, and if they can renew the freshness of their own curiosity and wonder with each morning's sunrise, their children are sure to catch something of greater worth than words can convey.

5

Experimenting in Social Behavior

The view that the child is born egocentric, evil, in "sin," is widely held. . . . Such a view is not supported by the facts. The facts, on the contrary, show that the child is born as an actively co-operating organism. . . .

— ASHLEY-MONTAGU

THE CHILD COMES INTO HIS WORLD through the orderly yet intricate union of two parent germ cells, through the multiplication, division, and co-operation of his own body cells, and through the interrelation of his own body and that of his mother. He survives only because he is ministered to by others. He reaches out with increasing feelings of love toward those upon whom he is dependent. If treated with permissiveness and warmth he becomes secure, content, confident. If denied this warmth he becomes tense, timid, or aggressive. He learns to love by being loved.

The quality of the social and affectional life of the child is thus developed in his earliest days and weeks. Having been born through interdependence, he will continue to grow as an essentially co-operative person, related in a positive way to other selves, if he is nurtured in love and security. One has only to glimpse the expressions of joy and radiant well-being on the faces of young children of relaxed and friendly parents to know that this is true. Being loved, then, is all-important to the child. For thus he learns, in turn, to love others.

One of the great insights which has come to us from scientific studies in mental hygiene is that children's social attitudes *develop,* and are as orderly in their progression as all other natural growth. The child does not inherit his personality. He inherits, rather, a highly flexible nervous system which permits social learning, and which has indeed become well started in tendencies to co-operate even by the time of birth. His long period of infancy will permit him to grow slowly but surely toward social maturity if he is given a wholesome social environment.

The young child is not "selfish" as he seeks love and protection. Rather he is following a course essential to becoming a whole person as he makes known his needs for care and affection, and he must have enough approval so that he can esteem himself. Adults, through giving him warmth and security and recognition in this earliest period, are nourishing the life of a self, capable of broadening to include other selves in its search for fulfillment.

To provide a healthy social environment for a child is a more complex task, however, than to provide him with the right physical food. One of the complexities is the fact that the child's emotional needs may at times conflict with those of his parents, and in these conflicts love may seem to turn to hostility, at least temporarily. Thus, at times, the mother may have to act in a way which arouses anger in a child. Then the child may in his rage blindly thwart his mother, and thus arouse momentary hostility on her part. The adjustments which these small crises necessitate, if they are met constructively, can have a healthy effect on the social growth of all concerned; on the other hand they can be bewildering. Perhaps we can feel less bewildered if we understand specifically what we can do as the child experiments in his social behavior.

First of all come those myriad ways in which fathers and mothers can express naturally and directly their delight in

caring for their children. The mother contentedly nursing her baby, the father offering to make his child's blocks, the three enjoying a meal together: these in truth provide the basic ingredients for the child's social growth.

Next come the ways of helping the child feel important by letting him contribute to the family's well-being in small and sensible ways. The baby may give his mother a bit of his custard, the toddler may share his Teddy bear for a moment, the runabout may place the silver on the table, or bring in the milk bottles. The five-year-old may pay the newspaper boy, or take the guests' wraps. By such real efforts at helping others the child earns approval, and he tends to repeat the behavior which wins him this recognition. He becomes the person he sees reflected through his parents' feelings toward him. An understanding mother makes it possible for her child, even in his very early childhood, to give what Erich Fromm[1] calls "productive love." That is, she lets him become aware that he contributes to the well-being of those he loves — not that she weighs him down with responsibilities, or makes him over-anxious to please, but rather she lets him give as well as receive little pats of affection, perhaps. She lets him share a bit of his zweibach with his puppy. She accepts his gesture to let her occasionally manipulate his xylophone or his chimes. Conspicuous praise for his "unselfishness" is undesirable, but instead there can be a quiet interchange of looks and light caresses which indicate to the child that his efforts to give pleasure to others are successful and are appreciated. Out of such experiences, in receiving, then in giving, comes the social development of the individual.

Again, parents foster wholesome social growth in a child when they are dependable themselves in their relations with him. Children should find consistency not only in the physical world around them; they should find, also, at least to a degree, a similar dependability in their relations with parents and teachers. Reasonableness is basic in developing co-operation,

and in establishing a satisfying acceptance of parental authority.

In a situation that becomes tense a parent or teacher may help a child to foresee what are the possible alternatives that confront him, so that he may choose his action intelligently in the light of the probable results. These alternative consequences the child should recognize as growing naturally out of his conduct, rather than as imposed arbitrarily by the parent either as rewards or punishments.

For example, Arthur, aged four, has been building with a large number of blocks in the living room, and it is almost time for supper. His father has an errand to do at the nearby drugstore. The father may say, "Son, I'm going to the store in ten minutes, and Mother says after that supper will be ready. Do you want to pick up your blocks now so that you will be ready to come with me, or do you want to stay home and play a little longer?" Or, when the child asks for a story the mother will not say, "Run along and play; I'm too busy this morning to read to you," but, "Right now I'm busy finishing these dishes. If you will help me we'll have time for reading after that."

Most adults talk too much and too rapidly to little children. They themselves have neural pathways so well worn, so perfected in their connections, that they fail to realize how inept are the newly formed reaction patterns of nursery-age children. Binêt and Simon found long ago, in developing intelligence tests among French children, that only three-fourths of the children as old as five could carry out in order three simple commands given at the same time. How much less should we expect of children under five! Yet what parent among us has not thoughtlessly given such a command as this: "Put-your-blocks-away-wash-your-hands-put-on-your-bib-and-hurry!" — a succession of requests which must surely bewilder a three-year-old mind. To try to hurry, as we see again and again, merely confuses and excites the young child, and adds

the emotions of fear or resentment to a process which should be natural. In fact, were we writing a decalogue for parents, we should be tempted to include as one of the commandments, "Thou shalt not use the word 'hurry' in the nursery; thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maid-servant, nor the grandparent within thy gates."

The analogy between the growth of children and of plants is suggestive, although we are reluctant to accept it. The flower takes time to root, to sprout, to bud, to blossom; any success at forcing is paid for at the price of loss of hardiness. So with the child's growth in his social controls — the whole process from root to flower takes time, and has orderly laws for its unfolding. Whenever a sensitive mother, who has tried to cultivate wisely the roots of security and courage for her own child's social growth, finds that other mothers obtain instant obedience, she may well ask herself about these other children, "At what price the training?" We can train a child into almost any kind of response, but the price may be fear, insecurity, or a wrong sense of proportion.

Akin to the child's need to learn that his parents' behavior is dependable is his need for becoming aware also of the cause and consequence in his own behavior. "You helped me wipe the silver so now I have time to play a game with you." "You saved the cookies Mrs. Smith gave you, so now we can have them for our dessert." Such remarks may bring to a child his first awareness of his power to achieve a future larger good by postponing a present good. "There is a law to protect the trees from fire, so we may not light a bonfire without asking the man at the fire station. Perhaps he will think it is not safe until after it has rained. If we should light it when it is too dry perhaps we might not be able to put it out." All such explanations from adults help little children to set their mind's house in order.

The teacher as well as the parent may help this process of understanding. "John, let me tell you what will happen if

you keep on skipping around in the opposite way from the rest of the children when the piano plays. Rosemary is smaller than you are. You are her friend. But when you go this way you bump into her. We know you don't want to hurt her. Wouldn't it be fun if you skip the way the rest do and let Rosemary have a good time too?" After such a chance to think John is likely to choose the alternative which conforms to the good of the group, especially if he is having plenty of other chances through the morning to express freely his individual preferences. In recognizing the reason for conforming his social consciousness is enhanced, and he feels himself acting as a free agent rather than as a passive unit to be commanded.

It is true that when children are in a group some agreements, well thought out in advance by the staff, are needed to facilitate group living. The teacher may say at one of the early sessions of the group, "Let us make a plan for carrying our chairs when we need to, so that the legs won't stick out and hurt anybody. How do you think it can be done, Naomi?" "Let us decide now where we can put our cups and where we will throw our paper napkins when we have finished our snacks." Such agreements on routine matters, if settled early in the group experiences, will help the children to set standards, and will free their minds from having to make daily decisions on such details. In this way their thoughts are released for decisions on more creative interests. And even in matters where children cannot make individual choices, as in fire drills or in making rules for their own safety, the fact that adults have always expected the children to be reasonable and responsible in free situations will enable them to give more co-operation where absolute obedience is imperative.

Among the stories of Martin and Judy are included a number which seek to clarify the child's understanding of his social relations. Judy, in the story "Whose House Is It?" comes to see why her home belongs to the whole family, rather than to herself alone. "Work for Big and Little" brings to both Martin

and Judy the realization that by their helping they may share the larger good which follows. So also do the stories "Cooks — Little and Big," "Martin's Mother Pretends," "The Wrong Side of the Street," and "Fun with a Third-Grade Boy."

Especially for this purpose has this sequence of stories been planned: "Martin Has Money for Something," "The Leaking Roof," and "Money Enough for the Train Book." Here Martin goes to the store to buy a much-desired book, only to find that it costs more money than he has at the moment. He faces as an alternative choice the possibility of spending his present earnings for a lesser toy. He is tempted by an immediate good. But then comes the process of thinking. If Martin spent his money today his purse would stay empty a week. When would he ever buy his Train Book?

Such procedures should be distinguished from the use of approvals and disapprovals as personal levers to control children's conduct. Arbitrary and emotionally given approvals and disapprovals are likely to impede children in their learning to guide their own conduct on the basis of the real causes and effects in the total social setting in which they are, even though the immediate results obtained in the child's behavior appear to be gratifying.

Nor should the teacher of young children use the child's respect for Jesus or God as a personal means of control. Such phrases as the following, not infrequently spoken to children, are open to grave question: "Jesus will be pleased by what you are doing," "God does not like naughty children," "God will punish you for that." Such a method for molding children's behavior should be discontinued for the same reasons that we should not control children by our own personal approvals and disapprovals. Indeed, the former may be more harmful, since Jesus and God are unseen beings whom children believe are very powerful.

Letting the child give love as well as receive it, being dependable and reasonable in our relations with him, helping

him to take note of the consequences of his own social behavior, and to change his behavior if he wishes different results: these are all basic to the maturing of a healthy social person. If a child has experienced and continues to experience these relationships, his social development is probably assured.

But what of the child who has already been so thwarted in finding friendly and warm relations that he is already fighting his society and his own disappointment with himself? Shall the adult relationship still be permissive when the child is not able to be reasonable? In her wise and understanding book, *The Nursery School,* Katherine Read gives the following account of the way in which one nursery teacher helped a certain small boy:

> Sam is an outstanding example of a child who had been pushed around in many ways without much loving and giving on the part of the adults in return for their heavy demands. He was expected to behave like a little gentleman on every occasion when there were visitors at home, and usually came to school dressed in a suit instead of play clothes like the other children. His speech was more like that of an adult — even his vocabulary of swear-words! He was advanced in his development but he was also burdened with a tremendous load of hostility. It came out in the frequency and cruelty with which he attacked younger children and animals, and in his verbal attacks against the adults when he discovered that these would not be punished. Instead of trying to identify with authority, he fought it on every occasion.
>
> As the group was coming in from the playground one day he savagely attacked a friendly little boy who got in his way. The teacher separated them quickly and firmly. Sam exclaimed: "That was fun." The teacher merely said "It wasn't fun for Jim. It hurt him," and told Sam to stay outside. As soon as the others were inside she returned and sat down beside him. They knew each other well, and she felt sure that he could accept her presence without feeling threatened by it. "I wonder why it makes you feel good to hurt Jim and the other children," she speculated quietly, not knowing whether he could give her any clue. He immediately launched into a description of how his uncle had brought him a gun, and he and his "little friend" (an imaginary friend) could use it.
>
> Again the teacher answered, "I wonder if it makes you feel big to have a gun and it makes you feel big to hurt someone." With apparent

relief the child answered, "Yes." They discussed how people wanted to feel big and how sometimes it wasn't fun to be little. The teacher mentioned that sometimes being friendly made people feel big. Sam stuttered as he talked and was near tears, something that almost never happened with him. He seldom dared to relax his defenses enough to cry!

At last the teacher told Sam that it was about time for them to go inside. He said, almost crying, "I could stay out here until afternoon." "Yes," she said, "you could." She busied herself picking things up and then asked, "Well, now you can either come in with me or stay outside. I wonder which you are going to do."

He got up and said rather sadly, "I don't know." At that the teacher knelt down and put her arms around this hurt, bewildered little boy and for the first time he could accept her loving and nestled close against her, no longer "tough." She said "I know how it is," and then suggested, "You might paint a big picture inside." He nodded and took her hand and they went inside. He went straight to the finger-painting table where he knew there was a chance for him to express more of what he felt.

Sam did gain in the nursery school and became better able to play with others. He was imaginative and resourceful and found a place for himself as his hostility decreased. When he was "graduated" he was a less hostile child, but still needed careful, understanding handling, There seemed little likelihood that he would continue to receive this handling. Although his mother had gained some insight into the child's problems, father would accept none of this "sissy stuff" and continued to rely on repression and a generous use of the rod to bully his little son into "good" behavior. Sam in his turn seemed destined to become a bully on the school playground some day as he continues his efforts to feel "big." [2]

This illustration shows the two opposite philosophies (discussed in Chapter 1) of child guidance at work at the nursery school level. On the one hand was the teacher of understanding who companioned the child, not merely on the superficial level of his outward conduct, but entered as a friend into the inner room of his emotions. Instead of condemning him she helped the child to understand his feelings. Instead of holding up before him standards to which he was obliged to conform, she showed him a simple choice he could make freely; and when she saw that even this opportunity bewildered him she gathered him into her arms and identified her feelings with

his. On the other hand was the parent who could not change his long-held convictions regarding discipline, and who bullied his son into a resentful conformity. The sequel to this story, alas, is the tragedy which is taking place in the lives of thousands of children in our confused culture. But when a child has known one such understanding friend there is hope.

Other children, as well as adults, may sometimes help the troubled child handle his aggressions, provided the teacher or parent can give a tactful suggestion, or will grant the freedom of opportunity. Retaliations are not so likely to be heaped upon the troubled child if the teacher says: "Sally seems to be having a hard time today. Can you think of any way to help her? Do you remember how she lent you her doll carriage yesterday when you felt cross?" At times a child may be helped by another child who states to him the direct truth. Recently a nursery teacher sat quietly by when three-year-old Peter asked Ruth Ann: "Do you like me, Ruth Ann?" "Yes, I do like you, Peter. But I don't like you when you hit me and it hurts." "Oh," said Peter thoughtfully, and was very gentle with the little girl the rest of the morning.

Adults, children, and sometimes even *things* may help a child find release from his hostile feelings. Hammer toys, punching bags, tin cans to stamp on and flatten out for the waste basket, are outlets which many nursery schools and homes provide. Sometimes a brisk play out of doors with a companionable adult will suffice. For some children certain kinds of music are a help.

Some teachers find that they can help certain children if they introduce to them possible roles to play which they may not have tried before. Seeing herself as the leader of the orchestra may erase from Becky's mind the thought of herself as being inadequate. Allowing Billy to spend most of the morning making a tom-tom for the group may crowd out from his mind his previous picture of himself as a destructive person. Encouraging Mary Louise to be the mother in the

doll house may help her to find satisfaction as protector and leader, deeper than the satisfactions she has been having as the baby of her family. Holding up for the recognition of the group the painting made by small Lucy, who has been treated as a Dresden doll by her admiring, capable, high school sister, may help her to feel the first stirrings of awareness of her own accomplishments.

Most of us who teach understand so little of what is back of a child's social behavior patterns — and even less of the wisest ways of redirecting the conduct in more wholesome patterns — that we should move with sensitive tread. For some steps a teacher's own intuitive judgment will be a safe guide. For others she will do well to wait for more observation and study of the child before making any plans. The too-certain adult is a dangerous one. Only to the ignorant does child guidance seem simple. Although we know that faulty environment may cause great damage to children's lives, we do not know with equal assurance just how to improve the environment. We may never be sure exactly which pressures are doing the greatest damage, nor which outlet should be tried first.

The sensitive leader, then, will begin with simple steps. She will first see that the relations between herself and the children are free from strain and are happy. She will remedy, if possible, the most obvious blights in the environment, such as the continuing of the habit of overdomination of the group by some one child, or constant criticism by some overanxious relative. She will give the group freedom to manipulate, to create, to experiment, and to play constructively together. She will give them acceptable outlets for their feelings of hostility. She will help the children to learn how to guide their own behavior through a growing understanding of cause and effect in human relations[3] rather than through an appeal to personal love or to fear of punishment, or even through any large use of personal approvals and disapprovals.

Children, of course, need adults who have enough self-

confidence to be comfortably firm and consistent in their social guidance. But they also need adults who realize that children arrive at the knowledge of effective social behavior only through experimenting all along the line from birth to adulthood, just as they must experiment in the physical world to learn the laws of nature. Children have a deep longing and readiness for affection, acceptance, and social recognition, but their love at times turns to hostility as they come into conflict with themselves, when they are at times pulled in two directions by their urge toward security on the one hand, and toward achievement on the other hand. While they are young they are still inexpert in seeking solutions to these conflicts, but the way is less hard, less destructive for their development, if they are undergirded by accepting, approving, and wise adults. We can help them more easily if we remember that back of all the social behavior of the child, acceptable or inacceptable, lies his impelling groping toward maturity, and his yearning for love.

6

Religious Festivals and the Young Child

From hand to hand the greeting flows,
From eye to eye the signals run,
From heart to heart the bright hope glows;
The seekers of the Light are one.

— SAMUEL LONGFELLOW

CELEBRATIONS OF HARVEST-TIME, of midwinter, and of spring-time are age old, and have been observed throughout the whole world by peoples of many religions. Celebrations in memory of sainted leaders, of great national victories, and of unforgettable days when nations were born, or of great causes finally come to fruition — these, also, have been days for special communal festivities of gladness and thanksgiving or of penitence and dedication.

Some of these festivals have been times of peculiar happiness for children, because they accent the warmth of friendships, and of family and national ties. Children are sensitive to these expanded feelings of community. Festive gatherings for feasting, for singing, for the giving and receiving of gifts, and for games and dances are pleasant breaks in the ordinary routines of commonplace happenings. Children naturally welcome these festivities.

Historical meanings lie back of these various festivals, and for the adults give to these occasions their peculiar significance.

These historical meanings are not simple to explain to young children of five and under. Yet thoughtful parents and adults in general are not quite satisfied to have the great religious festivals become completely secularized. Many children, for example, think of Thanksgiving as a day when an elaborate dinner is served. Christmas and Hanukkah have become seasons when children are taken to big department stores to see Santa Claus and the lavish displays in toyland; while the Easter and Passover seasons have become primarily times for new clothes, colored eggs, jelly beans, bunnies, and little more.

Very naturally the church and synagogue have tried to combat such a commercialization of their chief festivals; yet to attempt to explain the historical significance of these holidays to young children five and under presents many difficulties. Children's short lives have not yet given them an appreciation of times long ago and lands far away; nor can they imagine periods when conditions were different from those they know. Young children are likely to imagine Moses living as long ago as when grandfather was a boy, and the baby Jesus as alive in the present, being someone to whom they can actually give a birthday gift.

Nor do young children think in terms of nations and causes. They cannot grasp the meanings adults give to victory in war, to the enslavement of one nation by another, or to the birth of nations. The very names that divide the adult world religiously — Christian, Jewish, Mohammedan, Buddhist, Hindu, Confucianist can have no valuable meaning to preschool children. Nor can these young children understand the theological concepts imbedded in the stories of the miraculous birth of Confucius, Buddha, or Jesus, nor can they realize the difference between symbolic and real angels, or know the meaning of the poetry in myth. Most children under six have as yet not learned the simple facts regarding their own births. How can they grasp the mystery in the birth of a man said to be not like other persons — a divine being sent from heaven?

How can such adult language have for young children either the meaning an orthodox parent desires, or the meaning that seems appropriate to a liberal parent?

Let us not be led astray by the fact that children can easily be persuaded to say words without meaning if parents and teachers ask it of them. Some children will even insist they understand, when in reality they misunderstand. The development of a child's integrity in his use of language begins to be involved. It is difficult for us as adults to identify ourselves with small children's thinking and to be sensitive to their little pretenses, especially when these pretenses are carried through to please us.

Furthermore, children may thoroughly enjoy rituals even though they do not understand their meanings. In church and synagogue where children are usually given few opportunities for activity, such rituals supply a need for movement and dramatic participation, again regardless of the historical meanings these rituals have. But let us beware of the dangers involved if children learn to equate religious feelings with mere movements and ceremonies.

There is a further risk involved in imposing adult language on children when the meanings in these external acts are not understood or felt. This is the danger of outright misunderstanding and the gaining of ideas contrary to those which the teachers intended to convey and which as adults they might even scorn. Such mistaken ideas will have to be unlearned later on and the shock of being disillusioned may bring a resentful rejection of all religion.

Helen's father was a Protestant minister of integrity and kindliness. He and his wife had told Helen of Santa Claus and the stories of the baby Jesus, assuming that both were delightful tales every young child should have opportunity to enjoy. Playing the manger scenes with her neighbor friends had been a frequent pastime for Helen. But there came the day when she heard from her older brother that Santa Claus was not a

real person, that her parents had just been playing a game with her when they had pretended that Santa was real.

In distress Helen ran to her father's study and asked him point blank: "Is Santa Claus real, Daddy, or have you just been fooling me about him?" The father told his daughter the truth. "No, Santa is just a play person."

"Then," said Helen, "have you just been fooling me about Jesus and God, too?"

It was the father's turn to be shocked. He tried hard to set himself right with his daughter and to explain the difference between Jesus and God on the one hand and Santa Claus on the other. Santa as a play person Helen could accept without devastating disillusionment, but her belief in Jesus and God had been a real support to her feelings every night and morning, and now she felt deserted. It took a long time for her to rebuild her confidence in her father's religious instruction. Such an experience is probably not as unusual as we may think. Our cities and towns are peopled with thousands of disillusioned children grown to adult years, who now make light of their early religious teaching, and who have left the churches and synagogues in disappointment. True to the unthinking patterns encouraged in childhood they have never taken pains to work out a realistic faith worthy of their intelligence. Nor have they ever discovered that true religion is more fundamental than the repeating of religious forms of words and the retaining of old ritualistic celebrations.

If, then, teaching young children the historical meanings back of the great religious festivals is so difficult, how shall we introduce preschool children to them? Which of the experiences connected with these festivals give promise of contributing in the most wholesome way to the child's next stage of growth?

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving, a religious festival for all the United States,

regardless of sect or particular faith, is probably the simplest of all to explain to the very young.

To children living in the country the time of the ingathering of fruits and grains, at whatever season of the year it comes, is naturally a season for gladness. Children who live in our large industrialized cities, where markets are filled the year round with products from the ends of the earth, may miss this feeling for nature's rhythm. For them, some marked celebration of the bounty of the earth is especially important.

Thanksgiving is a time for talking about all that has been required for bringing fruits into ripeness. The rain, the sunshine, the winds, the earth, the seeds of life have all worked together to bring the harvest. Man's very existence depends on this co-operation. Thanksgiving is a time for telling stories of the animals in their summer and winter homes, of the birds that fly south when the cold days begin, of groundhogs and bears that sleep in protected shelters while the cold lasts, and of the animals who wisely store away food gathered in the summer for their winter's supply. Through actual experience in watching these animals and birds, and through hearing stories about them, the child may develop his first vague feeling for the rhythm of nature. Such experiences may serve as the little child's vivid introduction to the passing of time — and a thrilling introduction it may be if he begins to feel the stately and dependable nature of the great "dance of life."

In addition to awakening this emotional response to the ripening of nature's growing life, Thanksgiving may bring to the child an increased awareness of his relation to his family beyond that of his immediate home circle. For many, Thanksgiving is the day of days to visit relatives, or to have a stranger in the home to whom the family may stand in lieu of his relatives. "Over the river and through the woods to grandfather's house we go" may no longer be associated in the child's mind with the one-horse sleigh, but the thrill in the assurance of secure welcome is as great in this decade as it has ever been.

Many adults have found that their happiest childhood memories are associated with the joys of such family experiences.

There is also the opportunity for the child in a more privileged home to learn that his parents have made sure that the laundress, or the paper boy, or the milkman, or the rural delivery man are also able to have a good Thanksgiving dinner. If the young child is asked to contribute a gift, however, to someone outside the home it is important that the child knows the recipient and feels friendly towards him.

It is doubtful whether any good can come to such small children if they are asked to bring to the church or school some "food for the poor children." One mother attempted patiently to persuade her four-year-old daughter to give one of her dolls to a poor child who had none. When Anne finally carried the prettily wrapped package to her church nursery the mother was much pleased. But Anne, on entering the room, looked about and asked: "Where are the poor children?" When she learned that they were not coming and that they lived far away she said: "Well, then I'm not going to give them my doll." This kind of philanthropy, bestowed upon unseen people in need, is appropriate for older children and for adults, since they have the ability to identify themselves with people whom they have never seen, but it can have little meaning to preschool children. If such outward forms of generosity, imposed upon children by the persuasive powers of adults, are repeated through childhood they may eventually serve as barriers to a true and imaginative social sharing and planning. On the other hand, some simple and natural experience in sharing his belongings with another person who is real to the child may become a milestone marking the child's imaginative emotional entrance into the larger neighborhood community of which he is a part.

When young children are gathered together in nurseries and kindergartens during the Thanksgiving season the question naturally arises: What songs and prayers of thanksgiving

shall we teach them to sing and say? Some are convinced that there are great hymns, and beautiful Biblical expressions of praise, and prayers in the prayer book which are all parts of the child's rightful heritage, and that familiarity with the language should begin even before the meanings can be understood. It is believed that later in life the words will be remembered and come to have rich meaning.

In the light of what has previously been said, however, it would seem that other more childlike ways should be found in which children may express their feelings of gratitude than for them to be trained to chant beautifully worded liturgies or to sing hymns that are great from the point of view of adults rather than meaningful to young children. "Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh" might well be paraphrased into "Unless there be fullness of heart what does it profit a child if the mouth speaketh?"

Having in mind children's natural ways of expression, therefore, we should prefer to use in these group gatherings wordless music to which children may dance their feelings with spontaneity, pantomiming, if they wish, the movement of harvesters or of animals gathering and storing their food.

Short but natural conversations while the group is gathered together may help five-year-olds to recall especially happy times. "What am I glad about? What am I thankful for?" said a serious five-year-old one Thanksgiving season. "Why," he said very slowly, "I'm thankful for the shining kitchen pans." Most young children are likely to think in just such concrete terms when they are asked to say their "Thank you's"! It is for the new kittens, the new electric train, the new doll that the young child is likely to feel grateful. Even for such things, however, many do not easily put their gratitude into words unless adults ask them to do so. What three-year-old is likely to thank his father for building a fire or his mother for cooking his dinner, or for the happy home in which he lives? Children's appreciations are expressed in other ways

than in words — by sparkling eyes, a lilting dance, a waving of the arms, heartiness in eating, or perhaps merely by an immediate absorbed attention in the new gift.

When adults try to have children go beyond these natural expressions of gladness to say their thank you's to God, the source of all that is, then difficulties are likely to arise.

A mother asked her four-year-old to thank God in his prayer for his new express wagon. "But God did not give me my wagon," he protested. "It was Auntie Bess." Again the child's reasoning was sound. For him Auntie Bess was the one to whom thanks were due, and to be glad for what she had done was natural thankgiving enough for so young a child. If children do not first learn to show their thankfulness to those whom they can see and know, how can they learn to express true thankfulness to an invisible God? To begin with such concrete and special blessings, and to try to lead the young child back at once to the ultimate source of all that we have — namely to God — is to ask him to take a bigger step than his experience has as yet prepared him to take.

In Volume I of the Martin and Judy series there is a story entitled "Whose House Is It?" In this story, Judy for the first time feels that her house belongs to everybody in the family. She moves from the feeling "it is mine" into the feeling "it is ours." This seems like a small step in social expansion, but it is one a small child can take for himself if he can first have the kind of experience Judy had. In the second volume of the series are four stories in which Martin's and Judy's curiosity and sense of mystery are awakened by their first direct contact with things such as are available to every child. "Something New in Judy's Yard" is an ant hill. "Something New In Martin's Yard" is a spider in his web. In the story "Judy Looks At the Moon," she sits in her father's lap as she thinks and wonders about the moon. In "Judy and the Bright-Colored Sky" they watch the sunset together and feel its glory. To small children the world is new. Things old and common-

place to adults children discover for the first time with the glow of surprise.

A two-year-old for the first time caught sight of a bright-colored butterfly flitting through the air. The child ran after it, her face lifted up, her eyes glowing, her hand outstretched all the while and her finger pointing toward the circling beauty. Although she could not talk, she seemed to be saying to her mother, "Look! Look! I'm seeing a new wonder!" Such experiences as these, coming one after the other as the days go by, furnish the young child with the real vitamins for his spiritual growth. The bigger feelings and more expansive thoughts needed for sensing the intelligence and creative *élan vital* in the whole universe and in all life will naturally come later if the child is not pushed into unreal forms of expression prematurely before he feels the larger need.

The Midwinter Festivals

In the midwinter season our western communities are divided in their celebrations, the Jews observing Hanukkah and the Christians observing Christmas. This fact presents difficulties to parents who are sensitive to the prejudices which now divide the adult world and who hope that the younger generation will be able in its time of adulthood to live in a world of greater mutual understanding and brotherhood than we ourselves have achieved. Furthermore, both Hanukkah and Christmas are based upon historical happenings nearly two thousand years past. How can a Jewish parent explain Christmas? And how can a Christian parent explain Hanukkah to three-, four-, and five-year-old children? Or how, indeed, can each explain his own special celebration?

In thinking through this problem let us note, in the first place, that preschool children cannot appreciate the historical episodes back of either Christmas or Hanukkah, and therefore the simpler we can keep our conversations, our singing,

and our rituals in their presence the more sincere the celebrations can be for the children.

Nor are these the appropriate years in which to begin building up in the child a special loyalty to a special group, whether it be Jewish, Christian, Mohammedan, Hindu, or Buddhist. Mankind is already too much influenced by unthinking emotional loyalties established in personalities before the age of intelligent appreciation. Most of us feel that there are high values in our own special inherited customs and ideologies, but these special values can be more heartily taken over and preserved, with tolerance for differing values, if they are explained to children *after* they have had enough experience with life to be able to imagine and to criticize these particular traditions.

It would seem wise, therefore, for both Jewish and Christian parents, if we desire our children to be reasonable in their religious attitudes, to bring into our own celebrations of Hanukkah and Christmas those elements that are shared by both traditions. It may be necessary to say to a child: "Some families call this time Christmas. Other families call the time Hanukkah. But the name does not matter to us. Sometime we will explain it all to you. What we want you to know now is that this season is an especially happy time for all of us."

The Jewish practice of spreading a little of the celebration over an entire week, or rather over eight days, is a feature that might well be taken over in other homes. "We light a candle this first night," mother or father may say. "Tomorrow we shall light two candles, and the next night three, until on the last great night we shall have eight candles in our candlestick!" Such a beautiful ritual might well be participated in by Christians as well as Jews.

May the time come also when in Jewish homes as well as in Christian homes children may freely enjoy the gaiety of

lighted and decorated trees. The tree is an ancient symbol of the greatness of life, used in pre-Christian Europe and in the Orient. The tree has a universal appeal and Christians should not be permitted to monopolize its symbolism.

Furthermore, we all like to play that a fairy named Santa Claus goes around secretly to all homes and brings gifts for all children and for everybody. In modern nursery schools young children are asked to join in this Santa Claus play by making and delivering gifts themselves so that from the very earliest years Santa is as real as their own, and other people's, interest in others is real. Such a delightful good-will play should be the privilege of all children everywhere regardless of their parents' special historical connections.[1]

Both Christmas and Hanukkah, however, have their special historical meanings. Although reference to these may not be entirely omitted from our celebrations for young children, we can try to keep these references as simple as possible. We should seek to place the emphasis not upon what is peculiar to our own particular group, but upon those factors which have universal value which all children can appreciate. What then are these shared historical values?

These festivals are times for remembering the long, long ago. Christmas is a time for remembering a good man who lived long ago. Everyone likes a truly good man. And a grown-up person is always a baby in the beginning. So the birthday of the baby that grew to be Jesus, the good man, is important. Christmas has become a time also when we remember how important all babies are.

Hanukkah is also a time for remembering a happening long ago when a certain people stopped fighting. Their war was over and at last they could live happily and freely without being afraid. The "peace on earth" that the angels are said to have sung on the night of Jesus's birth is the theme of Hanukkah also.

Christmas and Hanukkah, then, are times for special hap-

piness and for the giving and receiving of gifts to show our love for one another. These festivals are like "everybody's birthday" celebration.[2] We cannot give presents to the people who lived in the long ago, but we can give presents to each other. These are days when we hope that every single person will find that someone likes him enough to give him at least one present, and that every single person will give at least one present to someone else. We want everyone to know that someone is glad that he was born. Christmas and Hanukkah are, therefore, days for candles and many beautiful things. When we think in terms of these larger meanings we wonder why we should have so much difficulty in promoting the feeling of a common celebration.

It is when we try to explain the concrete differences in our customs rather than our basic likenesses, and when we try to explain our theological interpretations, that difficulties arise with young children. These peculiar features in our separate ancient ceremonies, however, are the very parts which many adults insist must be presented forever and ever the same, else the special values transmitted through our separate traditions will be lost. Is it not appropriate, however, to ask if we should not rather, in this age of magnified change and newness, be searching for new customs, new music and art, and new religious rituals to express our changed ideas and feelings? At least for the children's sake should we not be creating new forms of celebration to express the universal meanings that lie imbedded in the old events, the meanings that are the really important emphases for our day? Sometime we may be even courageous enough to choose new events to honor.

Let us take as an example of our problem the question: how may children be first introduced to Jesus so that a real interest in him as a person significant in the history of mankind will begin? Since in our modern age, miraculous happenings, contrary to the known laws of life, are under doubt, is it wise when introducing Jesus to children for the first time

to emphasize his babyhood so exclusively and to present him as being born in a way unlike all other babies? Does not a scientific age call for a more natural approach to the world's memory of Jesus?

Furthermore, the theological implications of the stories of the birth of Jesus as told in Matthew and Luke, whether taken as fact or as legend, cannot be understood by children under six, and to tell them at this early age is almost sure to be confusing. Most young children of three and four are just beginning to ask questions about how babies come, and most of them have as yet been told little or nothing. There is so much of mystery and wonder inherent in the facts that are true of all babies that the simplest of these facts are enough for a young child to face. It is unnecessarily confusing if the first conception of the birth of babies is made glamorous with angels. Even though parents may themselves believe the Biblical stories of the birth of Jesus to be representations of the truth, why introduce little children to this unique birth before they know the facts of an ordinary birth and, therefore, before they have even the least means by which to estimate for themselves the truth regarding an extraordinary birth? If the wonder stories of the birth of Jesus are told, the sense of mystery may be shifted from the place where it should be focused, and the halo placed upon a lovely myth — an adult symbol that stands in place of the mystery.

Such logical and austere reasoning, however, is difficult to live by, for we are part of a cultural group that prizes its traditions. Deep emotions are so woven into our attitudes toward these Christmas stories that as adults we are quite unable to be objective. Then too, our Christmas customs bring these stories continually into the picture, whether we wish it or not. Our much-loved caroling assumes the stories. Some of these carols are taught to little children in almost every nursery school in the land — even in public nurseries professing no religious bias. Consequently, even the staunch-

est advocates of a more intelligently directed approach to Jesus for small children find themselves obliged to make compromises, or to evade the issues.

This is sometimes done by singing the carols without any effort at explaining their meanings, and by telling the old stories of the miraculous birth merely because children like the stories. Since children of this age do not distinguish clearly between fact and fancy the stories are left as wonder tales to stand alongside those of Grimm. Such parents and teachers trust the child's growing intelligence to help him work through the confusions and they hope that in the end he will appreciate the symbolic meanings that adults find in these legends regarding the wonder of life in its first manifestations.

Such procedures may be necessary at the stage of cultural development in which we as a generation now live. They can scarcely be regarded, however, as educationally sound procedures. We hope that someday a more natural kind of birthday celebration in honor of Jesus, the man whose historical significance has reached across national and racial boundaries, will become common, and that both Christians and Jews can join in the celebration.

Whatever we may do with the historical backgrounds of these religious festivals, however, we can take courage in the assurance that the feeling tones and the community relationships that prevail during our celebrations of Christmas and Hanukkah are the things that really count with young children. These festivals are well worth all the efforts they call for if our children feel the warmth of our common feelings of good will, and if they have opportunities for participating through their own choices and original creations in the sharing of this common kindliness and love.

Spring Festivals

In the springtime also, our society is divided in its religious festivals because of our differing historical backgrounds. Fol-

lowing the same general point of view for these spring celebrations as we have suggested for the midwinter festivals, it would seem desirable for both Christians and Jews to accent in their ceremonies for young children the natural and universal experience of rebirth, the renewal of life forms with the coming of the spring.

The passion, the crucifixion, the burial, and the resurrection of Jesus are clearly not within the young child's field of wonder and understanding. The nursery and kindergarten are not appropriate places for the story of a martyr or of a God dying and living again. Nor is the story of Israel's escape from Egypt, the traditional Passover story, one that fits the needs of young children. It involves conceiving of two nations, one enslaved and the other powerful, one unjustly treated and the other cruel, and of a God who protected and blessed the oppressed group by means of special miracles. For the preschool child such a story can have no valuable meaning.

Why therefore in our celebrations with young children of Passover and of Easter can we not simply abandon all effort to explain the special historical backgrounds of the two festivals, and instead let the younger children celebrate the primary natural event — the coming of spring with its newly awakened life. The word Easter comes from an old Teutonic word — *Oestre* — meaning Spring. Christians can have no exclusive claim to the name. The Passover festival developed out of the ancient spring sacrifices of the first-born of the flock, and the date of Easter has been set as the first Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal equinox. Spring festivals have been common in nations the world around: China, India, Persia, Greece, Egypt were observing spring festivals centuries before Christ was born or ever the Hebrew people were enslaved in Egypt.

The young child knowing as yet little of life cannot know death or resurrection, slavery or freedom. Why not begin with what he can experience? To appreciate the spring a

child does not need to know history. Spring he experiences for himself. Even in tropical climates there is the revival of nature that comes after the months of drought. Everywhere there is spring. The glory of it is all around the child. He finds it in the crocus peeping out of the dark earth. He finds it in the pussy willows and the leaf buds bursting to bring color to the trees. He finds it in the daffodils and the tulips in his own lawn and garden.

The young child may even participate in bringing the new life forms into being by planting bulbs and seeds, by watching them, sunning them, and waiting for the signs of new life. The mystery of a seed transforming itself into a flower or a tree is an ageless mystery before which young and old alike stand in awe.

The egg has been a symbol of this life mystery from the earliest days. Colored eggs were exchanged in Egypt and Persia long before Christ was born or the Passover feast was ever observed. Sometime, during the early years of childhood, city children as well as farmers' children should know the thrill of seeing small chicks just hatched from their shells. Our little Humpty-Dumpty Easter eggs, before we have robbed them of their sparks of life, are really more wonderful than anything "all the King's horses and all the King's men" can make. Once destroyed, an egg can never be put together again. It is because of this mysterious thing we call life within the shell that the egg became a sacred symbol, and later was turned into a plaything. Little children can be led to sense the real miracle here, and from this experience they may begin to know the miracle within the eggs from which they themselves have grown.

In the *Martin and Judy* series and in the *Martin and Judy Songs,* experiences with birth and the wonder of growing things, of seeds and flowers, and of growing animals, are expressed in story and song.

No matter in what latitude a child may live, nature will re-

veal some kind of rhythm in its changes. Daytime always follows nighttime. The sun shines high in the sky at noon and dips its head in the sunset clouds at dusk. Flowers grow from bulbs and seeds, and seeds come from flowers. Chickens come only from eggs, and eggs come from chickens. In homes and nurseries many opportunities may be given for little children to watch these rhythmic changes — dependable, and seemingly unending. "Nobody can make the morning," said a child in wonder. Children need such direct experiences with earth and sky, with plant life and animal life — with flowers, fishes, rabbits, kittens, chicks. To appropriate music children will take delight in pantomimic dancing, expressive of growth and change — in animals and plants, in rivers and seasons. These are the great experiences that the common seasonal festivals may emphasize and enrich for young children.

The Child's Own Birthday

Both in the home and in the nursery group the celebration of the child's birthday may have true spiritual value. The birthday, as does no other festival, emphasizes in the mind of the child his own peculiar value and importance. The child may well be led to feel that through the group's celebration of this, his own day, his friends and family bear witness to their delight in him as an individual.

Every group and every family will, of course, have its own tradition in the celebration of the birthdays within its circle. In most nursery groups a special song is sung. Some have the pleasant custom of letting that child whose birthday is to be celebrated be the host at the simple midmorning lunch, his mother providing the fruit juice and wafers for that day, and perhaps adding festive napkins. In some groups it is the custom for the child to give some gift, a story book or a picture, to the room or the school on his birthday.

In the home other lovely traditions may mark the birthday milestones. Certain measurements may be recorded, or mov-

ing pictures taken. The lighted cake is well-nigh universal. In the mind of the little child, it is a party if there is a simple supper, a lighted cake, and one or two guests. A party, with only a few guests, where natural, constructive play with wholesome equipment is encouraged, rather than adult-directed games, is sufficiently exciting to little children. Sometime during the birthday, fathers and mothers should find an opportunity to speak intimately to their child and to tell him once more of the delight which they experienced on the day of his birth, and to assure him of the continuing joy he has been bringing them through the succeeding years.

The mother who wants the experience of giving a party to be of the largest possible value to her child will let him help to do the shopping for the decorations, help to plan the menu, and help to buy perhaps some little token for each of his guests. In short, she will try to have the child realize that he is giving pleasure to others through his birthday. Then when the party comes, and the excited child in delight and glory opens his gifts from his friends, as they sit in eagerness about him, as he blows out his candles and cuts his cake, the thrill of being so much the center of attention is well balanced by the experience he has previously had of giving to his friends. Such thrills are indispensable if the child is to become secure and radiant, a well-adjusted personality.

Equally important to wholesome adjustment is the experience, most gracefully learned when young, of being one of those in a group in such a celebration, on a day when it is not one's own birthday. The art of giving pleasure when one feels his own self important is no more valuable than the supplementary art of being an inconspicuous but co-operating member of a group when someone else is in the spotlight.

Not all parties need to be in the afternoon. One family regularly celebrates a May birthday by morning play on the beach at a nearby lake, with a simple dinner at noon. The celebration is held on the Saturday nearest the birthday. Some parents

give their children a choice of methods — one year a trip to the zoo, another to see a marionette play, another a picnic.

Even more important than the young child's discoveries regarding the wonder of living things and of the constancy of nature, which should come with the seasonal festivals discussed in this chapter, is the child's unconscious but real experience with a constancy in his relationships with his parents and teachers. Each child needs to feel the reality of a love that never fades. Whatever else may fade or change, this at least abides. To be sure, at birthdays and at Christmas or Hanukkah, children will receive unusual expressions of this love. Like the ocean tides, evidences of affection rise and ebb. Yet always underneath, the love is found — dependable, irresistible, unending — as is the constancy of nature.

Children privileged to live in the presence of such spiritual constancy, along with its natural rhythm, even though they are not conscious of what is happening to them, are being undergirded for the stresses and disappointments of life. Some day when they are older they will be able to know, through their own experiences, the meaning of those ancient words in Deuteronomy: "The eternal God is thy dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms." As a small seed grows — "first the blade, then the ear and then the full corn in the ear" — so grows faith in the essential goodness of the universe.

7

Experiences with the Dark and with Dreams

I am not one
Who must have everything; yet I must have
My dreams if I must live, for they are mine.
Wisdom is not one word and then another
Till words are like dry leaves under a tree;
Wisdom is like a dawn that comes up slowly
Out of an unknown ocean.

— EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

BEDTIME, WHICH IDEALLY SHOULD BE the signal for the happy contented child to slip willingly into relaxation after the constant activity of his day, and then to sleep, may on the contrary be a period of fearfulness, rebellion, crying or of adroit intrigues for attention. How many parents develop in their young children a readiness for rest when bedtime comes? It is the rare parent indeed who has not at times felt frustrated in solving this problem.

"We tuck our children into bed at night," said President Herbert Hoover at the First White House Conference on Children and Youth, "with mingled feelings of tenderness and relief." The "relief" is the adult's private privilege, but for the child it is the "tenderness" that is the fundamental feeling to communicate. Going to sleep means a withdrawing from companionship. It brings a vague sense of aloneness; a feeling of going away somewhere. The young child needs a parting

kiss and special expression of love at this time, and assurance that the parent or parent-substitute is near by.

Many a child feels more secure if, as the adult leaves him, he finds himself with the comforting presence of one or more of his favorite toys. These may be a doll, a soft furry animal, sometimes even a piece of soft cloth, or lacking these, his own thumb. To take such a companion as a Teddy bear to bed seems to us so natural a pleasure that we recommend it.

Besides these evidences of affectionate care, the young child needs to be physically ready for bed. He should have had enough outlets for his energies, especially in the outdoors, so that he is really ready. Having an even sequence of active experiences, alternating with quieter ones during the day, he usually becomes accustomed to relaxing for sleep at about the same time every night. By an even sequence of his day's activities, we do not mean a rigid schedule, but a fairly consistent order from day to day, for meals, baths, play out of doors and quieter times in the house. A mother who wishes her child to have a nap directly after lunch will do well to arrange for this regularly, without permitting him on frequent occasions to go out to play for a little while first or to run to the store with her.

The daily sequences need adjustment from time to time to keep in tune with the child's development, and no parent is able to be so sensitive to his child's changing needs that all occasions for rebellion are avoided, yet we know that sleep blesses most quickly those who are not fighting against it. While the little child may not be able to tell time, he can easily understand when the adult says: "Very soon it will be time to put your doll to bed and then for you to go to sleep yourself." Or "after you have parked your tricycle you will be ready to park yourself for the night," rather than the you-step-now-or-else type of order which unnecessarily catches the child half through what may be to him a very important business, and sends him, unsatisfied, storming off to bed.

The type of pleasure which the adult arranges for the child just before his bedtime is also important. Those parents are probably wise who arrange, even though it means a consistently late bedtime, to permit Father some playtime with the child; but this is not the time for romping, or exciting dramatic activity. Rather it is the time for quiet play or for stories, perhaps a little singing, chatting, at times confiding, all of which are as much within the abilities of the father as of the mother.

The room, too, should suggest sleep. Even though it may have served as a playroom through the day, it is well for the mother to slip up alone to it before sleep time, finish putting away the toys and other distractions, lower the shades and open the bed, before the tired child arrives to undress.

The words and actions of the adult in the presence of the child should be such as to foster relaxation. That is why the suggestion of "hurry" at this time is so fatal for accomplishing its mark. This sense of hurry on the part of the adult, even though she may be most careful not to say a word, is almost inevitably communicated to the child.

While being put to bed should not be used as a punishment — for obvious reasons — at times there seems to be wisdom in associating rewards with bedtime. For example, if a mother is in the hospital for a period of time while an inexperienced person has been a mother-substitute, the mother may find upon her return that the child's bedtime has been considerably delayed, and the child may balk at returning to his earlier hour. If for a few nights, the child, as he is asked to go to bed, is told that *when* (never "if") he goes to his room he will find a little surprise under his pillow, this may help him "over the hump" of his temporary resistance. Such a procedure may also prove helpful when such other innovations in the home as a new baby, or illness of some other member of the family, or a frightening experience, has thrown the child off schedule. How much and when to use such special delights to foster new

associations must depend on the parent's own good judgment.

One thing, however, is of all things most important in the child's bedtime experience: this is that he be put to bed by someone who enjoys the hour and who glimpses its possibilities for happiness, to the child and to himself. Whether the adult be father or mother, or someone else, let him not fix his adult mind upon the next events of a busy evening. If an evening engagement necessitates the parents' leaving the house at an exact time, let the child be started off so early that the parent can put him to bed, and yet feel unhurried and relaxed. The evening story or, for the three-year-old, the singing together of some beautiful lullaby, may come to have in the anticipation of the child so important a place that to deprive him of it and hurry him into bed largely to suit adult convenience is likely to send him to sleep disappointed and resentful.

"Parents, enjoy your children!" is an injunction second only in importance to the more widely accepted adage "Parents, love your children!"

Developing Confident Attitudes Toward the Dark

If from early infancy the child has experienced security and gentle dealing at bedtime he is not likely to be concerned as to whether it is dark or light when he goes to sleep. But sometimes experiences which the parent cannot control introduce fearful feelings as the child grows older. These may come about through the radio, a superstitious helper in the home, an older child who has told him something "scary," or a real experience such as a nighttime fire next door. Among experiments by other parents which have been found helpful in reducing such fears, the following may serve as suggestions:

Playing an interesting but not exciting game, where running in and out of the dark is involved, such as hunting for a doll or a hidden toy.

Interesting the child in the stars or moon which can best be seen from his bedroom window when the lights are out.

Furnishing the child with a flashlight or long string to his ceiling light, so that he feels he has power over his environment.

Reading to the child of other little children and young animals going happily to sleep.

Singing quiet lullabies to the child to induce the feeling of restfulness and security.

Whenever possible, helping to dispel the cause of the child's fear or giving the child a closer acquaintance with the force that has frightened him, yet at the same time, avoiding all unnecessary talk about the child's fearful behavior.

Associating during the daytime, if possible, pleasant experiences with the thing the child fears at night.

Giving the child assurance of the physical nearness of the adult during the period when fear is most acute (as in allowing the child's door to be open or even sleeping in the room with the child if a serious fear situation has arisen). After the child becomes more secure, the adult can gradually wean himself away.

Rest Time in the Nursery Group

In an all-day nursery, a period for rest, and if possible for sleep, seems just as necessary as in the home. The problem of creating the mood, however, where a number of children are together in one room, is perhaps even more difficult to solve. An even sequence in the schedule, regularity in the time of the rest period, and the quiet assumption that "This is now rest time" are as much needed in the nursery as in the home. Individual cots, with some kind of screen or curtain between them, should be arranged, if possible, in order to limit the distraction caused by seeing other children tossing. The teachers will move about quietly, and calmly, and will deal with each child very gently. At no time is it more necessary for the nursery teacher to remember she is acting as a mother-substitute than at the child's rest time.

For a nursery group meeting for only a half-day session, whether weekly or merely Sundays, the question of the desirability of a rest time has been re-examined during the past few years. Teachers should make their plans on this score with open minds, trying to base their procedure upon the children's physiological and psychological needs rather than on tradition. These are some of the questions being asked: Would the children rest in the middle of the morning if they were at home? Would they choose to rest at the school if they were given a free choice? When the children are told at a certain hour to lie still and be quiet, how large a proportion of them really do relax? What happens to the child's growing desire for self-direction, if he is *made* to be quiet when he feels no need for rest?

Some leaders, after experimentation both with and without the rest time, have solved the problem by having a rest period for those who wish it (with some silence and later some music), allowing those who do not choose to lie down to play quietly in an adjoining room. Others have found that, if the sequence of activities is well planned, a quiet period, about halfway through the morning, for listening to music or for a story is all the quietness most of the children need or wish. Some leaders of church school nurseries have found that the rest time, especially if the shades have been pulled down, has been the time when timid children have most missed their mothers, and a few have, as a result, developed a dislike of their Sunday nursery.

But even in a nursery or kindergarten group meeting but once a week we would have, if possible, a quiet corner or room with a cot or two or a few comfortable clean rugs, where a child who feels the need may seek a little rest. Moreover, teachers have an old resource to offer when needed. Did not Grandmother, when noticing a small child drooping or becoming too high strung, gather him up to rest in her capable and secure arms, and sing to him her soothing lullabies?

Helping the Child Deal With His Dreams

Children, like all adults, dream. They probably dream long before they are old enough to talk about their dreams. By four and five they are able to report them.

At Columbia University, Dr. Arthur Jersild and his associates asked 400 children, from five to twelve years old, a number of questions regarding the things they were afraid of. Among the responses were 140 instances where these children spoke of fear in connection with the dark, of being alone at night, of hearing noises at night, of dreaming and of apparitions. Of those with high intelligence (I.Q. 120 or above), nearly twice as many reported fears of these kinds as did those of average intelligence.[1] Some two years later another study was made of the same children. It was found that although fears of many kinds had decreased during the interval between the two studies, there was a marked increase as the children grew older, in the "frequency of fears of imaginary, fanciful, subjective, supernatural, or remote dangers (including fear of the dark and imaginary creatures associated with the dark, fear of matters associated with death and corpses, of being alone, of bogies and other imaginary creatures, . . . and also fears arising during dreams and nightmares). These categories accounted for 5 per cent of the fears when the children were first studied, as compared with 24 per cent of the fears reported in the follow-up study."[2]

The dreams of children, however, are not always terrifying. Dreaming may be one of the most exhilarating experiences that an individual can have, thrilling him with the realization that his mind may at times transcend the prosaic confines of time and space and lead him far toward some goal or some solution of a problem he is ambitious to solve. Dr. Jersild, however, when questioning the 400 children about their dreams, found that the children reported a greater frequency of unpleasant than of pleasant dreams. Of recurrent dreams reported, 163 were unpleasant and only 67 pleasant. He found

that 14 per cent reported as their chief fear that of being alone in the dark or in strange places, and 12 per cent had had dreams of these same experiences. Those children with intelligence quotients of 120 or above had unpleasant dreams twice as often as pleasant dreams and were more likely to dream of strange people and the dark than were their less alert classmates.

Whether pleasant or unpleasant, the experience of dreaming, if left entirely unexplained by the adult, must be confusing to a little child, and one would expect it to lead him to seek some explanation from a trusted adult as to what is real and what is imaginary. Perhaps as parents and teachers we have not done enough to lead small children to a beginning of an understanding of this amazing power. The young child with his afternoon nap time and his early bedtime spends a considerable fraction of his hours in bed. To be alone in the dark means that there is considerable time for the free use of the imagination. Whether this fancy will be directed by the child to the realm of pleasant constructive experiences, or will be concerned with thoughts of dangers, of fear, of unresolved problems which have been disquieting, depends to a large extent upon the child's relations with the adults nearest and dearest to him.

In trying to discover the nature of the young child's dream life, the adult needs to be especially discerning. Not to the tortoise alone has Nature given the privilege of withdrawing into his shell at the approach of danger. Like the tortoise, many children appear to be self-sufficient, calm, and contented when at heart they feel most insecure. They have learned, even at this early age, to defend themselves from real and fancied danger by drawing into their own shells. Such children may be highly sensitive, aquiver with inarticulate fears. They may sleep lightly and restlessly and cry out in their dreams. The wise teacher or parent will strive to learn to distinguish between the quiet born of inner resourcefulness

and the withdrawing which comes from social insecurity, and will try to give special care toward reassuring the more repressed child.

In view then of the significance of children's attitudes toward the dark and toward their own dream life, a series of narratives and songs relating to bedtime and to dreaming have been included in the Martin and Judy series. "Hiding in the Dark" and "Darkness Hides All Things" are intended to associate in the child's mind his own bedtime experience with the thought that other children find the dark a source of fun and interest. "Nighttime" has been written to suggest to children ways of helping themselves solve their own problems. There follow two stories of dreaming. In the first, Martin has a pleasant dream; in the second, he has an unhappy dream. The manner in which the parents in each case deal with the child's dream may be suggestive.

When a child runs to his parents' room after a bad dream, the parent will comfort him calmly and help him to settle down to sleep again in the security of the parent's presence for a while. If at the time or later when the daylight comes, the child can talk over the dream, the parent may be able to help him to see that there is no reality to dream objects and therefore nothing for him to fear. The dream, however, may make clear to the parent that the child is unhappy about something in his daily experiences which the parent has in his power to change; at least he can reassure the child of his love. Such a dream might be one in which the child thought that his father had taken a trip and could not get back home, or a dream in which the child feared that he himself had gone away from home and when he returned found that a baby had taken his room and that his parents had no place for him, or a dream in which he was frightened by some big animal.

If such dreams are recurrent,[3] parents may well give special attention to them. A check on the child's health and eating habits is the first step. Do certain foods when eaten at supper

give him discomfort? Does he have too much and too irritating a diet so far as roughage goes? Is he constipated? Often a physician or a psychologist may unearth the cause.

The parents may also try harder than before to help the child resolve his conflicts and problems as they arise during the day or, at least before he is left for the night, so that he does not have unsolved issues facing him as fears before he goes to sleep. When Judy and her mother, in the story "Judy Makes a Mistake" (Vol. III), talk over how Judy can pay back the nickel she has taken from the mother's purse, they settle it then and there. This is much wiser than to have Judy's mother put off the issue by saying, "We'll see about that in the morning."

Parents of a child who has bad dreams will be especially careful to arrange for the general tenor of the child's days to be as tranquil as possible. Picnics, walks to the park, jolly games and spontaneous fun are, of course, to be encouraged. But for the high-strung child these treats should be simple and sensible. Certain other experiences, even though many other parents do plan them for their children, may be unwise and quite unnecessary for the happiness of a given preschool child. Such include the trip to the circus, a day at the State Fair, the downtown parade (how little a small child really can see of a crowded parade!), a movie, a hurried, fairly long, week-end trip. Even though it sometimes seems necessary to have the child go through such experiences for the sake of values to other members of the family, where they must act as a unit, it is important to keep the contacts simple for the preschool child.

If the child having the disturbing dreams has a vivid imagination, the ingenious parent can do much to channel this imagination into wholesome outlets during the daytime in such ways as playing with finger puppets, story-telling, dramatization, and art work, so that the child's energies need not be spent exclusively on playing make-believe at bedtime.

It is well known that the radio is responsible for the terrify-

ing dreams of many children. Parents of an only child are fortunate in that they can postpone until well beyond the preschool years his interest in the radio or television, simply by having such an instrument on only during the comparatively few periods when there is an excellent program. When there are older children in the family it is much harder to protect the younger child from overstimulation. One way, perhaps the best, is openly to enlist the co-operation of big brother and sister in protecting the younger child. A mother may read to the preschool child in his own room while big brother uses the family radio in the living room. The parent may even be clever enough to devise a reading time so attractive to both big and little brother that the radio or video loses out. But all should agree that hair-raising programs should not be offered, at least to younger children. Happy, active companionship between the parents and each of the children in a family often precludes the need for a child to seek passive absorption in his "programs."

Praying at Bedtime

Whether children of three and four should be encouraged to pray at bedtime is a question too large and too important to be included in this chapter, and will be discussed later. But one element present in prayer at its best should be mentioned here, for it is possible for all parents, orthodox, agnostic, or uncertain. Many have found it valuable enough to include as a part of the bedtime procedure, at least several times each week. This is the opportunity the hour presents for quiet, friendly talk and meditation over the day's events. "Some parents who no longer feel natural in asking their children to kneel in prayer are planning similar periods for them when, either alone or with some grown-up, the children may quietly think and talk over frankly the day's conflicts and joys. Such occasions for little children might make possible their first steps away from an unmeditative snatching of life in momen-

tary pieces and toward a taking of a longer-time view of themselves and of their growing social world. If the modern child is encouraged to live without some periodic opportunities to reflect in quiet and he becomes accustomed hastily and superficially to snatch the scraps of life that are immediately at hand, he will miss much. Children have not infrequently found this value in the act of prayer. Such experiences tend to deepen the stream; to give life fullness of meaning. . . . [But] the talking over of everyday events with children calls for a fine art if children themselves are to be given the opportunity to take the major steps in the thinking process."[4]

8

The Courageous Child

Out of the infinite heart of love we have come through you but not of you, into the now. We are the ever-new, yet ever-old miracle of the incarnation—God coming to dwell among men.

Encumber us not with tawdry things, but give us a chance to grow souls sensitive to beauty, vibrant with good will, and hungry for the imperishable values of life.

Wither us not with fear, but touch with faith's wand the mystic springs of courage in our trusting souls.

Open unto us doors of reverence for all brave deeds, yearning for all true facts, and the high responsibility of duty.

Walk with us in understanding comradeship to the house of prayer where together we may know the meaning and purpose of life.

We give thanks for you, for all you have given us, for all you have hoped for us. We will not fail your dream for us when we at last beg leave and take our place as the builders of the new tomorrow.

We are your children.

—W. Waldemar W. Argow

Trintje was standing back against the iris border watching the older children in her play-group marching one by one across the walking-board, a twelve-foot two-by-four raised some three inches above the grass. She herself, aged twenty-eight months, had not yet ventured to try it. The mother-in-charge looked across from the jolly little group about her to where Trintje stood watching, the sunlight flecking down

through the cherry blossoms to dance in light and shade across the earnest face, brown eyes intent upon the marching children. "Trintje, would you like to try it too?" invited the mother. Trintje hung her head and tightened her hold upon the rubber ball she carried. "See, Trintje, the other children will wait. You may have a turn all alone. Donald, Russell, you wait now! Let Trintje try!" Slowly, along the border of scarlet tulips and white hyacinths, came Trintje, her brown eyes shining. Past the big box and ladder, past the slide, to the end of the walking-board. Carefully one small foot essayed the board, slowly the other was lifted from the ground, carefully the crossing was begun. Brown eyes were aglow now, cheeks red with excitement. Carefully, slowly, inch by inch, progress was made. Once one foot nearly went to the ground, only to be swung back into place, as with a run the last few steps were covered and the child flung herself triumphantly into the arms of the waiting adult.

In their delight at this accomplishment of their youngest, the group stood back and let her go again and again across the thrilling heights, until finally she walked it with ease, and the adult could give her attention to some other activity in the play yard. Trintje had met and mastered with courage a new challenge in her environment.

Courage in the little child, like the southwest breeze, is fanned by currents from two directions — in one are the attitudes of his parents, and in the other are his own daily experiences. Of all the patterns and habits of life which develop while the child is young, none is more fundamentally set during the preschool years than the attitude of courage. This fact is a challenge to parents and teachers. To realize this should also bring us great relief and security, for it simplifies many of the demands we make on ourselves.

What specific evidences of courage in adults are nursery children most likely to observe? There are the attitudes of

parents toward special circumstances. When the first sharp thunderclap of the summer is heard in the nursery playroom, one may notice almost every child looking quickly at the adult for an interpretation of the strange sound. If the adult goes quietly and cheerfully on with her regular activity, the children will usually go happily on with their play. But let the adult feel inwardly anxious, let her hurriedly slam all the windows shut, caution the children tensely about playing near the fireplace, call to another teacher to hasten in from outdoors, it is almost certain that the children's first association of fear with the storm has been set up.

So it may be with automobile driving. Let the mother who is holding the baby in the car tighten her hold on the child with each approaching intersection, let her draw in her breath or call the driver's name whenever the driver handles the car in an unexpected way, and no other word need be spoken to develop in the child a feeling of apprehension toward driving.

So it may be in social situations. The parent who fears to mingle with those of another race or nationality will almost certainly have children who reflect these fears. The father who fears business reverses, the mother who fears that her mother-in-law will not like her housekeeping, the parents who unduly fear accidents to their children, are likely to have children who reflect apprehension in their relations with other children, with guests in the home or with any newcomers they may meet.

But not all fearless parents have fearless children. Important as are the intangible influences of parent attitudes, a second series of factors have an important determining effect on the child's approach to life: these are the daily experiences of the child himself in facing hardships, and the degree of success with which he meets them.

A mistake we easily fall into when trying to develop in a child courage to meet his difficulties is described best by two

illustrations. First, we have in mind Jack, aged three, whose father, vigorous, athletic and jolly, was eager for his son to love the water. The day after the family arrived at the beach, Jack, dancing with delight, ran beside his father over the sand. But as he approached the edge of the water he slackened his pace. With his first step in the water he drew back. A second step and he was pulling back vigorously. This the father noticed. "Come on, little fellow, Daddy's got you. Suppose I carry you out over these waves." Before the child could escape, he was hoisted upon his father's broad shoulder and carried out as far as his father could walk. "Now, isn't this fine? Just look here, you're not afraid. See, Daddy will teach you how to swim. Just lie out on my hand." Jack, now screaming in resistance, was laid on the water where the father's firm grip kept him from being submerged, though it could by no means keep the salt waves from exploring the recesses of his open mouth. In vain the father reassured and joked. In vain he urged Jack to notice the progress in swimming of young Joseph who was responding to similar treatment from his father with delight and valiant effort to learn. Jack continued to scream, trying in his panic to clutch at his father's form — his hair, his arms, his neck. Finally, the exasperated father carried the child back to the shore and with more good humor than irritation deposited him beside his little sister, saying, "There, you'd best play here with the baby. You're not the man I hoped you were." Thus, Jack's first experience with the water met with failure and ignominy in the eyes of the one he most admired.

Russell was a two-year-old whose parents, instead of trying to hurry him to success, saw the significance of first steps, first attitudes. When he was about to take an overnight ride on a train, his parents read him in advance stories of trains, showed him pictures of busy porters opening berths, of children sleeping in small berths, made up stories to include the special

details of this particular trip that was projected. When the time came, the parents boarded the train early, settled Russell happily before the train started to move, recalled to him the similar adventures of the boy in the story, sang him his accustomed lullaby, placed his familiar Teddy in his arms. Then the parents sat chatting together in a nearby vacant section until their boy fell asleep. His first experience in sleeping away from home and crib he had met with pleasure and success.

The roots of courage and of timidity are deeply imbedded in just such complex experiences as these. Obviously there are wide individual differences in disposition, in temperament, in sensitivity to environment. Methods used with one child in a specific environment may be unsuccessful with another child. We have no first-class research upon this great problem of the causes and factors in the development of courage and self-reliance, yet common sense, observation and experience do give us some guidance.

1. For most children, perhaps barring the extremely venturesome or impulsive, the attitude of courage must be learned in step-by-step fashion, and is built up out of weeks and months of increasingly more difficult challenges successfully met, especially during the period from six months to four years of age.

2. These steps in the development of courage can be taken during simple, everyday experiences common in the lives of all young children. Among such experiences are the approach of a stranger in the home, meeting a strange child, stair-climbing, thunder storms, trips to new places, putting high ornaments on a Christmas tree, using a seesaw, swing, or walking-board, and the coming of the doctor.

3. Children, if they are to grow in self-reliance, need to have their experiences interpreted to them to such an extent that they sense adult approval and family rejoicing over small evidences of such growth. If the child's feelings of pride over well-earned achievement have been sanely built up, he has

small need to resort to resistant behavior, "showing off," or other unsocial behavior to get the attention he craves and needs.

Since, then, the encouragement of positive, expectant attitudes in life is one of the major needs of the child of nursery age, a need far more basic than training in skills of memory or of words, there are in the Martin and Judy volumes several stories which are especially intended to bring out this experience in courage.

In "The Barking Dog" we find Martin and Judy faced with the problem of passing a dog which barks at them. They remind themselves that this dog may feel as friendly as their own dog, and they learn that by their walking along without panic, the dog does them no harm. "A Five-Cent Piece Rolls Away" is also written to encourage a child to utilize his own resources in case of need. We find Martin facing the problem of his lost coin, and we read how step by step he works this problem out successfully. In "Martin Helps Himself" we find that Martin gets himself home safely by stopping to think. "Judy and the Doctor Help Each Other" and "This Is the Hospital" likewise suggest the value of developing in the child confidence in his ability to meet the hard situations which sickness sometimes brings.

The nursery teacher can do much to supplement these stories in building confidence in the child. First of all, she herself will try to be a calm and confident person. While she tries to be vigilant and attentive to each child's needs, she will try neither to show anxiety nor to feel overly apprehensive toward their activities and emergencies. She will have her first-aid kit at hand, her windows and banisters guarded against falls, her own plans clear as to action in case of fire, but having taken these precautions she will trust the future and will not be worried inwardly over possible catastrophes. Moreover, it is ideal for little children to be in the presence of a teacher who herself loves wholesome adventure, who lives freely and richly,

who "considers the Universe safe in the hands of the Almighty." This positive, serene attitude toward life is bound to be reflected in the attitude of the sensitive, alert children by whom she is surrounded.

Specifically in her relations with the children, the teacher will keep the positive approach. "Watch your tray carefully," rather than "Look out, don't spill," to the child who is returning the fruit juice cups to the kitchen. "See how well Joe will pour his orange juice. It will go *in* his cup, every drop," rather than "Now don't spill any." When the child is successful, quiet but genuine celebration is made. When he fails, as in this matter of spilling, quietly again the teacher may say, "We all spill sometimes, Joe. Tomorrow you will get a better start." Nor is this friendly encouragement and praise to be construed as a bar to the occasional need for saying firmly and frankly to some careless or attention-seeking child, "You can do much better than that, Dickie. Tomorrow we want you to do as well as you did yesterday. Remember how carefully you built that house?"

It is also good nursery group practice to encourage a child who has attempted and failed, to try the same activity again, with the teacher beside him to insure his success on the second trial. Thus the child may go home at the end of the morning, not with the feeling of defeat, or of a fear which may lead him to an avoidance of that activity the next week, but with a feeling of pride and self-confidence.

Again the teacher may help the children develop an awareness of their own sources of courage by praising them quietly, but in the presence of others, for fortitude in meeting minor bumps and hurts. "Isn't Sally fine? She sat very still so I could take out the splinter quickly," may be the beginning of helping Sally to feel that she is not the "baby" she is reputed to be at home. "Did you notice that when Tommy fell down a few minutes ago he picked himself right up and went on playing?" Such comments must be genuine, but they will

teacher helped her to guide. The boat took shape, was finished, and painted a bright red. For the first time since her enrollment, Anne ran into the playroom ahead of the teacher, and held up her boat with a triumphant smile. Thus Anne had found a channel deeply satisfying to her and approved by the group. When, later, she was helped to make a birdhouse which the group actually could put to use, it was clear that she had begun to gain a concept of herself not as a belligerent, but as a friendly person.

The rhythm band, like woodwork, may have a special function here. For the little child who has been brought up "not to touch" the piano at home, the vigorous use of cymbal or drum has real release value. For the shy child who fears to be conspicuous, it may be an invigorating experience to feel himself one of a group and able to express freely his love of rhythm. And perhaps even more essential as an avenue of healthy self-expression and free activity is the interpretive dancing or individual rhythmic play period where each child may be encouraged to respond in the way "the music makes him feel."

Physical equipment for vigorous play is also desirable in the indoor playroom: a walking-board, small ladder, play house, or jungle gym, or a rope for climbing.

At home the mother may continue all these avenues of interest — stories, rhythms, painting and crayoning. But in addition, she has an opportunity to build up for the child a reputation for being calm in emergency, courageous in approach. "Isn't it splendid, Father," she may say quietly at supper, "Helen went way to the top of the slide today. She has been wanting to do that for a long time." Or, "Tommy got a deep cut today, Daddy. I had to work a long time to clean it out. He sat very still to let me work at it. He was really brave."

Our aim in matters calling for fortitude should not be to forbid young children or shame them out of expressing fear

or hurt, but rather to help them build up in themselves a belief, based on previous successful experiences, that they "can take it," that the future is not full of unknown, fearful possibilities, that life essentially is good. Keeping this in mind, we realize that tears are only natural, and often even therapeutic, bringing about a healthy release of tension. If the basic sense of self-confidence is gradually being built up, we may be content.

9

The Secure Child

A home is such a vital element
To go into the making of a son!
Chair, rug or spoon his baby fingers bent,
Are bred into his being, every one.
The way he stands, the way he holds his head
Can alter with the changing of a room.
A softer lamp beside his little bed,
A moment with a paint-brush or a broom,
A picture on the wall, a yellow bird,
All these are part of him forever after.
All these — called "home"; there is no sweeter word —
Will shape his heart for courage and for laughter.

— Mary Elizabeth Counselman

David, with the earnest intentness born of an eighteen-months' sojourn in this world, was eating his lunch at the family table. His mother had two guests at lunch, comparative strangers in the home. The conversation, of course, concerned itself with the interests of the three adults, and although there were brief smiles for David, no special concern was shown him. Apparently in busy contentment, David finished his first course and started on his dessert. Just then, to his mother's surprise, she heard him cough, once, and then again. Was he choking? Or did he have a cold? She watched him from the corner of her eye, but her query was answered even as she watched, for with a little smile, compounded of pride and

self-consciousness, he deliberately, conspicuously, grasped his small pitcher of milk, took a quick glance at the guests, and carefully, slowly, filled his own glass without spilling a drop. A quiet, understanding guest smiled recognition of his achievement, and the episode was over. The adult conversation was continued, and David soon went to nap willingly. His moment of importance had been apparently a sufficient crown and glory.

We have spoken of the basic urge of all life for an upward and outward reach, for outlets of self-expression and of achievement, for opportunities to venture, to essay. Inextricably bound up with these essential experiences is that other need of which we have already spoken, especially in Chapter I: the need for security. This is so elemental that all parents, we repeat, should consider it the first desideratum for their children. Yet its attainment is so elusive that some parents miss it who strive hardest, while other homes provide security where the adults seem least conscious of its importance. In human relationships there is never a tangible, static environment wherein the parents may feel certain that the child is secure. Nor would we, even if we could, surround our children with complete security. To do this would be to deny them the feeling of needing to achieve. Yet security, thus qualified, our children need. Can it be defined? Can it be attained? Can it be increased? How may it be threatened?

Considering the whole range of children's development, physiological and psychological, we realize that security involves not only wholesome food, shelter, and nursery care, but the nourishment of children's ideas, interests, and feelings of self-importance. Specifically it implies that they be surrounded by adults who like them, who maintain for them some stability of routine, who expect well of them, and who have time to plan for them and with them. More than this, it implies that those adults surrounding the child be themselves moderately adjusted to life's major demands for common sense,

fortitude, and buoyancy, and that between the adults in the home there be mutual respect and basic affection. The "fair guest-chambers, open to sunrise and the birds," of which Whittier wrote, are especially characteristic of homes which give the child security.

That security in this full measure is often not attained is obvious when we scan the records of juvenile delinquency, of school failures, of child guidance clinics, and later of marriage maladjustments, and of that legion of individuals who may not have failed signally, but who carry personality scars, or unhealed hurts due to early experiences in feeling unloved, unjustly treated, inadequately respected. These areas of insecurity show themselves in a variety of ways, in anxiety, apprehensiveness, suspicion, retreat, sometimes in anger, in ready tears, in irritability, in continual attempts at self-assertion and domination. Both the compulsion to retreat and the tendency to attack, when confronted with a conflict, are modes of behavior due to insecurity, which may be woven during the earliest years into one's personality patterns.

In a desire to increase their children's security, parents attempt on occasion to do more for their children than has been their custom. For some, this is altogether wholesome. It is good for the parent to show interest in equipping the backyard playground, to give time to painting and maintaining an attractive, colorful playroom, a restful, harmonious bedroom, to select appurtenances in bathroom, kitchen and dining room which encourage self-help and comfort for the child. But, as in the case of sunlight upon the child's tender skin, so in the case of parental attention to the child's delicate tendrils of self-direction, he may not flourish under too concentrated exposure. One of the most important balances which the parent must learn to maintain is the balance between doing *enough,* but not too much, for his child. Perhaps, indeed, one of the best criteria of wholesome parenthood is suggested by the question, "How much do these parents let the child do for

himself?" In doing for the child those services which he cannot do for himself, and in letting him do for himself in those areas within his range of ability, we are in the heart of the problem of character development, of religious nurture. In our longing to protect our children, to give them memories of happiness during their precious, fleeting preschool years, let us not neglect the fact that deep inner happiness and security come not alone from comfort and generous care, but also from the dawning conviction that one has inner resources of steadfastness and of self-direction.

When, we may now ask, is a child's feeling of security most likely to be threatened? Primarily, research answers, when the child is faced with forces which he fears and which are still beyond his control. Among the fiercer fears which may beset him may be listed his awareness of deep antagonisms between his parents, his feeling that his parents are frightened by financial or racial insecurity, his belief that he is not loved or admired as much as some of his brothers or sisters, his conviction that he is not trusted or not wanted, his knowledge that he has made what his elders consider grave failures in the past and that they expect these to be repeated, his fear that certain real or fancied physical handicaps are socially conspicuous, his realization that he does not know how to hold his own with others of the same age, his acceptance of what he considers the adults' belief that there is no one thing he can do well.

These factors are so subtle, so difficult to measure, that they have eluded many attempts of research workers to understand them. One of the most illuminating studies is that by Francis and Fillmore on *The Influence of Environment upon the Personality of Children*. A psychiatric and social study was made of two groups of fifty-six children each, in contrasting areas in a small city: one had sordid, degenerate physical surroundings, the other was in a fine residential district, with large lawns and attractive homes. While it was found that there was juvenile delinquency in the first area and none in the second, it was also

found that in only about half of the underprivileged homes studied were the parents' attitudes significantly worse than those of the parents in the better residences; and it appeared that the attitudes of the parents rather than the physical environment were of major importance in influencing the development of personality. The authors conclude: "Although a sharp difference between the two areas in respect to physical conditions was found by both observation and statistical analysis, the physical factors do not assume importance in relation to personality development. . . . The main point so far as these results are concerned is that parental attitudes do shape the personality of a child, while his material surroundings are not of vital importance."[1]

Other recent studies point to similar conclusions — that within homes of fairly similar physical attractiveness there may be subtle differences in parental attitudes which provide security for one child and deny it to his neighbor, and that likewise in homes widely dissimilar in economic comforts there may be almost equal security or equal insecurity. These differences may occur even as between brothers and sisters in the same family.

Behavior is a language highly inflected and capable of being understood only by the discerning and sensitive. And strangely enough, what the child is trying to say in his behavior is often related to this one theme: "Do you really like me?" "Where do I belong?" Sometimes his longing for more reassurance leads him to aggressive, attention-getting behavior highly annoying to the adult, and then mistaken for overassurance. Under the same urgency some children retreat, and seek, by evasive behavior, to make themselves inconspicuous and thus not open to criticism. Many children seek compensation through nail-biting, enuresis, prolonged thumb-sucking to get the attention from adults they had when younger; others may show by extremely cautious behavior and apprehensive man-

ner that they are uncertain of their own adequacies. "Actually a child is never so much in need of love as when he is most unlovable, and parents who understand will spontaneously rise to the occasion. He needs extra reassurances of love, by demonstrated affection and richer companionship until he has adjusted to the shift demanded by the growth process." [2]

Fortunately, we are appreciating more fully today the contribution grandparents may make to the child's happiness. When the little child has parents who are secure enough to let *their* parents feel secure in their relations to the child, much contentment in living may flow through all three generations. Sometimes a grandparent, through his or her greater leisure and necessary concessions to life, has the time and understanding to give glimpses to the young child of a way of life which gives him great security.

In the nursery school there are many ways of giving to the child this feeling of belonging. The way he is greeted by the teachers, the way the nurse makes her morning inspection, the finding of his own emblem where he hangs his wraps, and seeing the room arranged in attractive order for his interests; all these speak to the child a kind of personal welcome.[3] Added to this more pervasive atmosphere are concrete ways in which the teacher may help the child attain social recognition. Through the child's co-operating in routines he may gain certain feelings of importance. "How well David dries his own hands. And he remembered to throw his towel in the waste basket." Such recognition gives a feeling of glow even at thirty-six months. "Alice waits for her mother inside the playroom. We can always depend on her," may send some diffident child home with a happy heart. It is good for a child to feel that the adult counts on him to feed the goldfish, or to put away the box of musical instruments, or to pass around the paper napkins.

Through creative achievement the child may also gain social

recognition. Whoever has watched the expression of a little child at an easel, or at the tool-bench, realizes how necessary to the integration of personality is this early feeling of importance. "Tell your grandmother of the big present Daddy had for Christmas," suggested a mother to her seven-year-old, thinking he would speak of the bicycle she had given her husband. "Oh," said the boy, his eyes shining, "I made him a bookcase."

Through his friends the child may gain added feelings of importance. "Dere. We are all weady. My frwends are coming toon," said a two-year-old as he awaited the arrival of the small neighborhood group who gathered daily in his backyard. We have little research to tell us how many and what channels are best for very early friendships, but the evidence is clear that it is desirable for even the three-year-old to have a small circle of friends of his own age among whom he feels he has a position of importance.

Setting Limits for the Child

We have been speaking of ways of giving a child security through accepting and encouraging him. But he may also gain security by the way we limit him, at those times and in those directions when his behavior cannot be approved. No parent wants his child to grow up lawless and irresponsible toward the welfare of the larger groups of which he is a part. What is the place of discipline in the child's growth? What are the known facts which might guide parents here? First: What about spanking?

This may seem an unnecessary question to discuss with readers interested enough in child development to read this book, for few of these, on principle, would approve of spanking, even though in practice they may resort to it when their feelings are aroused. But each reader of this book must know relatives, acquaintances, neighbors who not only resort to it in emotional stress, but who actually believe in it and are

critical of those who do not. There are still occasional magazine articles approving it. What are the research findings which might strengthen us, should we be asked our opinion?

There is no evidence, either through clinical studies, personal records, biographies, or statistical correlations, to support a belief that corporal punishment is an aid to a child's growth toward maturity and self-discipline. On the contrary, there are a number of studies which show that corporal punishment tends to make a child feel insecure in his relations to his parents. Since parents for so long a time constitute the child's world, the sense of insecurity, of fear, of resentment, of hostility or of submissiveness which the child feels toward such parents, as he steps from home into the surrounding world, largely determines the attitudes which he holds toward other adults. Case studies of juvenile delinquents,[4] of neurotics,[5] of young people who failed in school,[6, 7, 8] of adults whose marriages were unhappy,[9, 10] reveal a large proportion who had severe discipline in early childhood.

There is also evidence that fear hinders learning rather than helps it.[11] Fear seems to set in motion protective devices in the autonomic nervous system so that neither digestive tract, nor circulation, nor mental processes function effectively for an extended period of time. Fear always induces some inner state of tension or panic: this may produce the immediate obedience desired, but it does not bring about constructive learning, or growth in maturity. "The child learns to fear and yield to brute force, and a little of his dignity, courage and self-reliance is destroyed with each blow."[12]

There is evidence, in addition, that adults who use corporal punishment choose to use it mainly to give vent to their own ill humor or feelings of frustration or fear rather than to correct behavior of serious significance or to help the child learn. In a study of the kinds of guidance given by parents to their children, Dr. Gertrude Lafore observed normal nursery school children with their parents in their homes. Her observations

reveal that many of the parents used corporal punishment frequently and for behavior of trivial importance on the part of their children. Tony's mother slapped him for getting on a bed, for making faces at her in retaliation, for crying when she washed his face. Caroline's mother slapped her when she hit her mother and again when she pushed her little brother. Candy's mother slapped her when she would not stand still enough to be dressed, and spanked her when she would not remain on the toilet seat. Nancy's mother slapped her when she ignored admonitions to leave the sink. Soap in the mouth and the police were used as threats to control Enid and Caroline. Surely all readers would agree that greater understanding and a more relaxed attitude on the part of the parent would have prevented the need of creating scenes like these. Of course, some of the parents observed were gentle and constructive in the guidance of their children, and all of them gave evidence to the observer of their deep regard and affection for them. Moreover, all of the children seemed to be normal and lively, engaged in the usual preschool practices. But "it seemed to the observer that all of them wanted to behave as the parent desired, but did not know how to reconcile their natural inclination with the wishes of the parent. In many cases the total situation aroused in the investigator a feeling of deep pity: the parent was trying so hard to be a good parent and the child was trying so hard to be a good child and in the eyes of each the other was a failure." [13]

What about other penalties imposed arbitrarily by parents, such as isolating, depriving of a pleasure, scolding?

Here again, research has a few answers. With regard to isolation, for example, it has been found that the behavior of many children who do things which lead adults to think they need "being put in their room," "sent out of the group," "left at home when we have a picnic," are children who for real or fancied reasons, already are insecure, and who, therefore, in their inexpert way, may use any kind of behavior to get ad-

miration and love. In such cases to cut them off even temporarily from all attention has sometimes aggravated their need instead of helping it. There are times, of course, when the quiet of one's room may steady a child, but it should be offered him as a resource, not as a punishment.

The other methods included in our question need the same kind of analysis. When a child is disturbed or confused in his social behavior, does it clarify his thinking to have arbitrary retaliation from his parents? Does scolding him help him to learn? Does embarrassment clarify thinking? The only guide for thoughtful parents who want to know the worth of these methods is to keep a simple record of their use and thus see for themselves whether their written anecdotes do indicate that the methods are really getting at the causes of the children's behavior.

Are there other limitations, then, to be recommended?

Yes. Children are more secure when they sense consistent firmness in the adults around them, and when they have learned to accept through understanding the necessary no's in life. What matters are the ways in which the limitations are set up. Wholesome ways are those which enable the child to see clearly cause and effect, to count on his social universe, and especially those which enable the child to become his own agent in setting his boundaries to conform to society.

For example, when Janet's mother felt that Janet might be old enough to play outdoors without her mother's constant presence, she and Janet hunted up a piece of red chalk. They walked together south down the sidewalk until they were just beyond their own property line. "Now, Janet, tell me how far you can go down this street and still be where you and I can see each other when I come out on the porch?" Janet thoughtfully backed down a few feet, her eyes on the porch. "This far," she said. "That's fine," said her mother. "You see, you need to know where I am and I need to know where you are when you are playing. What would you think of making a

line here to help you remember where you may play and where you may not? What kind of a light reminds me to stop our car?" "Red," said Janet. "Well, will you make a red line across the sidewalk here? and" (after repeating the conversation at the northern limits) "here?"

Thus Janet saw the reason for her limitations, helped to set them, and thus to remember them. Her subsequent behavior led her parents to feel that in her play she was more secure because of the red lines than she would have been had she had a wider but less definite freedom. When she was older the barriers were extended to the corners of the block, and finally, still with very definite understanding, they were removed altogether. Why did she not persist in overstepping her bounds? Because individuals are not likely to flaunt the laws they make themselves.

Of course, not all children are exactly like Janet. Michael's mother followed the same practice with each of her three children in turn. Each of the three overstepped the boundaries once. When this happened, the mother kindly, but firmly, brought the child in the house to play, explaining that he was not ready to go out again until he had thought long enough to remember not to cross the red line again. But here again, it is the way in which he is brought in and later released, the calmness born of inner confidence on the part of the mother in the child's ability to learn, and in the rightness of her attitude, which determines whether the half hour will be one of bitter resentment toward the mother or honest acceptance by the child of his own mistake.

Similarly with choice possessions in the house. Sensible parents may put out of reach during the child's runabout years Wedgwood and crystal. But they should be able to have some necessary valuables around which the child should not feel free to handle. For example, a choice encyclopedia may fit best in the lower shelves of the living-room bookcase. Aaron, age eighteen months, in creeping about, may reach

for a volume. The father, of course, may easily settle the problem for the time being by slapping his hands and pulling the book away. In this case Aaron's father had a sounder way of limiting the boy. He knelt on the floor beside Aaron and cleared a space on the lowest shelf. On it he put a magazine Aaron had just enjoyed, next he took Aaron to the nursery and they collected two or three of his favorite picture books, and then they explored the living room and found a few more. These he and Aaron stacked in Aaron's section of the bookcase. Then the father took Aaron's hand and they touched the newly arranged books. "Aaron's books — yes." Then, touching the encyclopedias, "Daddy's books — no." Aaron gave a slow, understanding smile as his father returned a brief, approving hug.

For several days the lesson was patiently repeated. If Aaron started to touch one of the adults' books, his nearest parent would take one of Aaron's off the shelf saying, "Here, Aaron's book — yes." And, gently taking the adult book, or sometimes guiding Aaron's hand, he would return the other book, always saying, "Daddy's book — no."

Children do not usually will to be destructive or defiant or annoying. If treated reasonably they are likely to respect reasonable laws, especially those they help to make. Without limitations we would all be lost in this world. But if children are to gain the security which wholesome limitations can give them, these must be established calmly, reasonably, firmly and with the lightest touch *that will work*. And even though nearly all parents resort at times of fatigue or anxiety or tension to some unfairness toward their children, they need not feel too guilty if their general course in defining the limits of their child's liberties is such as squares with their principles.

10

Attitudes Toward Life and Love

The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

— Francis William Bourdillon

The church blesses marriage as a sacrament and speaks of the holy state of matrimony. The minister, rabbi, or priest hopes that the words he may say during the half hour of the wedding ceremony will deeply influence the young couple and may give them an overview to guide them in their new relationships; yet it is clear that whether that particular marriage will be happy or not depends not very much on the marriage ceremony, but on habits and attitudes which have already been firmly formed through childhood experiences within the personalities of the man and the woman.

But, we may ask, since preparation for marriage comes in the later school years, what have the preschool years to do with sex education? The answer is that there are many ex-

periences in early childhood which are related to sex education, where early attitudes and early adult-child channels of confidence are all-important.

The love nature of every individual starts with the beginning of his life. It develops through the quality of warmth and devoted loving care he receives from his very first day. That is the fundamental reason for the new rooming-in plan now in its experimental state in some hospitals: that the newborn infant and his mother may respond to each other in a one-to-one love relationship. Maternal warmth, protection, devotion give the child the ground in which his affectional life takes root, and without which it may not fully flower. Caresses are important, basic also is the privilege of sucking, at the breast if possible. The child needs to be held securely and tenderly when fed, instead of having his bottle propped up for him. He needs to be played with, rocked a little, laughed with, treated as a person of delightful importance. In all these tender early physical ministrations he learns that in love he lives and moves and has his being. "In the beginning, psychic and bodily interests — or, as they may be more appropriately termed in babyhood, affectional and bodily interests — are clearly allied. They cannot help but be, with both the gift and the giver of life's sustaining forces united in one warm and milky source."*

Nor should this kind of loving attention, this sex education, stop at the end of the first dozen or so months, though it so often does, especially when a second child is born in the family. In our culture, the little runabout of one or two years has stopped feeding at the breast, but he may still enjoy his bottle for sucking some of his milk. Certainly he still needs caressing, some rocking, lullaby-singing, mother-play and father-play. He needs too a brief time for play under careful

---

*Quoted from *The Normal Sex Interests of Children from Infancy to Childhood,* by Frances Bruce Strain (1948), by permission of Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.

supervision with perhaps one other child of his age so that his idea of himself may be expanded by perceiving some one of the same age who is not himself. If he hits or bites at this age it is not because he is "unkind" but because loving and biting often go hand in hand with early affectional development. It is all-important that the first tendrils of his expression of love, this reaching out to pat his parent or to touch another child in friendly play, be successful.

More than any other part of our natures, our sex natures have been injured — often irreparably injured — by wrong methods of training. Nobody was to blame. Until recently, nobody knew there was such a nature in childhood to save from injury. That is one of the things we have come to know.

The love impulse, being part of child nature, is constantly cropping out in fashions all its own — not grown-up fashions but childish fashions. As constantly as it appears must we, the parents, give recognition to this impulse that it may develop through the years into final and free expression in normal productive maturity. . . .

In all of us from the very first the sex impulse is twofold in its nature. It is an attribute of mind and feeling as well as an attribute of body. It is an energizing force which urges us on not only to strong personal attachments but, we believe, to high personal achievements; not only to the procreation of families and children, but to the creation of the arts and sciences. Bridges, towers, paintings, gardens, drama, music, sculpture — these are not conceivable without some driving force rooted in the very nature of man himself and brought forth by love of man for man or love of man for his Maker.[1]

This early period is also important in laying wholesome attitudes toward sex because of the fact that so large a share of the toddler's time is connected with toilet routines. As we have pointed out, many mothers are eager to establish for their children the habit of keeping dry. Often they fall thoughtlessly into the use of shaming or punishing when the child shows lack of control in his habits of elimination. The child who when very young has developed a sense of shame regarding the functions of toileting is likely to carry over some of

this feeling into later life in relation to his generative functions. The child who is natural in one respect is more likely to be natural and free from undesirable inhibitions in the other.

Moreover, the early years are the language-forming years. During the bath, the undressing and dressing, the child from two to five asks many questions about his own body. And it is indeed fortunate if he is in the care of an adult who will tell him, naturally and simply, correct terms for any parts of his body he asks about. "What dat?" asks young Arthur, pointing to his stomach. "That," his mother may say, as she continues his bath, "is your navel. And that is your elbow. And that is your penis. And that is your nose. And those, Arthur, are your fingers that need scrubbing. Right now they look like the five little pigs that went to market."

Parents' attitudes toward their own marriage,[2, 3] toward their sex adjustments,[4, 5] and toward their own love of life and parenthood are quickly caught and reflected in the personality of the little child. "Quarrels, harsh voices, rough treatment, laughter, tears, love, tenderness between others pass over to him and leave delicate tracings upon his spirit. Long before children can talk, they understand language. Long before they understand language they appear responsive to moods, emotions, and feelings that are current in their surroundings."[6]

The years from three until six are fully as important as the three earlier ones. The wise mother, while she will continue her expressions of genuine affection, will not keep the attachment so close that the child takes refuge in her sole company when he might be playing with another child of his own age. The first step in his unfolding social life is now before him, and whether the mother finds it easy or not, she must share her two-to-three-year-old with a group of his own friends.

Hannah was a little girl of four years whose grandmother was shocked at the mother's decision to put her in a nursery school. The grandmother was given the special privilege of staying with the nursery group during the first few days of the

child's adjustment. But imagine our surprise to find that whenever Hannah stepped into the sunshine, the grandmother jumped from her chair on the sidelines to hold an umbrella over her. When she went two or three steps up the jungle-gym, the grandmother was there to caution her against falling; and when she sat by the edge of the little wading pool, grandmother was there to caution her against drowning. This little child, already pinched, apprehensive, trembling at the approach of any other child in play, was being almost predestined at the early age of four to a life of inhibited social experiences, of thwarted, fearful love development.

The age from three to six is the period of first questionings about the origins of life and the coming of babies. These are the golden years for information to be given as readily and as naturally as answers to "Where does Daddy go to every morning?" "Why do you wear glasses, Mummy?" "What makes the teakettle boil over?" Moreover, it is the experience of many parents that while children at this time do ask many direct questions: "Where did Mrs. Jones get her new baby?" "Where did you get me, Mother?" it is equally true that they do not linger on their questions, but go on to others of a different nature, or else they run off to play before the mother has given half an answer. During these years, in fact, what the mother gives by way of information is not so important as how she gives it, and especially whether the child feels that in his mother and father he has an open gate to more knowledge whenever he wishes it. It is the child whose questions are repressed, who feels he is being denied access to a great secret, who is likely to develop undue curiosity, intense longing and often furtive efforts to find out.

There is one other well-nigh universal experience of children which makes it important to give wholesome sex education in the early years. Children find themselves in some neighborhood play group where sex talk or sex play of a more or less minor nature is going on. Mothers are dismayed to hear the

sound of children's hurrying feet going up the stairs, the quiet barring of the bathroom door, the giggles and whispers from around the toilet seat. Fortunate is the child whose mother on such an occasion can breezily follow the crowd up, not too hurriedly and never stealthily, knock cheerfully on the door and call out, "Who wants some of the hot cookies I have downstairs? Who wants to come and help me make some more?" There need be no reproach, no investigation; no harm has been done unless the adult has acted shocked or angry. A change of interest is often the only necessary step to take.

If a similar episode should happen several times, or if some one child seems a ringleader and by no means to be satisfied with suggested changes of occupation, it may be wise for the parent to find out a little about this child's needs or opportunities for learning. Does he call the crowd up because he wants to see how a little girl looks when undressed? If so, it might be arranged for him to assist at the bath of a little girl baby some day. Is it because he feels he has special information to impart? Then possibly he can be helped to excel in some other field of knowledge, so that he is no longer so insecure he feels the need of showing off. Is it because he feels he has a "nuisance" reputation in the neighborhood and therefore feels that he has to shock the crowd in order to get a place in the sun? Then perhaps concerted and kindly neighborhood action can be taken to help him feel he is a trusted member of the community. Every situation of this sort needs individual handling.

The important point is this — that in all neighborhoods, in all countries, among the rich and the poor, in homes of trained and of untrained parents, children (girls as well as boys) have occasional play of this sort and may try to include nursery-age children. Sometimes it is over the exciting secret of urinating out-of-doors, sometimes it is making secret rhymes they think adults might forbid, sometimes it is undressing in front of each other. These activities are due partly to curiosity, partly

to vague desires to be part of the gang, partly to lack of more interesting possibilities for play, and partly to the delight of having a secret and of being chased. They are also expressions, clumsy though they may be, of a universal urge of children to grope toward a fuller understanding of the mysteries which make life possible. If the adult understands the meanings of these activities in terms of the child's deeper needs, it will be easier to deal with them more wisely.

In this connection, one of the most thrilling realizations that can come to an earnest parent is to catch a glimpse of the good she may accomplish within her own neighborhood by maintaining a wholesome, co-operative attitude toward neighborhood play in all the boy and girl relationships. First of all, she may act as the stabilizing factor in an organized neighborhood play group for her youngest children and their friends, or in a well-supervised club for her older child and his friends. She may serve as a source of information and guidance to other mothers in their attitudes on sex, and she may act as a kind of committee of one to build up a better reputation for the neighborhood bully, so that mothers of little girls need not fill their heads full of fears of older boys. Such a mother may not be received at first with open arms: neighbors may resent her frankness with her own children. They may, out of their very defensiveness, even delight in noting little signs of imperfection in her children. But if she quietly and serenely goes on, making her home a neighborhood rendezvous, her cellar a Santa Claus workshop, her attic a glorified property box, she will soon convince her neighbors of the sincerity of her interest in their children's happiness. The next step, that of leading the neighborhood to a little closer co-operation, even of group study, or of building up a vacant lot playground, may then follow.

If, on the other hand, a mother is frightened or upset the first time she comes upon any furtive play of the sort described, if in her excitement she tells the neighbor's child to go home

and never to come back again, she has taken a great risk. She may have put an end temporarily to further misdemeanors of this nature on the part of her own child, but the feelings of guilt and self-distrust built up in the neighbor's child may last for years, and may even contribute to a barrier against free and happy marriage relationships. She may also, by startling her child with the force of her harsh and frightened feeling, build in him a lasting memory which otherwise might have been forgotten quickly.

Because sex education is so vital a part of wholesome religious development, several stories related to this theme are found in the second Martin and Judy volume. They are planned especially for the mother who is about to have a second baby and who would like suggestions for ways of helping the first child anticipate the coming of the new brother or sister.

"Martin Learns a Secret" is the first of these. This story suggests ways in which a mother may tell her first-born of the coming arrival of a second child. It is followed by another story "Martin Tells a Secret," where Martin is allowed to open the gifts or purchases for the baby, to arrange them in the small dresser drawers, to display them carefully to mother's friends ("Here is a new sweater for our new baby"), to play with the little clothes on mother's big bed (with hands that have been carefully washed), and to share other activities with mother which will lead Martin to feel he is participating in the preparations for the expected arrival. In "Martin Takes Care of His Mother" the suggestion is again made that the older child be helped to feel responsible and necessary in the planning for the new baby.

Some jealousy, however, cannot be entirely prevented by all the careful thought in the world. Perhaps to a certain extent some jealousy is healthful, and a source of wholesome tensions. We have known instances where, in their eagerness to avoid causes for jealousy in the first child, parents have

given him such undue praise and consideration that he became self-centered and overly dependent upon protection and attention. But the basic principle is still important. Parents should share their secret with the elder child, and should help him to feel important in relation to the new baby and should take wholesome pains to see to it, after the birth of the second child, that the first still feels loved and sought after.

As to the nursery teacher's relation to sex education, only a few suggestions are needed. It may not be wise for her to read all the stories to the group as a whole, until the mothers or fathers have read them to their children at home first, if they prefer. If one child in the group is to have a new baby in his family, the teacher may decide this is the ideal time to introduce these stories, but she should guard against arousing the hopes of the others of some similar events in their families.

As incidental questions come up from individual children in the group, the teacher, like the mother, should give free and natural replies, answering no more than the child has asked, and then going on easily to other topics of interest. For the awakening of such interests, the keeping or bringing of pets into the nursery is especially to be recommended, since in the coming of the young canaries, or puppies or kittens, much can be learned that is valuable for the child.

In a second way, teachers may be of help in this field. In a group of fifteen to twenty children, there are likely to be one or two who, when they are not otherwise occupied, try to handle their genital organs. If this practice is repeated over and over, the wise teacher will treat not the symptom but the cause. Is the child bored? Perhaps he needs more interests. Is he insecure? Perhaps he needs more attention and affection. Is he trying to escape from reality? Perhaps he needs help in making friends with the group. Is he physically uncomfortable? Perhaps the mother should consult a doctor as to diet or circumcision, or perhaps she herself may make some simple adjustment.

Peter was a rosy-faced six-year-old who suddenly one day at school began such self-play. After it continued at increasingly frequent intervals for a week, the teacher went one evening, long after his bedtime, to see his mother. The mother then realized that the little jersey suit which Peter had been wearing, which had fitted him in the fall, was now after repeated washings much too small for his fat little legs, and was irritating him. She bought him a new suit the next day, and that ended the problem completely. Olive, however, was getting into the habit for a different reason. She had a new baby at home which suddenly diverted to itself the mother's attention. Olive had found real emotional and physical satisfaction in riding on the big rockinghorse. No other interest could be found as a substitute for her, until the horse was put away from her sight and thought, and she was thus led to be more active in social forms of play, and became happily responsive to the increased friendly advances of the teachers and the other children.

Teachers can sometimes help parents to realize that handling one's sex organs, like thumb-sucking, is almost universal at some period in the growing-up process, that it sometimes serves as an escape from an unsatisfying environment; that sometimes it is a sign of boredom, sometimes a sign that more vigorous physical play is needed; that sometimes it serves as a defense against the necessity of active efforts to make friends. At all events, in the normal home, with the normal child, there is nothing to fear about these habits in themselves. More risk is run in making a problem of them than in creating a happy environment and in trusting to nature and to growth. Only in the most warped or inadequate home environments, and with extremely maladjusted children, is either of these habits likely to last long.

One final suggestion to the teacher. Through the first six months of the new baby's life, but especially the first two months, the older child is likely to feel upset and insecure, no

matter how carefully his parents have tried to prepare him. In the nursery group, this insecurity may show itself in whining or frequent crying, in reverting to immature habits of wetting, thumb-sucking or food refusals. Or it may, contrariwise, show itself in hyperactivity, aggressiveness, even defiance. The teacher can do much to help if she sees that her staff gives the child extra security, extra loving-kindness, extra importance at this time. He will need acceptance, understanding, and a feeling of being loved; that is, he needs to learn that he, too, can be loved and wanted without having to resort to the behavior he attributes to the baby in order to get his wants known.

Not only can the discerning teacher help the child in the nursery group, but sometimes she can suggest to the parents, especially to the father, ways of practical help in meeting the child's needs in one of the most difficult adjustments he will ever have to make. A nursery teacher recently said to a mother who was criticizing her daughter's whining after the new baby had been at home only a week, "Wait until your husband gets his second wife, and you'll understand just how your daughter feels!"

11

Times of Crisis in the Home

There was a child went forth every day,
And the first object he look'd upon, that object he became,
And the object became part of him for the day or a certain
part of the day,
Or for many years or stretching cycles of years.

. . .

The mother at home quietly placing the dishes on the supper table,
The mother with mild words, clean her cap and gown, a wholesome odor falling off her person and clothes as she walks by,
The father, strong, self-sufficient, manly, mean, anger'd, unjust. . . .
The family usages, the language, the company, the furniture, the yearning and swelling heart,
Affection that will not be gainsay'd, the sense of what is real, the thought if after all it should prove unreal.

. . .

These became part of that child who went forth every day, and who now goes, and will always go forth every day.

— WALT WHITMAN

When a Second Baby Comes

We have been discussing the value to preschool children of being told truthful answers to the question, "Where do babies come from?" and of being given as much information about the origin of life as they are ready for. But especially fortunate is that child whose mother makes the most of the occasion

of the second child's arrival to build security and anticipation in the older child.

The knowledge itself that a brother or sister is to arrive is usually a thrilling thing. Perhaps even more delightful is the privilege the parents may give the three- or four-year-old of participating in the preparations. Getting down from the storeroom the child's own outgrown baby clothes and deciding which ones are still nice enough for the new baby is an experience many mothers have shared with an older child. Helping to wash these tiny clothes, to hang them on the line to sun, and to arrange them in a bureau drawer — these are well within a three-year-old's ability. When visitors come to call, and to bring gifts during the later months of the mother's pregnancy, the older child himself may be given the fun of taking the layette out to show to the visitor. Some mothers have given their older children many happy rainy-day hours by letting them dress and undress their big dolls in these baby clothes. One mother had a special drawer marked "Toys for the New Baby."

Since the mother will not be physically able to give her older child as much of her time after the coming of the baby, she needs to build up in the child's mind so real and wholesome a feeling of importance, especially in relation to the care of the new baby, that he does not feel the need of the usual amount of personal ministration. Sometimes this feeling of importance is best given to a child by planning nursery school experience for him, where he will not only acquire status in his own right, but where he will find new interests and chances of adventure. It is seldom wise, however, to send a child off to school for the first time just when the baby is about to come, lest he feel that the one event necessitates the other. It is better to plan ahead so that the child is able to establish a sure place for himself in his school or play group before the coming of the baby and the temporary upheaval at home.

Probably the younger a child learns that the parent's love, like the sunshine, can envelop more than one child without being reduced by the numbers it includes, the sturdier he will be; our hope is to give him a gradual maturing experience without the warping fear that he no longer has a real and lasting place in our affection. All children feel some resentment, of course, and the story "Martin's Baby Pictures" has been written to suggest to the parents ways of understanding this feeling. Children who are sure their parents understand and accept their occasional turmoil almost always weather the stress and develop a rich sibling relationship.

Children's Illnesses

When illness comes to a child, insecurity is likely to strike at both parents and child. How the parents (especially the mother in her responsibility as nurse) may keep their courage at such a time, and how they may maintain their assurance that all will turn out well, is beyond the limitations of this book to discuss. Suffice it here to recognize that such apprehensiveness may be a deep and devastating experience, indirectly affecting the child. All the philosophic calm and all the courage which parents can practice at such times is important for the child's ultimate recovery. Not only do many parents fear for the future, but they live in the grip of remorse over some neglect or omission in the child's past care, of which they fancy they have been guilty, or they criticize their earlier care of the child in the light of present knowledge and torture themselves with the thought, "Oh, if only I had known more and had not left that window open so wide the first day of the cold, this pneumonia would never have developed." Parents might well help one another to attain a first footing on the long climb to serenity in such matters through frankness in constructive discussion groups.

One practical step which parents may take is to build up in the child's mind a feeling of trust toward the doctor and

the nurse. The doctor's visit should not, except in a rare emergency, come as an unexpected shock, but should be explained to the child, with possibly some song about the doctor's coming, as in *Martin and Judy Songs,* "The Doctor." To the child the doctor should be a friend who helps children get well.

Children often have great capacity for courage if they know in advance what to expect. In so far as the parents can prepare the child for what is to come, in a matter of fact yet confident way, the child is more likely to feel secure and to co-operate as he is asked. It may be well, for example, for a mother to let her child accompany her on one or two of her own visits to the dentist, thus allowing him casually to get acquainted with all the strange lights and machinery, before the visit when the child himself is to be the patient.

If pain is to accompany the doctor's treatment, it is probably best not to tell the young child long in advance. Just a few moments before the treatment is to occur, it is often wise to say, "This will hurt you some, Bill, but only for a little while." One pediatrician of our acquaintance often says to his young patients, "You say 'ouch' when it hurts so much you think we had better stop." Then if the work involves pain, the child will feel that the doctor has been honest with him, yet the child has not had long to dread the experience. There may, of course, be certain delicate treatments which the doctor must make where the child's co-operation can be assured only if he has no warning of pain, but for the large majority of situations, it is the safest plan to be frank with the child in advance and thus to keep his confidence.

Much more important, however, than what is told the child, is the manner of the adult when he speaks. If the mother is calm, if she has confidence in the doctor, if she takes the long view and realizes that most children have difficulties from time to time and yet do recover, she is likely to reflect this assurance. But unless she has thus worked out her own

philosophy and has herself in hand, she is almost certain to communicate fear to the child, even while she tries to give him reassuring words, and thus to hinder the great recuperative forces of nature.

Martin and Judy have illnesses, too. The story, "Judy and the Doctor Help Each Other," is presented to suggest some of the practical ways by which the child may be taught to co-operate with the doctor. So, too, is "Doctor Smith and Doctor Martin." "This Is the Hospital" has been planned especially to suggest to the mother ways of helping the child to anticipate a hospital visit and operation, if such an occasion should occur. The small son of one of the authors was prepared in a similar manner by his father and went through his operation calmly and with full co-operation. He was preceded into the operating room by a child whose only preparation for this experience had been his mother's statement that he was going on a picnic. With no more explanation than this, she left him with the operating-room nurse, who thus bore the full brunt of the lad's violent resistance and struggle to get away. It is hardly necessary to add that this boy took a much longer time to go under the ether, and that he was much more apprehensive during the subsequent day and night while he was in the ward than the boy who had been given an opportunity to co-operate intelligently.

The child's character development may be radically changed by illness, not so much because of the pain and inactivity suffered, but because during the illness the family may have developed certain attitudes of special protection toward the child which may continue after he has become physically normal.

Bobby was a nursery-school child, thirty-three months of age. His frequent outbreaks of temper puzzled the teachers, for he would throw himself on the floor, beat his hands and legs and head against it; and, if picked up by the teacher to remove him from harm's way, he would beat a tattoo up and

down her shins in his rage. Since the immediate causes of these outbursts at the school seemed so insignificant, the teacher visited his home to learn from the mother all that she might about their possible deeper roots. She learned that Bobby had had a very even and sunny disposition until the age of eighteen months, when he had contracted whooping cough. He then had such severe coughing attacks that the doctor advised the mother to pick him up and hold him whenever he coughed, and furthermore, to cross him as little as possible in order to avoid making him cry and choke up. As the mother was relating this to the teacher, she said suddenly, "You know, I believe I have the answer to our question about Bobby's temper. I believe we are still treating him as if he were ill. His father and his sisters and I grew so used to trying to please him, to avoiding issues, and to satisfying all his desires that I am sure we are still overprotecting him and giving him no occasions for self-control. I think you'll see a change at the nursery school if we at home can change our attitude toward him." Being a highly intelligent, well-poised young woman, the mother did change, and within two months Bobby became one of the sunniest, most serene children in the group.

Whenever possible, then, let us encourage parents to let their children go back to a normal physical and psychological régime after their physical illnesses are over. But let us not forget that there will be parents unable to make this transfer completely. The habits, which the crisis brings out, may merely be the exaggerated justification for habits of overcaution and fear that have persisted for years. Let us realize that such parents are themselves unhappy and insecure, and that they need all of our patient friendliness and understanding rather than our reproval. However much we may wish they would relax or use more common-sense methods, let us not expect the impossible of them, knowing that their attitudes have become imbedded deeply in their emotional history, and

cannot be reached solely by appeal to reason or to will power. It is as important for nursery leaders to "accept" parents as to "accept" children.

Traveling and Moving the Home

The experience of having his home moved from one neighborhood or one city to another may be quite devastating to a child. It takes him from his familiar room, play yard and surroundings. It involves seeing all his belongings in turmoil, with strangers entering briskly and, with apparent ruthlessness, tearing to pieces many settings that have been near and dear to him. The move is usually accompanied by fatigue and strain on the part of all the adults involved, by irregularity in the child's personal routines, and by the presence in the home of numerous friends who come to help or to say good-by. There are last minute errands and business arrangements which necessitate for the parents hurried trips and conferences.

For at least a week after the family's arrival at the new home, there is again a period of confusion and irregularity in the child's daily schedule. Strangers come to the home, and new adjustments to new demands are involved. If the distance between the homes has been a long one, there is the added excitement of the trip, of meals in public, and of sleep in strange places.

But more significant than these upheavals in the physical surroundings is the threat to the child's security that may lie in the breaking of the circle of his friendships. Probably some children forget the past much more quickly than others. A new experience may be so delightful an adventure that the joy of the present may crowd out the memory of former associations. But for other children, the transition is much more difficult, and they literally pine for their former friends. For these children, the tearing loose from old roots, especially if the experience is repeated, may be so devastating that the later development of their personalities is changed. They may

tend to withdraw into the security of their family circle, sensing apparently that it is safest not to tie to a shifting buoy, or they may try to compensate for their insecurity and fear of further change by overeagerness to make new friends; their very determination may drive them restlessly to make increasingly more contacts.

Thoughtful parents may do much to offset these disadvantages and to have the experience of moving become an occasion for a broadening adventure. If the parents accept the change sensibly, if they themselves look forward with expectancy to finding new friends, and to making a happy new home, if they accept the task of moving as a matter of course and not as a hectic hardship which they can hardly weather, the children will probably be calm and feel adequate to help. It is in the way parents rise to meet special stresses and strains that children acquire the overtones which make for richness in character development.

In practical ways, the mother may do much to keep for the children the semblance of the familiar in the midst of the strange. A favorite toy animal as companion in the sleeper, or a little suitcase full of self-selected toys for the trip, the child's own bib and silver at the restaurant — these may symbolize security. Reading stories and sharing pictures with the child in advance of the trip may give him a feeling of knowing what to expect. Acquainting him with the purpose of the men who come into the home to help in the moving may prevent needless shock.

Three-year-old Alexander dashed into his own room, slammed the door and stood himself in the farthest corner against the wall, his face set. His mother left her conversation with two stocky, swarthy men who were busy at work tearing off the molding of the baseboard in the bathroom preparatory to laying linoleum, and went to the little boy. "Why did you shut your door, Alexander? Why did you come to this corner?" she asked, drawing him on her lap. The sobs burst forth

quickly. "Dey are breaking it all up. Dey are breaking it all up. Don't let dem tum in here." With no previous warning that the men were coming, or that they would have to rip things up to accomplish their purpose, this child was taken aback at their bursting into his home, and with such haste throwing his well-known quarters into confusion. After his mother had explained what the men were doing, Alexander was willing to take her hand and watch them from a distance, but his fear had been so real that he was not willing to stay alone on the same floor with the men, even though usually he had delighted in watching workmen use tools.

In order to bridge the gap between two circles of friends and to encourage the child to feel that friendships once made may continue throughout life, it is probably wise for the mother to help the child continue through the mail his contact with special friends. These touches with the past should not be so absorbing that the child looks backwards rather than forwards in his friendships, but occasional exchange of cards of greeting and anniversary gifts will serve to give children the feeling that roots in life may grow deeper with the years, and that few need to be severely broken.

Adoption and Remarriage

Even in the usual home where children live from infancy to late adolescence with their own parents, strains are felt at times and children lose their assurance of security in family relationships. When, however, children live in foster homes or are obliged to adjust to step-parents, with the memory of tragedy and loss in the background of their experience, the probabilities of insecurity are multiplied.

David was adopted by his foster parents at the age of five years. During his short life he had previously been placed in at least six different temporary homes. The new foster parents in this succession made the most careful preparations for David's adoption. His play yard was equipped with toys

and apparatus that would delight any five-year-old and his friends; his bedroom was furnished with taste and thoughtful care. In addition, the couple sincerely loved the child and showed their affection in many ways. But to their dismay, the lad remained for many months sober and constrained. They looked in vain for expressions of happiness and spontaneous eagerness. Finally, one night unexpectedly the clue to David's slow acceptance of the security offered him came as he was being tucked into bed. "Oh, Mummy, don't let them take me away again, will you?" He could not believe that at last he had found a permanent home.

There are other cases where it is the adopting parents themselves who feel insecure and their insecurity is reflected in the child's behavior. There are at least three causes for such uncertainty common in the hearts of many foster parents, each one of which may be largely dissipated if freely faced.

One cause is the fear that the child will necessarily be upset if he knows the facts of his adoption. This fear leads to a desire to shield the child from finding out that he is not bound to the parents by blood ties. This fear to tell the truth is usually increased if the child's true parents are still living or if his birth was illegitimate. In any case, foster parents are usually puzzled to know the correct age at which the truth should be permitted to slip out.

For the adults' sake, as well as the child's, it is well to have the child know the truth at as early an age as the matter would be of interest to him. He may be told that he is a "chosen" child as soon as he is old enough to be told about birth itself (around three or four). Not too frequently, but whenever it is natural, and comfortable for the parents, he should hear the words "adopted child" with as warm an emotional connotation as "a fine child" or "a dear child." He should be told the pleasure the parents felt in choosing the very child they wanted. Thus he has nothing to unlearn in later childhood and yet the reality of the love of his foster parents for him

becomes of more importance to him than the specific aspect of his natural ancestry. The child who has read love and admiration from the eyes and the touch of his adopting parents can safely be told, sometime during the first six years of his life, facts which the parents may wish were less harsh, without having his security undermined. Experiences speak louder to young children than words, and this truth should be a constant comfort to adopting parents. In the story "Uncle Bill's Surprise" are suggestions for enhancing this experience for the young child.

A second fear common to many foster parents is due to faulty ideas of inheritance. Among the parents who have come for consultation with the author was a foster mother who wanted advice about Doris, aged four, to protect her from becoming "wayward," from becoming imprudent with young men when she became mature. Doris was the natural child of unmarried parents, and the day before had been found in the bathroom watching her new playmate, a boy of three, use the toilet. Did this not mean that this beloved little foster daughter had inherited abnormally weak sex control? The mother's relief was profound when she was assured not only that immorality is not an inherited trait, but that children's interest in anal affairs and differences between the sexes is universal and normal.

Perhaps other parents may be relieved of similar fears if they clearly understand that character traits are not inherited. When we speak of the child's inheriting "traits" we mean such physical or neurological characteristics as the nature of the body build, the color of hair or eyes, the speed of reaction to stimulus, facility for forming verbal associations, or musical sensitivity. These things, however, are not in the realm of morals. A child may inherit a facility with words, but upon his environment will depend whether this ability is to be expressed in street rhymes or in sonnets. He may inherit a tendency to wide swings of emotion, but whether this will be

expressed in uncontrolled reactions of anger, or in the finest consecration to high causes, will again depend on the environment.

A third fear which may come to the foster parent is due to the desire, which all parents share, to have perfect children. All parents are frustrated in this desire, but biological parents may not be so easily frightened by unconventional behavior as foster parents, for the child's normal misdemeanors may awaken memories of kindred behavior in their own childhood. Perhaps ministers, nursery teachers, or leaders of church parent groups may help such parents realize that no child is perfect, that no two children can be fitted into the same mold, and that patterns of behavior which were natural to an adored child, who may no longer be living, should never be held up as the sole desiderata for a newly arrived stranger in the family. Clinical records are full of the tragedies caused by parents trying in vain to make a rebelling foster child fit a mode of behavior natural to a child previously idealized in the same home.

We have spoken of three possible sources of fear on the part of adopting parents, all of which are avoidable when there is first an understanding of the essential phases of the normal child's growth in security and self-confidence. Parents who are themselves secure in their love and sincerity need only a few suggestions for practical steps directly to foster the child's security. One is to let the child realize that he is especially loved because he was especially chosen. Another is to keep the child as free from feeling the burden of a "debt of gratitude" for his care as one would wish to keep all children free. Ellen, a fine and sensitive young woman, who was adopted as a child, postponed her marriage for years, until it was dangerously late to have children, because she felt she ought not to desert her infirm adopting parents "because of all I owe them." A third important step is either to provide the first adopted child with a second child adopted

into the family, or else to make ample provision for early and regular group play experiences for him, so that he will not be weighed down by too much attention and solicitude from the two adults in the home who have waited to have this one child in their midst, and who have exalted expectations for him.

Let us turn now to a related problem, that of the coming of a step-parent. Here again it is the security of the relationship of the two parents with each other that will bring most security to the child. Only when both parents make earnest and sustained efforts to respect the needs and the longings of each other and of each child who may be in the home can a child-step-parent relationship be wholesome. Because such efforts may not be made equally by each partner, and because the tensions which may be aroused over hurt feelings may be so charged with memories of the past or with fears for the future, the guidance expert or the minister may find he can be of great help in such a family. The father who feels bitterly that his natural child is not receiving as much loving care as his stepchild, the mother who senses that her child annoys and receives harsh treatment from his stepfather, may be greatly helped by being able to confide in a trusted consultant and thus be led to see the problem more constructively and with less fear.

For all that we have said of difficulties which may come with the adopting of children or the entrance of a step-parent into the home, we should add that we have found that large numbers of such relationships work out happily. Both the experience of adopting a child and that of a child's acquiring a step-parent are so fraught with possibilities for delight and security that it seems worth the effort for each one concerned to enter upon these experiences with as much understanding and anticipation as possible.

12

When Death Comes

Come lovely and soothing death,
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later delicate death.

Prais'd be the fathomless universe,
For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious,
And for love, sweet love — but praise! praise! praise!
For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding death.

Dark mother always gliding near with soft feet,
Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?
Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,
I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come,
come unfalteringly.

— WALT WHITMAN

MUCH AS WE MIGHT WISH it to be otherwise, it seems well-nigh impossible for a child to reach the age of three years before death in some form has been thrust upon his thoughts. It may come through a father's warning on crossing the street. It may come through the death of a goldfish or a pet kitten. Like the mother of Gotama Buddha, we should like to keep our young children in beautiful gardens completely sheltered from all tragedy, but we find our efforts thwarted by unexpected exigencies. In fact, the young child may first come

upon death in some experience so commonplace to adults that the parent may find himself using the word *dead* in the child's presence without the parent even being aware he has done so. This was recently the experience of one young mother whose two-and-a-half-year-old's first question about death came when the mother was swatting a fly — not exactly a choice moment for serious explanation!

Fortunately, the young mother did not take the matter too seriously. She realized that her child needed a minimum of explanation, that any words she might say could have but scant meaning for the child. To Marcia the killing of a fly was probably no more than the breaking of a small toy, for she had had no experience to arouse in her a realization of the essential differences between living and non-living things. Not yet having been awakened to the wonder in being alive, how could she be prepared to sense the loss in being dead?

This lack of experience on the part of young children with the wonder of living explains, perhaps, how easily they can forget what they have seen of death and how fleeting their disturbance over it often proves to be. Let us then not feel the need to give more of an explanation about death than the child seems to be asking for. Rather let us turn our attention first toward giving these young children experiences to waken the beginnings of thoughtfulness at the mystery of life itself. Let us share with them the wonder in newborn plants and animals and human babies, and dwell with them in thoughtfulness on the amazing power of living things to grow and to change. Then when the time comes that the child witnesses a form from which the spark of life has fled, he will be able to sense a little of the mystery and meaning of dying.

If we should again learn from the child, Gotama Buddha, we should recall that it was not until the boy had seen sickness, old age, and death that he was awakened from his easy and luxurious existence to a determination to search after the

true meaning of life. It was his own experience face to face with tragedy that urged him into the real world of men to seek enlightenment. Instead then of bemoaning the fact that we cannot protect our children from a knowledge of death, let us recognize that these very experiences may perhaps become the vitalizing moments when somehow a dynamic is born for purposeful living. Difficult as it is to know what to say or what to do at such times, let us try to think of these moments as opportunities for the expansion of the child's thoughts and feelings, and therefore as times to prepare for and to cherish.

Quite contrary to this attitude, however, has been that of many parents. Children's questions about death have been feared and evaded with much the same feeling of walking into tabooed territory as the past generation experienced when dealing with questions about sex and the birth of babies.

The whole subject has been an area of childhood experience much neglected by students of psychology. A few studies have recently been made which give us some guidance.[1,2] But none of these as yet has thrown much light on the first attitudes and ideas regarding death among children under five. Until more adequate studies are available, we must write our observations made from less scientifically studied experiences. We hope that the few suggestions we venture to set forth may prove to be at least provocative of greater thoughtfulness regarding the problem.

Perhaps it is well at the outset to remind ourselves of the ways in which small children differ among themselves in their reactions to death. Not a few, like many of their elders, are completely silenced in the presence of this overpowering mystery. Children who are perpetual question boxes on most subjects, in the presence of something dead will drop their heads in a wordless awe. With some children this silence may express a lack of thoughtfulness. With others, however, it may

betoken a timid hiding of the self from this overmastering phenomenon. We feel we would give anything to be able to enter the chamber of their thoughts but we know not how even to knock at the closed door.

There are other children to whom death once seen becomes a recurring nightmare. Already insecure in their relationships in their homes, these children meet death unfortified, and exaggerated fears lay hold upon them. Restless tossing at night, and screaming, because of terrifying dreams, sometimes result. Although in each case, unfortunate conceptions of death may need repeated correction, the fundamental cause of the difficulty may often lie in a deeper need of the child for a steadier love and a more understanding intimacy from the parents. There is another type of child who, even at four or five years, begins to philosophize and who, unsatisfied with a simple explanation regarding death, will bring forward questions night after night.

What and how much the parent then may say depends upon the type of child with whom he deals, and the emotional relationship which already holds between parents and child. What the parent may say depends also upon the attitude and beliefs of the parents themselves regarding the meaning of death. Their whole religion or philosophy of life is involved. On so profound a subject, and on a subject about which so many differing beliefs are held, it would not be seemly to dictate any one type of philosophy as the best to present to small children. It may be of help, however, if we look at some of the various possible beliefs and see, if we can, how each one of these beliefs may be expressed in language suitable for little children.

It may seem, on first thought, that those parents have a great advantage who sincerely believe in a personal immortality, and in some kind of beautiful heaven where eventually all those who lead good lives may meet. Such parents may say with simplicity and assurance, "Grandmother, we say, is

dead. But it is only her body that is dead. Grandmother herself has gone to live in a beautiful place where every one is happy, where no one is ever sick, or feels pain, and where every one is kind." Probably most young children to whom death is so explained accept the picture without question and feel satisfied.

There are other young children, however, who, with a keen penetration, will go straight after the difficulties involved in such a picture of everlasting life. Gerald, for example, was six when his playmate across the street died. His grandmother explained that John had gone to heaven. Night after night just before going to bed, Gerald plied her with searching questions. "Is he alone? Who is with him? Why didn't his mother go with him? Or his father? Are there any other children there? Can he play with them? Can he play all he wants to? Can he do the least bit of a naughty thing? Will I go as soon as I'm as old as John? Will I stay here until I'm big? Until I am a hundred years old? Or two hundred years old?"

"No," said the grandmother to this last question. "All your friends would be gone then, too."

"But they all go sometime, don't they?" added the six-year-old philosopher. "They all come like little baby sister came. They all come, and they all go."

Four-and-a-half-year-old Elizabeth was first challenged by the death of her pet cat. She, too, seemed determined to extract from the episode all the wisdom she could reach. Her mother, attempting to be equally frank, tried to explain about people dying as well as kittens, and expressed her own belief that after we die we shall wake up again to live somewhere in greater happiness than we now know.

"But when we die, *will* we wake up again really?" asked Elizabeth.

"Yes, we think we shall," said her mother. "Jesus said we would if we tried to be good."

"Will we really wake up again?" came the question again.

Again came the mother's expression of her faith.

"But we might and we might not," answered this four-year-old skeptic.

Fortunate, indeed, are those small children who have such friendly adult companions in the home who are not disturbed by their children's persistent questionings, and with whom they feel free to speak out their doubts. In both cases, these children seemed to have sensed that the adults to whom they were talking shared with them the feeling of being in the presence of a mystery. The parents, too, saw as "through a glass darkly," and in the sincerity of an intimate companionship, the children were not afraid. Gerald was strong enough and keen enough to come through with the acceptance of death as a universal something analogous to birth that comes sometime to everyone. Such an experience marks a great day in a child's life. Few achieve it until long past the age of six. Elizabeth was able to be vocal even about her doubting. She brought into the open what her mother had kept veiled — the acknowledgment that really we cannot know. To accept the fact that the full meaning of death is hidden from men's eyes and then not to be afraid of going to meet the dark, is also a great achievement.

It would seem then that even for parents who are most confident in their faith regarding life after death, it is well to be humble — to let even the small child know that what dying really means is after all a mystery — in child language, a secret that none of us knows. So also is what we were before we were born. If birth has seemed good, why not expect that death also initiates something good?

There are other parents who are just as sincerely confident as this group just described. This second type believe that death is the complete end of all that can be called personality. To be sincere with their children in the presence of death, they must say something like this: "Grandmother is dead. Her life is finished, like a story that has been told. Like stories,

our lives have their beginnings. Like stories, our lives also come to an end sometime. Grandmother's life was like a long and beautiful story that has come to an end. We shall miss her but she will not miss us, for her time for knowing us and loving us is gone. Dying is perhaps something like going to sleep — a sleep so sound that we never dream and a sleep out of which we never wake."

So dogmatic a negativism regarding death, however, will seem to many to be scientifically unjustified. How do we know that dying is the end of us? Our birth was certainly not the beginning of us. A continuous stream of living substance somehow links us with unnumbered generations. In fact, a little of us must somehow have been in the very first living piece of protoplasm on the earth. Psychologists, as well as biologists, are setting forth evidence out of our subconscious dream lives that there are within each of us remnants of the feelings and thoughts of countless generations. They speak in terms of a "collective unconscious." It seems as if there were some all-pervading, everlasting life of which each one is a part, like a drop in a flowing river. Both the psychologists and the biologists seem to be hinting that part of each of us has apparently come out of a seemingly endless stream of life. Why not then assume that part of each of us will continue in that everlasting life? This enduring part, however, of which we speak, belongs to the here and now, and to a future on this earth (so long as our earth remains habitable), instead of implying a different existence in a far-off heaven.

How a life after death may be thus extended in succeeding generations is beyond our imagination to conceive. The continuing element does not seem like personality in any sense in which we are accustomed to use the term. In fact, what is it about an individual which is constant even from the cradle to the grave? We cannot say. Neither can we doubt the reality of this continuing unifying element. If then we are not able to think clearly about the continuance of personalities as we

know them in the flesh, how can we expect to think clearly about personalities after death?

A third group of parents who cannot conceive of a personal immortality in heaven, and who are also unwilling dogmatically to assert that death ends all that can be equated with the personality, hold this position just outlined. To them such a belief in the unending quality of something of which each one is a part seems important. Whether or not this ongoing be conscious and personal does not concern them. It is enough to recognize that the significance of a person's life, whether small or great, seems permanently to affect the larger currents of life, and that the nature and value of this unending element depends upon the nature and value of the individual life. Such a belief can make a profound difference in one's attitude toward living.

Such philosophizing may seem rather far afield from the practical problem which we are discussing; namely, how shall we speak to three- and four-year-olds about death? Such thoughts are clearly beyond the comprehension of small children, to say nothing of many of us who claim to be adults. The more abstractly we think, the more difficult we make our problem. There is one satisfying return, however, for any long struggle after a satisfying philosophy and that is gaining the humility that inevitably comes, and the realization that any dogmatism regarding the effect of death upon the more intangible elements of the personality would seem to be presumptuous.

If such reasoning be sound, it will follow that in such a background for our approach to young children regarding death, we may do well if we accomplish but three things, and even all of these should not usually be attempted through the first conversation. First, young children should know that in dying the live part — or the wonder part as we may call it — in any living thing leaves the body. The body is then as useless as a dry leaf or a wilted flower. The bird or the

kitten or the person that we have known is no longer in the body. It is dead. This may be enough to say in the first conversation. Any further comments may best be left until the small child asks, "Where has the wonder part gone?" Then will come the opportunity for the second important thought. The parent may say, "I do not know. I wish I knew. The answer to your question is a secret none of us knows." For most parents this would seem enough to say, were the object of questioning a dead animal or fish or bird. If, however, the parent is speaking about a person whom the child has known, a third thought may be introduced in some such remark as this: "I do not think that the wonder part has really gone into nothing. I think it is somewhere. I think that somehow it is still with us, even though we cannot see Mrs. Brown or talk to her any more."

Among the stories in the Martin and Judy series, two in the second volume deal with this problem of facing death. One is about a time when the children found "The Bird That Could Not Fly." The other tells what happened when "Judy Hears about Grandmother." In writing these stories, the author had in mind the three values named above.

In a third story, entitled "Judy and Her Father Play a Game," the attempt has been made to suggest a little game through which small children may be led to realize that in each one of us there is something very important that can never be touched or seen — something that we cannot take hold of in any way and say, "Lo, here it is."

Judy's father closed his eyes and asked, "Where is my Judy?"
"Here she is, Daddy. Here's Judy sitting beside you."
"Oh, sure enough. My Judy's right here," said Father. "Then I surely can touch her. I want to touch the part of her that I like the best. I want to touch Judy's love. Are you near enough for me to touch that, Judy?"

Then after touching her hands, her hair and her knee, and

not finding Judy's love, the father, still insisting it is somewhere, sings this song:

> I can feel Judy's love when she kisses.
> I know Judy loves by her eyes.
> But the real part of Judy that loves me,
> Oh where, or where does it hide?

If the story of which this is a brief excerpt is read to a child or if a similar game is actually played with him by his mother or father, he may begin to glimpse the fact that there are realities in life which we call *spiritual* and which cannot be seen or touched. The game may be varied to include, for example, trying to guess each other's thoughts, or trying to touch the place where the happy feelings or the angry feelings are. We have found such dramatic play to be of interest to young children, and an encouragement to a wholesome type of thoughtfulness that enhances the child's feeling of personal worth.

Such an attitude seems also to fortify children for the day of tragic loss when it comes. One mother, who tried to protect her child from the devastating effects of the ruthless language of the older children around the block who talked in his presence about his father's death, said to the boy one day: "Son, you remember when we talked about Daddy, we said that the real Daddy is a spirit. But if the children outdoors say to you that your Daddy is in the ground, you can say, 'Only my Daddy's hands and feet and body are there. They are in the ground because Daddy does not need them now. But my real Daddy is still alive. That is his spirit.'" The child was silent for a moment. Then he asked, "Do they always put people's bodies in the ground when they die?" "Usually; but they couldn't put their spirits there, could they?" said the mother.

Having made these suggestions, we cannot refrain from a few warnings. First of all, let us relieve our consciences

of the need to tell children all at once everything that we believe. It is probably the part of wisdom to say too little rather than to say too much, remembering the young child's meager capacity and experiences. Let us also guard, if possible, against the small child's overhearing the old traditional formulas used so often in adult conversation regarding death, such as these: "God has taken our sister to be with Him in heaven"; "God needed her more than we"; "It would be selfish for us to wish her back with us." Such remarks sometimes ferment a long time in the minds of the unsuspected listeners and become especially damaging when the basic experience with death has deeply affected the child's emotions and has threatened his fundamental security. Unable to understand and afraid to ask questions, he may develop a bitter feeling of resentment and injustice which in turn can bring forth hatred of God himself. In addition, when such devastating emotions are repressed because of fear of adult censure, and if the child really feels that he is selfish in wishing his loved one back or that he is wicked in hating God, there may grow a deep sense of guilt to rise up even in adult life as a mysterious unconquerable specter in the unconscious. How much of antagonism to religion has come from just such unfortunate childhood experiences, no one can measure.

For the sake of avoiding some of these possible dangers, it may sometimes be desirable to let a trusted neighbor take care of the child during the period of the most severe crisis. The funeral service and burial, with all the emotional overtones that adults bring to them, are beyond the level of the little child's emotional comprehension. If the child is old enough to ask questions, however, and he senses even vaguely the seriousness of the family situation, it is important that he should not feel entirely isolated from all participation in the event.[3] Parents should plan ways of telling the child what has happened and should give the child opportunity to share in the sorrow and in the outpouring love, on his own level of feeling. It is sur-

prising to find how easily young children of five can sometimes take the straightforward physical facts, and how sensitive they often are to the thought that the body no longer contains the real and wonderful part of the personality. Sometime during childhood, the spoken words should be supplemented by the direct experience of seeing a human corpse, under as favorable conditions as possible. Without this, death may have an abnormal fascination, and the child's imagination may produce some grotesque result of which parents remain unaware. The mystery and the loneliness that death brings are inescapable. These may be more easily accepted when the child has actually seen for himself what human eyes can see.

The ability to understand the finality of death is dependent on a child's stage of development. Young children can easily imagine the dead as coming back to life. A child may announce to his playmates, "My Daddy died last week. He's never coming back again. My Mother will have to find a new Daddy for me." And then a little later he may say, "But my Daddy will come back next summer I think." Such comments need not be corrected by the listening adult. The child's immaturity is his natural protection from too great a shock.

It has been found that wonderings about death are often contemporaneous with a child's first real interest in numbers and in counting the days on the calendar as they pass. It is appropriate at this stage that a child should be helped to note how each life has its span — a birth at the beginning, a growing up, a growing old, and finally an end. The thought of his own dying in that distant future and the death of older people, a child can usually take with composure. A grandmother sick in bed was a bit surprised one afternoon to have her grandson comfort her by saying, "Never mind, Granny, you will soon be dead," but on reflection she realized how wholesome and natural for him were his thoughts.

Let us suppose that, in spite of all our efforts, an intimate experience with death does come. What are some of the

symptoms in the children's behavior for which we should be prepared, and what may we do about them? The studies made to date suggest that a bereft parent left in a home with children should expect that, to some extent, they will feel their own emotional security threatened. This does not usually mean that these children will worry about their own deaths. It means rather that they will feel robbed of their full chance at life. If the death has been that of a parent and if the child is very young, a parent substitute may fill the emptiness rather quickly. If the child is old enough to remember the one who has gone, and if the tie between the two has been close, then life will inevitably take on a loneliness never before felt. Such a situation calls for maintaining an especially close intimacy between the surviving parent and the child. He needs to feel that his welfare is a matter of deep concern to the parent and that on the level of his emotional comprehension there is a bond of sympathy between them. If the child feels his safety and his care have really been threatened he is likely to regress to childish behavior in order to force greater attention to his needs.

Again, a death in the family often leaves, in the unconscious or semi-unconscious part of the mind, a feeling of guilt. No amends can be made after death for the unkindnesses, the bad tempers and the jealousies we may have shown to the deceased. Since the dead are usually idealized and spoken of with praise, the living are left to carry the entire burden of guilt. A child afraid to tell his feelings hides them in the darkness of his own loneliness, where they may spread until they poison the inner life. These hidden feelings of guilt may be expressed in various ways: in periods of sulkiness, lack of ambition, withdrawal from playmates, or sudden manifestations of temper.

Another cause of such feelings of guilt among younger children is said to be their primitive and magical outlook on life. Strange as it may seem to adults, little children have a naïve belief in the power of their own wishes. Not having grasped

the scientist's picture of a law-abiding universe, children often regard themselves as being much like the fairies and witches of their story books, and feel that their wishes have a magical power. Suppose, for example, a child is jealous of his younger brother and at some special time of irritation, he wishes the brother were dead. Then suppose that later on the brother really does die. It has been found that the living child often actually believes that his wish has killed the brother. For fear of condemnation, the child cannot express his feelings openly to his parents. His sense of guilt becomes apparent only to one who can understand the symbols of dreams.

It is thought wise, therefore, for parents to assume that when death comes in the home, feelings of guilt may be present for one or another reason. To help relieve this inexpressible feeling of guilt, parents will try to build up the self-respect of those who remain in the home, and by loving and sympathetic treatment reveal adult trust. It is also desirable that conversations regarding the dead should be carried on as naturally as possible and that occasionally mention should be made of faults as well as virtues.

One more rather common but unfortunate result of an intimate exposure to death is the feeling of resentfulness and hate toward the aggressive power that is believed to have caused the death. In times of violence this consequence is likely to appear more frequently than under ordinary circumstances. This hate may be directed toward some hostile or violent person or group, or it may be directed toward God.

Such an unfortunate consequence of death cannot be handled effectively through condemnation, for such a method does not remove the hate but merely pushes it down further into the unconscious. In this world of imperfection we must find a way to share the blame for the unnecessary tragedies of life. Hate usually disappears in the open light of true understanding. *It is better to let hate wither in the sunlight than to attempt to pull it up by the roots.*

Although such unhappy aftermaths of death as these two — the development of a sense of personal guilt and of feelings of resentment or hate — are quite common among children, they are not likely to be long continued in homes where the children have been happily adjusted to life. It is more often true of those who have been overprotected by anxious parents, or who have long harbored jealousies of brother or sister. Such children are the most apt to be abnormally upset by the death of someone in the family. In any case, if parents are prepared to look upon any form of unusual behavior as a natural result of feelings which the child is unable to express directly, rather than as symptoms of naughtiness, they can find ways to lessen the disturbance and to shorten the period of upheaval.

We are back then, after this short inquiry into the problems that death may bring to our homes, to the basic element of importance with which we began — namely, our own adult attitudes and philosophy in regard to death. There is so much that has been unwholesome in traditional teachings about death, that we need a new orientation to the subject. We cannot helpfully share our own thoughts until they are clarified and assimilated into our own being. To this more basic requirement, we need to add a growing understanding of our children's emotional problems so that we can psychologically prepare them for a crisis when it comes. A happy and purposeful adjustment to life, both for ourselves and for our children, makes possible a courageous facing of death. But a twisted and false notion of death may stimulate the abnormal growth of negative attitudes already acquired toward life. Understanding life and understanding death should advance step by step together. Life and death are opposites, but they are not enemies. They are the Chinese *Yang* and *Ying* that embrace each other, and together make the full circle of meaning.[4]

13

When Should Come a Consciousness of God?

The minute that a young child's mind makes an excursion into the unknown, we hurry to aid with explanations and measurements. We fairly post "keep out" and "verboten" on deep curiosities. We forget that the probing of strange phenomena, creation, God, death, magic, has made our scientists, our artists, our religious leaders, throughout the ages.

— C. MADELEINE DIXON

OF ALL THE QUESTIONS raised in parents' groups that meet to consider the religious education of their small children, one seems to be more persistent and more widely asked than any other: How shall we tell our children about God? This concern seems quite natural. Praying is the customary first religious exercise for a young child and he cannot pray unless he has some idea of the One to whom to pray. Moreover, a person's thought of God and attitude toward God are usually regarded as the center and heart of his religion. How can we get anywhere in teaching a child religion until we have given him the first and most fundamental thought? Such reasoning seems quite logical and religious education has long proceeded upon these assumptions. But it is exactly at this point that we have the most misgivings, and our reasons for questioning this procedure will be apparent as we go forward.

First of all, when one individual wishes to give a new idea

to another, the only psychologically sound thing to do is to find out what background that person has from which to look at this new idea. What experience has he already had to which the new may be related? What are the limitations of his vocabulary, and what are his interests and his prejudices? Small children should be made no exception if we are to introduce them to a new concept so important as that of God.

Suppose then we consider the four- and five-year-old children who have reached the age when the majority of Christian and Jewish parents think they should have an explanation of God. What are the limitations in the experience of such children which would cause them difficulties in conceiving of God?

To begin with, we note the child's limited vocabulary, composed mainly of words to describe things and people and activities that he himself has seen or touched or heard. Although he has seen both toys and living things, he does not distinguish clearly between them. He easily personifies sticks and stones, and yet he forgets that his kitten has feelings when he pulls her tail. The wonder of being alive, involving consciousness and the power to choose between courses of action, has not yet impressed him. Although he is beginning to ask his *whys* and his *hows*, he still knows little about the things around him, how they work and how one thing causes another in reasonable succession. He finds life full of surprises. He can easily imagine unseen fairies and elves doing amazing things, just as his father and mother again and again accomplish things as if by a magic process that he never sees. The world of natural law has scarcely come into his ken. He but vaguely notices the passing of time, for each moment he lives absorbingly in the present. Unless he has actually been confronted with the birth of animals or children, it has probably not really simmered into his consciousness that there was once a time when he was not. And his outlook toward the future is equally vague. His life as an inclusive unit, having its potential span including birth, growth, maturity, and death,

has not become a part of his thinking. He thinks of his life as going on and on, much like the stories he tells, and he meets it vividly as it comes, without meditation on its total meaning. For such an existence his biological urges, with their emotional compulsions, are his main guides.

In view of these limitations in the young child's experience, one cannot help ask: "Does he need God as yet? And if a parent does attempt to explain the idea and nature of God to him, what, if anything, is accomplished?"

Let us suppose, for example, that a four-year-old should ask, "Who makes the kittens?" or "Who makes the snow?" and the parent answers, "God," and attempts to explain the Creator back of or within the universe. What is likely to be the outcome? First of all, the child accepts the answer without question. He has no experience or knowledge with which to refute the statement. All he can do is to compare this Creator with people whom he has seen making things — perhaps his father. The child begins a habit of regarding the natural phenomena of the world around him as the products of the personal labors of some unseen person who can do anything at any time, as he may feel inclined. During his summer vacation, five-year-old Byron had been visiting his grandmother who gave him his first teachings about God. She told stories of God who made the flowers and birds and who sent the rain and sunshine. Later, on his return home, Byron was looking through a book of photographs and saw pictures of the New England hurricane. "God made the hurricane," he said. "Of course he did. If he makes the rain and the snow, he must make the wind, too. Next time I meet God, I'm going to punch him in the nose for sending the hurricane." Mary's mother also attempted to explain the greatness of God. She was disturbed, however, when one day her five-year-old Mary said to her, "God can do anything, can't he, Mummie? He makes cars run over people."

In both these cases adults had tried to teach the greatness

of God as the creative power back of or within the cosmos. It was a high and worthy conception of God, whether they thought of Him as a supernatural and transcendent First Cause or whether they conceived of Him as qualitatively like the creative element within all living forms and working now within each of us. But the meaning these small children gave to the words they heard was very different. To them God became an arbitrary worker of magic, as it were, acting from motives which even the children could not respect, or doing things that seemed to them bad.

Again, parents may attempt to explain to young children two other attributes of God — his invisibility and his omnipresence. Now even adults must struggle to hold in mind these two attributes as applying to the same being at the same time, unless they attempt to think of something other than personal. They must try to conceive of intangible qualities or potentialities such as the forces of love or truth or creativity. But what can a small child do with such words? When he has not yet sensed such intangible and spiritual forces within himself or in others, the best he can do is to imagine a fairylike person that can move quickly and easily from place to place without being seen. Children in a certain nursery class were afraid to go into the coatroom. "The bogeyman is there," said one, "or maybe God." Three-year-old Bobby, contrary to his usual custom, began crying when he was told to go to bed. "God is under the bathtub," he insisted, "and he is being hurt." How the child could have come to imagine so weird a place for God to hide was inconceivable to the mother. Janet puzzled over God's being everywhere. "How can God be in my house and Mary's house at the same time when the vacant lot is between?" she asked emphatically.

In order to guard against such fantastic anthropomorphic ideas of God, other parents tell their small children that God is a spirit within our hearts, helping us to think and to know

what is good. Small children have had many an argument together trying to figure out how this may be. "God is too big to be in our hearts," said one. "He's as big as the whole world." "Oh, but he can make himself little. God can be so little you can't see him at all," came the reply. "Is God in your heart still?" asked four-year-old Sam of his mother. "Well, he's in my stomach," continued the boy. And there was Jean — as old as five — who was about to take a drink from the kitchen faucet when she turned to her mother and asked, "If I swallow this water, will I swallow Jesus?" Once more, with such episodes in mind, we realize how very little four- and five-year-olds know about themselves and the way their bodies work. Food and drink are the things that they have learned by experience as entering within them, and the stomach is the usual name given to the place where these things go. What more natural inference than that God should be like these? If spirit has a different meaning, it is likely to represent some tiny elf that can live inside one's body. A friend tells how she used to imagine God as a pygmylike creature, and even in her maturer years whenever the word God was mentioned, the picture of this little creature insisted on coming into consciousness to hinder her achieving other thoughts of God. Finally, she found she had to abandon the term God entirely in order to attain any worthy quality of devotions or meditations.

If such examples of young children's fantastic pictures of God were really unusual, we could dismiss these illustrations as of little importance, but such stories are far too easy to collect to lead one to think them uncommon. Indeed, when we really understand the meager background in experience which these four- and five-year-olds have had, the logic of their thinking seems quite natural. The cause of their grotesque misconceptions is not the children's inability to think, but rather the nature of the data from which they reason.

Such results raise for us a disturbing question. Are children

so young benefited or handicapped by the gaining of such ideas? If we admit that they are handicapped, serious doubts are raised regarding long established and widespread methods having the tacit approval of the ministerial leadership in the majority of the synagogues and churches of the world.

Thus far we have been considering only the small child's limitations and his meager experience. Let us now ask what significant things he has already achieved by the time he is three and how he has been learning. Practically all schools of psychology, however much they differ at many points, agree that the first two or three years are the most significant and influential of all life. Dr. Alfred Adler was one of the first psychologists to propound the theory that even before the end of the first year the child has formed what he called "a philosophy of life," unworded to be sure, but manifest as a pattern molding all his behavior. This the child has formed not through conscious meditation and decision. Rather it has grown unconsciously out of his emotional reactions to his world. Since then the painstaking work of such scientific students as Dr. Margaret Ribble[1] and Dr. Spitz[2] have given concrete confirmation of Dr. Adler's insight.

In short, if we can think of religion not merely in terms of a worded philosophy that centers in God, but rather in terms of a vital attitude toward life, then we must admit that a three-year-old child has already a kind of religion of his own. The warp and woof out of which he has woven it are made of his wishes and fears, his satisfactions and his protests, his urges and his thwartings. The relative intensity of the colors of the different threads produces the pattern's ensemble — whether it be weak or strong, full of antagonism or of love, dominated by timidity or enlivened by courageous social interest. This emotional picture of his universe that the young child has painted may be untrue to reality — from the point of view of an adult. It will necessarily be sketchy, inadequate, childish, and very narrow in its scope. Any large sweep of

consciousness into either time or space is quite out of the question. Nevertheless, this picture of life — this childish religion — is surprisingly potent in its influence upon the child's further development.

To think of giving a child religious instruction without knowing the nature of this unverbalized religion which he already has acquired would seem like being concerned with the outside of the cup and saucer without any reference to what was within. If the child is in protest against his parents' domination, how can he welcome a greater parent whose pleasure and displeasure is even more significant? If the child pictures a world where he feels free to be adventurous and alert and trusting, in what ways may God be explained so that these qualities are encouraged rather than stunted?

In writing of the psychological significance of religious doctrines presented to adults, Dr. Georges Berguer has written these challenging words: "Man becomes religious not because, at a certain moment in his development, he has encountered a certain group of dogmatic ideas, doctrines, or formulas which he has been pleased to adopt, but first and foremost because his desires, needs and feelings — one whole side of his psychic life — impel him in the direction he adopts. The religion does not exist in the dogmas, the doctrines, and the ceremonies before it exists in man himself. It is because it exists first in the psychic life of the individual that he later finds it again, so to speak, and accepts it, in the intellectual systems that are presented to him or in the ceremonies and the rites which correspond to his conscious and unconscious aspirations."[3]

If the whole psychic side of the adult impels him in the direction of the religion he adopts, how much more this must be true of the young child, because his ability to judge and to discriminate is so embryonic. Unable to deny the authority of the parent's instruction, with no basis in his own experience by which to judge the truth or falsity of the statements, need-

ing to accept the words of instruction literally at their face value, the child has to fit the new portrait of God somehow into the picture he has already painted. It is not strange if his emotional needs determine just which parts of the new he shall choose and which he shall try to forget. Let us give two illustrations to indicate how the psyches of two small children actually seized upon the religious instruction given and made it serve their dominant emotional needs.

Chucky was a red-haired, freckle-faced little boy, and from the point of view of the casual observer in the church nursery the first morning he arrived, he was "bad." He pulled the girls' hair, he untied their hair ribbons, and he threw books on the floor. When at the end of the morning his mother came to take him home, she asked if he had been a good boy. To the surprise of all who heard, he answered, "Yes, I showed 'em I was a boy like God wanted me."

Upon investigation later, the teacher learned that Chucky was the youngest of a family of six boys. When he was born, his parents had been keenly disappointed that he was not a girl. Apparently they had revealed something of their regret to Chucky and had said to him, "But God wanted you to be a boy." Around that one thought Chucky had woven his whole life philosophy. God had put something over on his parents. Chucky, too, would put things over on them because God was on his side. This belief tended to exaggerate a protest that Chucky already had against his parents because he intuited their disappointment in him. His belief in God's favoritism for boys also lessened his respect for girls. God became, in short, his personal champion, and justified a continuance of a pattern of antagonism to his environment which he had already developed very early in life.

A second illustration, coming from the same nursery group of twelve apparently "usual" children, illustrates the same point. Danny's three older brothers had been coaxing their

mother to let their youngest come to Sunday School, and when he reached his third birthday, she consented. Danny had been looking forward eagerly to this new experience. It was a great surprise, therefore, when the child cried persistently throughout the first three Sunday morning sessions. Strange to say, during the week at home he talked as though he had had a good time. Finally, the teacher called at the home to discover, if possible, what was wrong.

She found an idle and discouraged father who had been unemployed for many months, and a mother in poor health struggling heroically to secure the basic necessities with the meager resources of a relief stipend. She was the one who always collected the monthly food rations and she was the one who always said grace at table, expressing thanks to God for His goodness to them. When the teacher asked Danny, "Why do you cry in Sunday School?" his answer was the cryptic statement, "He likes me." "But not when you cry," protested his mother. Danny, looking up in surprise, said, "Yes, he does. He likes me. He likes *you* when you cry." More puzzled than ever, the teacher sought the mother alone to find out when Danny had seen her cry. The mother recalled that, on several occasions while saying grace at mealtime, she had broken down and cried. She admitted also that several times when Danny was saying his prayers, tears had come to her eyes. Then, too, there had been occasional heated arguments between husband and wife, which the child had overheard. At such times the mother often warned her husband that God would not help them unless he did his part. Furthermore, the child had been told that when he went to the church he would be going into God's house.

At last the teacher felt she could understand Danny's strange behavior. Putting together as best he could the impressions he had been given in an atmosphere surcharged with emotional insecurity, Danny felt his hopes were dependent primarily

upon his mother and God. His mother was the one who really cared for him and his mother used tears to prevail upon the mercy of that Greater One without whose providing hand they would all be lost. So Danny, having been told that in going to Sunday School he was going to God's house, adopted his mother's technique even though it meant sacrificing Sunday after Sunday the joys of participation in the nursery activities toward which he had been looking forward so keenly. One marvels at the utter "commitment" of a three-year-old based upon his own unworded belief in God.

In both these instances, that of Chucky and that of Danny, one is impressed by the strength of purpose shown by such young children. We marvel at the dynamic that each of them found in *one idea* and how they used it to feed an unsatisfied craving for security. The religion they had themselves emotionally worked out, their determination to strive at any cost to hold on to love, wherever it might be found in their limited world, had ten times the vitality of the intellectual worth of the words themselves. Indeed, these children were able to twist and mangle the meanings in the words in such a way as to turn truth to falsehood in order that the beliefs they were taught might fit securely into the warped and anti-social philosophies by which they were already living.

Many similar cases might be cited. Indeed, we have known of so many of their kind that we have come to doubt whether any child, who is not already quite normally adjusted to the real world, is able to make out of even the best instruction in religious ideas anything that will prove in the long run to be enriching and expanding. The child's own intuited religion may speak so loudly in his heart that he cannot hear what we are saying.

At any rate, it is clearly no simple task that we face when we decide to help young children to grow religiously. It is something vastly more difficult and complex than the giving

of words and the introducing of children to rituals. It is a task needing the keenest psychological understanding and the deepest religious insight attainable.

It is because we have come to recognize these hidden but potent elements contributing to the religious education of the young child, that we have come to the conclusion that in most communities and homes we have been beginning at the wrong end, and have lacked insight into the natural ways by which children might grow in religion.

Instead of beginning with the giving of a religious vocabulary or with the establishment of habits of worship or prayer, we should start with the unverbalized philosophy of life that the child already has formed. If, on observing his behavior in some natural setting where inner drives are not restrained by repression, we note that the child's pattern of life is anti-social or timid, let us provide a different kind of environment for him — one that will encourage an outgoing and interested response toward other persons. Let us remove, if we can, the cause for his painting a false picture of life, and give him an opportunity to draw for himself a new pattern. If the child seems already secure, socially interested and co-operative, let us give him time to enlarge his picture, putting into it more and more experiences of being a creative partici-pant in an interesting life in a world full of adventure and the learning of new things.

Then, in order that these young children may begin to learn the values of meditative thoughtfulness, let us have informal conversations with them over the little happenings of the common days, sharing, if we can, something of the freshness of their enthusiasms. Stories of other children, such as those of Martin and Judy, may well be read to quicken thoughtfulness about similar experiences they themselves have had, and to encourage the germs of religious sensitivity and aspiration. When the first philosophical questionings begin, let us share the wondering, and not be in a hurry to cut it off

with a few words. Help the child to sense something of the largeness of his outreach. Then when it becomes apparent that the child is old enough and understands enough to give a worthwhile meaning to the answer, let us help him to realize why all people do not think alike, and let us express our own belief in God as being our own sincere faith rather than categorically as fact, like the hour of the day.

Seeking to make possible such a slow and natural growth in religion is a far cry from the usual authoritative instruction, in which adults simply assume that God is thus and so, and teach little children what to think. Since it is important that this contrast should be clearly recognized, we shall give an illustration to point it up.

A singing teacher had just been teaching a group of five- and six-year-olds the song, "Who made ocean, earth and sky? God, our Heavenly Father." Later during an intermission, she overheard this conversation among three boys.

"God did not make the earth and sky," said Dickinson, whose father was a brilliant physician.

"Why, Dickinthon, 'courth he did. If God hadn't made the earth, it would have juth been a great big ball of gath floating up there. It thayth tho in the Book of Knowleth," said Andrew, whose father was a conservative, highly intelligent lawyer.

"God did too make the sky. It says so in the Bible," said David, whose mother was an ardent church-school teacher.

"God did not make the earth," repeated Dickinson slowly and solemnly, his eyes scowling out below thoughtful brows. "The world always has been, and is and always will be, and God didn't have a thing to do with it. My father told me so."

"Thath not tho," said Andrew. "I'm going home and look it up in the Book of Knowleth."

"Well me, I'm going home and look it up in the Bible," said David eagerly.

And there the conversation ended.

Here we find three children, so young and yet so intelligent that they might have gone far in their own searchings, already having been given by their respective parents not only words with which to peg down their thinking, but each believing that back of his beliefs is an unchallengeable authority. Instead then of being able to profit by the differing points of view and to discover that men have given different answers to this great question, and that no person is justified in speaking with final authority on the subject, the boys were compelled to begin in their small way a verbal war of religious fanaticism. Such fixed and absolute religious beliefs are out of tune with the finer movements of our day toward worldwide and progressive understanding, and the mutual and friendly sharing of the blessings of culture.

Furthermore, such authoritatively accepted ideas do not lend themselves easily to change, especially when they have become emotionally bound up with parental love. To accept a belief about God because father or mother or teacher has given the idea — the child not knowing why he believes it to be true, or that any other way of believing could be right — leaves one with something fixed and outside of one's self.

On the other hand, to gain a thought of God as a result of one's meditation on actual experiences, even though the word for the thought is given by another, is to discover something alive that has roots both within and without. Knowing how the belief was gained, the individual knows how it also may be changed. When the opportunity comes to compare this belief with those of others, the child can understand and appreciate the other point of view and may even revise his own in the added light he obtains. Thus a growing religion is possible and toleration and appreciation of differing points of view become natural.

To allow children to discover God for themselves would require a reserve which most religious parents would find it hard to maintain, for the thought of God is too important

in our adult culture for us to be able to protect children for very many years from all contact with it. We should bear in mind, however, the possible truth in the warning given by Frances G. Wickes in *The Inner World of Childhood*, "When we tell a thing prematurely, we destroy a possible *individual creation*, and substitute for living process a dead form."

In most schools of religion, we have not learned how to cherish an "individual creation" of faith. Indeed, we seem rather to be doing all within our power to make impossible for the child "an original relation to the universe" such as Emerson declared to be the birthright of every person. We spend years trying to instill into children the "faith of their fathers." In Christian churches we assume a Christian God, believing it to be our duty to pass on to our children the products of the best minds of the past, even though these beliefs must come second hand. We excuse ourselves on the ground that small children cannot think for themselves on such great matters. Recent studies of young children reveal clearly, however, that small children can think for themselves with an amazing directness, provided they have adequate data on which to base their thinking. It is when we expect children to think before the necessary data are available to them, and when they have no interest in doing the thinking, that they seem to be incapable. It is dangerous even for an adult to try to think in fields where he has no learning. Confucius put this insight succinctly when he said, "Learning without thought is labor lost; thought without learning is dangerous." If we applied this wisdom to our dealings with young children, we should keep always close to their actual experiences, providing for them wider and wider contacts as data for their meditations. Then having done these things, we should trust more largely the children's own abilities to think for themselves, and their own fundamental need to have a working and satisfying philosophy of life.

If God really is everywhere, he surely may be found any-

where, through any experience of life, if one only has the eyes to see and the ears to hear and the persistence to search. Children — if they are old enough to be told of God — are also old enough to be told that the opportunity is theirs to search freely for hints of Him anywhere they may find them and as long as they live. To wait until after they have been indoctrinated, until the stirrings of adolescence, to expect an "original creation" is too late. The more satisfying the religion has been throughout childhood, the more difficult it will be to rethink it and let it grow. Rather, the process of growing in religion is the other way around — first the rich unverbalized experiences, and then slowly and wisely the sharing of the thoughts of others. First the seed, then the blade, then the ear, then "the full grain in the ear."

14

Prayer at the Nursery-Age Level

I cannot invent
New things,
Like airships
Which sail
On silver wings;
But today
A wonderful thought
In the dawn was given,
And the stripes on my robe,
Shining from wear,
Were suddenly fair,
Bright with a light
Falling from Heaven —
Gold, and silver, and bronze
Lights from the windows of Heaven.

— TOYOHIKO KAGAWA

AFTER OUR WORDS OF CAUTION in the preceding chapter against too early instruction in religious matters, there comes the question, "Then what?" Can it be that so many young mothers and teachers have been entirely wrong in teaching young children of four and five to pray? Are there not some simple rituals in which nursery children may profitably engage? Is the use of language beyond the comprehension of small children always harmful to their growth?

We should be blind, indeed, were we to deny that high values have been achieved through direct religious instruction

given even to four- and five-year-olds. When parents and teachers are themselves religiously sensitive, when they reveal their intimate feelings and aspirations with a natural sincerity, young children no doubt often recognize something true and valuable, quite apart from the meanings they may ascribe to the words spoken. They may, indeed, recognize an honor in being asked to stretch their thoughts toward an adult level; and, in the effort, they may gain an exhilaration of feeling that there are things beyond their present understanding that wait for their exploring. Such experiences may be truly uplifting to those children whose relationships to life in general are already secure enough so that they are not impelled to clutch some formula that may give them a false sense of protection. Whether or not such normally adjusted children of four and five, if left religiously untutored until a few years older, would develop a more lively curiosity regarding the deeper meanings of life, and, in the end, a more original and vital faith, we cannot assert with assurance until more experimentation has been carried on along the lines proposed in the last chapter. We can merely suggest the possibility. To us, the slower, less verbal procedure seems to promise truer and more radiant spiritual results.

So drastic a change, however, as the deletion of all prayer from the home life for small children and from the Sunday morning period for the nursery class, should not be made without the substitution of some other practices commensurate in worth with prayer. More positive and constructive proposals, therefore, deserve consideration. Another set of questions needs answering. Why has the habit of prayer on the part of small children sometimes encouraged a desire to grow up rather than a desire to remain childish? Why has prayer for some children strengthened inner controls and inspired a more realistic approach to life? If such values have been found in prayer at its best, just what is it that the nursery child may miss if prayer be eliminated from the morning's program

of the nursery school? Or just what may a small child lack if he is not taught at home to pray at bedtime? May these values be found through other ways than prayer?

In a young people's meeting, a young woman told how for a number of years she had not been able to pray. Nevertheless, a vague feeling of loss clung to her, till at last she began to wonder if in order to achieve and to maintain her intellectual honesty, it was necessary to abandon everything that had been involved in the prayer habit. So she began setting aside a period each day for quiet meditation alone. During this time she thought back on the day's experiences, tried to discover wherein she had made mistakes, and, in the light of the understanding acquired, she resolved to do differently as new opportunities emerged. With the progress of her experiment, the young woman felt the sense of loss disappearing. She found spiritual refreshment and purposefulness through this simple ritual of her own making.

The experience of this young woman suggests one element that has always been found in prayer at its best, and which should not be lost out of the life even of a small child. This is free yet purposeful meditation on the happenings of each day.

A grandmother, grown weary at the close of the day with the many foolish escapades of her young grandson, finally said, "Jack, I think you had better go upstairs to bed now and ask God to help you to be a good little boy." "I don't want to be good," was the emphatic rejoinder, "and even if I did, I wouldn't have to ask God to help me. I could do it myself." In the presence of such forthrightness, the grandmother realized that saying a prayer was but the final step in a larger process, if the prayer itself was to have any meaning. First of all, Jack needed to stop and think over what he was trying for and whether or not the things he had been doing had helped or hindered him in gaining his real desires. In short, Jack needed a quiet period of unforced meditation.

Meditation on the five-year-old level, however, is quite a different matter from meditation on a grandmother's level. In the presence of judges who talk in terms of "good little boys" and "naughty little boys," small children are thrown on the defensive. They shut up their confidences tight against exposure. On the other hand, in the presence of adoring parents who feed their children on praise as they would hand out candy awards, children dress themselves up in adult phrases and parade unreal thoughts in order to win further attentions.

To learn how to participate with children in quiet thinking times without imposing adult standards that may destroy the sincerity of the children's own interpretations of facts and their own expressions of desire is a much more difficult art than teaching children to repeat words of prayer. Yet there are parents who have been venturing along these lines and who have planned daily periods with their children, when together and without the sense of hurry they may talk over the day's happenings. A certain father is dated ahead by his three children in turn for such a time of personal fellowship before going to bed.

In both the church nursery group and in the home, these periods of quiet thoughtfulness may sometimes be introduced by reading from a story book the experiences of other children. The three volumes about Martin and Judy have been written for just this purpose. The hearing of such stories may help some children to discover their own inner thoughts, and to find a more radiant thrill in their own contacts with things and people through learning that other children have had similar stirrings. Fortunate, indeed, are the children whose parents or teachers remember their own activities in terms of sense experiences and who are able to use the vocabulary natural to children.

In one church nursery class, instead of a stereotyped service of worship, the group was accustomed to a period of listening to what they called "music stories." "What do you hear in

the music?" the teacher would ask. "I hear birds singing." "Oo-oo-oo-oo, the wind is blowing." "The rain is going tumpity-tumpity-tumpity on the window." "The children are playing in the snow." "They are running and laughing." "The church bells are ringing." Such remarks would accompany or follow the playing of the music. The children found happiness in discovering these stories in the music. Sometimes they would ask the organist to play those special stories that they liked best, and he would improvise to their great delight — "the children running down the hill," "the children playing in the sunshine," "the rock-a-bye song," "the pussy cat song," "the glad children." So without words to help them, these four- and five-year-olds were reliving over and over their especially happy experiences. They were lifting out of their days certain intangible qualities and enjoying them vividly. We may well call such experiences, relived through the intangible medium of music, the beginnings of meditation on a four- and five-year-old level.

After these times of thoughtfulness, either in the home or in the nursery class, some adults may find it natural, and therefore valuable, to lead the children in a few simple words of prayer, gathering up into words some of the thoughts and desires that seem to be already present in the children's minds. We cannot speak with assurance regarding the value in these spoken words of prayer. The attention of young children is at best fleeting, and they are very imitative and can so readily accept the pattern of a group formality without catching its meaning. Whether or not the words are grasped, and whether or not they express truly the children's own desires, the little ritual may convey to the child a vague sense that the time of quiet has been worthwhile and may add to his feeling of security within the group.

A second value often found in the practice of prayer, even by small children, has been an added appreciation of the

bountifulness of life, the largeness of the resources available to us in our universe that encourage learning and growing. Some of these blessings come through the love and thoughtfulness of parents and friends. Others fall upon us like rain entirely apart from human effort. Indeed, in most books of prayers for small children this element of thankfulness is emphasized.

Any nursery school teacher, however, who has guided small children in such prayers of thank you to a personal God, must be aware of certain difficulties that may arise. It is exceedingly easy for small children to develop a feeling of special privilege in the universe, and it is equally easy for their gratitude to change to resentment if misfortunes and deprivations come. We should avoid giving small children the impression that God is like a good fairy who will send blessings merely for the asking and who will withhold these blessings if children do not say their "thank you's" or if they are not good.

Nature is indeed lavish with her blessings and deserves appreciation. The potentialities of life are good beyond our imagination and we should now and then bathe ourselves in the joy of life. On the other hand, nature is also sometimes hostile, threatening our very existence. Our hope of gaining the good things that are possible in life is dependent upon our understanding of these forces of nature within us and without us. Our hope of understanding rests upon the essential dependability and reasonableness of the universe. For all these possibilities we should be profoundly grateful. Small children seem to be able to feel the exuberance of this joy even more absorbingly than adults, but their understanding of the sources from which these blessings come must develop slowly. Step by step through many direct experiences, each contributing its small quota of understanding, we should seek to develop in children a conscious appreciation of the intelligence and

unity and essential goodness back of all phenomena, and a growing sense of being a part of the *élan vital* in the universe — or as the religionists may call it, being one with God.

Some leaders, instead of encouraging children to express their thanks in prayers to God, encourage more natural expressions of gladness. When the giver of a good gift is some one person or group whom the children know, these leaders would let the children express their thanks directly to these people. If the source of the blessing is largely beyond human control, and is not yet an object of wonder or questioning on the part of the children, mere expressions of gladness are encouraged and the directing of thanks directly to God is reserved until a larger thought of the Great Unity is possible. In any case, whether prayers are spoken or left unsaid, the important thing for children to know is the experience of gladness over the goodness of life.

There is a third element found in high-minded prayer which seems to have enriched and expanded life even for young children. This element, difficult to describe, is that indefinable emotional something that comes with the reaching beyond and beneath the surface happenings toward greater and deeper meanings. It involves the feeling of looking forth in the direction of universality or infinity or eternity. It may be a fleeting glimpse of the great mystery. Some would call it the feeling of standing face to face with God. A friend in recalling her childhood experiences said that her father in leading family prayers always used to begin with these words, "O Thou that dwellest in the heavens and rulest in the universe." Although she felt but vaguely the meaning of those words, they stood in her mind for an outreach of thought to the greatest lengths of which her child mind was capable.

Such experiences come to small children probably more often in other ways than through the saying of prayers. Madeleine Dixon tells of a nursery child who had been looking through a microscope at snow crystals, and suddenly ex-

claimed, "Miss Dickie, how do you make worlds?"[1] An amazing leap of thought — from snow crystals to worlds! How could the child feel himself both in the presence of something so tiny as a snow crystal and something so vast as worlds? Is it not because in the one mystery in the microscopic piece of snow he intuited the greatest mystery he could put into words? His thinking was vague. He could have profited little, if at all, by any explanation from an adult. More important than to know the facts was to cherish this brief sensing of the wondrous vitality and power in the universe.

That nursery school teachers and parents in the home should be watchful to recognize, if possible, these fleeting moments of children's wonder has been the burden of much that we have already written. "Each child," says Miss Dixon, "must plumb vastness and infinity. Let him call it what he will — fire, water, death, God, worlds, stars. And somehow he must share his curiosity and his awe before he has too many static answers. More than factual answers he needs communication of his inherent wonder, fear, curiosity."[2] Whether on such occasions the adult speaks of God and puts a simple prayer into words, or whether the child expresses his feeling in his own natural ways — in dance or in song or in silent awe, the important thing to cherish is the experience. At least, we may somehow in our manner let children know that we share some of their feelings; that we, too, have the same humbling but glorifying moments.

A fourth element in prayer is that which is at the core of all petitionary prayer; namely, the expression of the deepest desires of the heart. In the words of the old hymn,

> Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
> Uttered or unexpressed,
> The motion of a hidden fire
> That trembles in the breast.

Prayer at its worst has degenerated into a begging ritual. Children have been mistakenly led to think of God as a Santa Claus to whom they may go with special requests for special favors with the expectation that their petitions will be granted, provided the children are obedient and kind according to parental standards. In prayer at its best, however, many children have felt that they could lay their inmost desires before Some One who understood their strivings. Light from the face of such a Personality at the heart of the universe has sometimes helped children to see the real values in their wishes and to become more mature in relating them to a real world. Such an experience may be creative.

Whether or not children express their wishes in prayer to God, it would seem desirable that they should at least be able to express their wishes to someone who understands and who will not condemn them for their desires. "If you could have just three wishes, Jimmie, what would you wish for?" asked a mother of her five-year-old son. After a few moments of quiet, the child answered, "I wish, Mother, that you would never die. I wish that nobody in all the world would ever die. And I wish there would be no more wars."

How much more significant of the boy's inner longings were these three spoken wishes than are the petitions little children usually put into their evening prayers! The boy's feeling was deeper than simply in respect to the needs of the hour. He was reaching farther than to wishes for himself or his family. He was revealing a yearning shared by countless generations for a longer and firmer security than his family could give. Indeed, the fact that he was not addressing his prayer to God from whom he hoped to secure the fulfillment of his wishing may have helped him to dig deeper into his soul for the largest desire that he could conceive. Such an experience followed by the mother's sharing of her own thoughts about these wishes might well be called an experience of prayer.

Children sometimes unwittingly lay their desires before us by telling of their nighttime dreams. Even though parents may not be psychologically trained so that they are able to interpret the meanings in dreams, all of us may cultivate the art of listening. We may learn to recognize the fact that behind the grotesque animal and giant figures that so often appear in children's dreams, there stand powers of which the children are afraid, relationships burdening them, circumstances that thwart the gaining of their secret goals. Sometimes the mere telling of a dream may lighten the child's burden. The two stories about dreaming told in the first volume of the Martin and Judy series suggest simple ways possible to all parents of talking with children about their dreams.

One should not belittle, moreover, the advantage that understanding may bring. Especially should we seek to understand the undercurrents affecting the direction of our own activities in order that we may be able more objectively to deal with our children's inner struggles. We need to learn how to share with our children our own wishes for our own living, those which we had as children, those which we still have as adults, those which we still need to change, and those which we believe are worth cherishing. We need to learn never to condemn a wish or to instill a sense of shame for any sincere longing, lest these tender things fly back into the dark and forgotten chambers of the mind where they cannot be examined. Behind each desire we need to look for the need that prompts the desire. Merely condemning a wish will not put into its place a better longing, whereas changing the situation may destroy the roots and clear the soil for a new growth of desire.

Whether or not children express their desires in words of prayer addressed to God, or whether they tell of their wishes to some friendly adult, we believe it is unfortunate if the child seeks for help entirely apart from his own purposeful

efforts. It is better at the outset of life that a young child should learn to rely upon his own inner resources, using them to the full, and to seek in natural ways the help of others in achieving his ends rather than that he should be taught to believe in the possibility of special divine dispensations given for the asking. Gradually as he comes to feel in fuller and fuller measure the amazing possibilities in human effort, he may reach to the belief that all life is somehow undergirded or permeated with a creative strength in which each of us may trust and of which each may richly partake. To transmit such a belief to a child through words, however, before he has had some experiences with which to interpret the words, is to cut short the process and to ruin potential values in the result. Only those who feel the presence of this larger Creative Life through experiences of participation with it can thoroughly believe in its reality.

There are, then, these four values which men through the ages have found in prayer — a poise and self-understanding gained through quiet meditation, an appreciation of the bountifulness and essential goodness of life, an elevation of spirit that comes through glimpsing the essential mystery of the universe, and finally the release and clarification that come through laying bare one's sincere desires and working one's way through toward purpose regarding them. In some small measure these values may come into the lives of small children. Whether we cling to traditional modes of prayer or whether we experiment with more informal ways of securing these high values, let us realize that finding them is like catching the melody of the bird on the wing. Opportunities may come unexpectedly, displacing the smooth movement of our routines. We may well cultivate the art of being sensitive and the readiness to meet the events of any day in the "sunlight of surprise." [8, 4]

15

"Speak to Us of Religion"

Man's capacities have never been measured; nor can we judge of what he can do by any precedents, so little has been tried.

— HENRY THOREAU

LET US NOW RETURN to the questions asked in Chapter III. Is there a place for some kind of religious instruction in a nursery or kindergarten carried on in the liberal church or synagogue? What do small children learn about God? What do the stories and songs teach that is religious? How do such nursery schools and kindergartens differ from secular schools?

Those who have followed us thus far in our discussion of the young child's spiritual development, must recognize the importance we attach to the child's own direct experiences. His playroom at home or school is his laboratory for experimentation in living. His toys are his books. His paints and clay are his pen and pencil. The young child discusses his problems by reliving in dramatic play the situations he has known or which he wishes he might enjoy. He meditates most vividly when in actual contact, through touch, sight or sound, with real phenomena. For example, he becomes curious about his body when he sees and feels his naked self in the bathtub. He questions, in a wondering mood, when he sees a newborn baby or kitten, or watches a chick struggle out of its shell.

The child learns the worth of other persons when he has his fumbling contacts with other children, experiences conflicts in his play, and discovers that others also have feelings.

Thus the learnings in nursery and kindergarten seem casual. Observers watching the children's doings often say, "Oh, they do nothing but play," as if that were a trifling matter. Yet from the point of view of the developmental theory of spiritual education, it is largely in these play activities that the child's learnings take place.

Even for the children themselves, the program is far from being simply play for there are responsibilities to be carried, there are tasks to be done, there are projects to be planned, there are other children to understand and learn how to play with, there are questions to ask and answer. From the teacher's point of view, all that quickens sympathetic imagining, that awakens sensitivity to other's feelings, all that enriches and enlarges understanding of the world; all that strengthens courage, that adds to the love of living; all that leads to developing skills needed for democratic social participations — all these put together are the curriculum through which these children learn. Such learnings are not easily observed or measured; they nevertheless can be planned for, to some extent, and the children themselves can determine in no small measure what the learnings shall be.

"All this is fine!" someone thinks to himself. Any good nursery school or kindergarten teacher would agree. But isn't there any religious or spiritual *plus* in a church or synagogue school? Our position at the time of writing is that under the circumstances which prevail in our American democracy, the difference between *good education* and *good religious education* is one of emphasis rather than something added to the content of the curriculum. Let us explain.

In our thinking, religion is the dynamic and personal philosophy of life by which one lives. It is found in the meanings one gives to daily living. It involves one's attitudes and deeds

in relation to other human beings, and also one's understanding and attitudes toward the physical universe and other forms of life apart from the mere human realm. It involves one's understanding of himself, and his estimate of his own value. It involves one's attitude toward sex, birth, and death. It involves the balance one maintains between his fears and hostilities on the one hand, and the warmth of his friendly relations on the other. It involves his attitudes toward what he cannot know as well as toward what he can know.

For most of us our religion is not a consistent and clearly thought out philosophy. It is more often something felt rather than reasoned through. The ability to express one's religion in words is the fruit of maturity rather than a gift which can be added to a young child's thoughts.

Most religiously minded parents and teachers, however, think that very young children should be told the one most inclusive and all important idea (usually contained in a religious philosophy of life): namely, the idea of God. This procedure is advocated, even though the idea has to be simplified and sometimes even changed from a big idea into a little one in order to fit into the consciousness of a small child. Such an approach is based on the conviction that young children need to believe in God as a source of security and as an authority for living a good life. Some advocate the use of the word God, even though it may have no meaning at all, because of the value of participation in the religious ceremonials of the family. This assumption is implicit in such a statement as the following from Dr. Gordon Allport:

> The first apparently religious responses of the child are not religious at all, but wholly social in character. They consist at first of trifling habits such as bowing the head or folding the hands, and soon after of learning to repeat simple prayers or hymns. To the child these are as routine as brushing the teeth or shaking the hands, or any of the pointless habits required of him by well-meaning but trying parents. The rituals are learned but not their significance.[1]

Such a process of child guidance is just the reverse of the process we have attempted to set forth in this book. Instead of first giving the words and the forms of rituals, which in themselves have no meaning for the child, we would begin with the kinds of natural experiences that *can* have meaning to the child, and the kinds of words that *can* be understood, and the kinds of rituals that *can* express the child's true emotions. From these experiences we would lead the small child step by step toward a reasonable and emotionally rich philosophy of life. This is the natural way of religious growth in contrast to the long prevailing way of adult instruction which fosters unthinking participation in the cultural ceremonials. We cannot endorse any philosophy of child guidance that demands of children conformity to outward acts and forms that are "pointless" to the child. Even the brushing of teeth should have valuable meaning to the child or else it should receive no parental encouragement. How much more should the child feel the meaning of his prayers!

But is it possible for the young child to grow religiously or spiritually without such specialized instruction in some one group of religious rituals and doctrines? How can a little child build his own philosophy of life out of his own experiences? In order to find some answers to these questions, we gathered records from families and nursery groups where young children were observed. We asked: on what occasions and about what matters do the children's philosophic questions arise? What kinds of experiences awaken feelings of wonder? or fear? or heightened moments of delight? What reactions do small children have when brought in contact with the immensities of space and power? What evidences are there that small children sense the reality of things invisible?

While gathering these records, we began to study also the more recent books written by anthropologists and students of early forms of religion. We wanted to find out how religious beliefs and practices first began in the history of the human

race. Did they arise full-orbed as a result of some special revelation to the first man? Or did mankind in his racial childhood build up his religion naturally out of his own experiences with life? If the latter, what kinds of experiences challenged him most strongly?

The answers to this second line of inquiry were clear. Man became religious because of the very nature of his world and because of his own needs. Before he had learned to make arrows, or to cultivate the soil, primitive man felt his world alive with power. He felt it in the wind and rain, in thunder and lightning; and he sought ways of control and protection. He felt power in things both large and small — in animals, trees, fire, water. He was awed by the rising and setting of the sun, and was both comforted and frightened by the waxing and waning of the moon. Primitive man felt such a kinship with animals that he learned to ask their forgiveness before killing them and eating their flesh. Primitive man felt the mystery of life: he felt it whenever he witnessed the birth of animals or saw his own newborn offspring. When that unknown cave-man first molded an image of divinity in the form of a pregnant woman, he was expressing his feeling for the wonder of creation. And when Neanderthal man first buried his dead and laid beside the motionless corpse a chain of beads or a stone knife, he was expressing his feeling that death did not destroy all. He had recognized that in his sleep something invisible within him could transcend the body; so in death he saw a similar possibility. The world of spirit was very real to primitive man. He felt himself immersed in mystery, and he set out to try to penetrate it. In spite of all the superstitious content of his thought, it must be admitted that it was the savage who created religion and not civilized man. The untutored cave-dwelling man, who could neither read nor count nor even perhaps converse coherently, was the one who began "the biggest experiment that mankind has ever attempted"[2]— namely, to feel his way into a philosophy of life which would

keep his heart warm in spite of all the terrors he experienced. Primitive man began to experiment not only to find out the nature of the world he could see, but also the nature of the invisible forces he could not see. In short, mankind's religious beliefs and practices grew naturally out of his experiences with life and because of his own inner emotional needs.

And what of the results of our study of the experiences of small children today? Our interest grew as we gathered more and more records, for we discovered a remarkable parallelism between the kinds of experiences which had aroused primitive man, and the kinds which occasioned young children's questionings. We found that children under five, even in our protective culture, had to face the three major mysteries of existence — birth, sex, and death — and were both fascinated and awed by their contacts. We learned also that young children feel the threat and overpowering greatness of the large forces of nature — the wind, rain, storm and thunder — and often find real difficulty in adjusting their personal desires to realities. We found that even during the preschool period, children often become aware of their dreaming, and sense the privacy of their own feelings and thoughts and begin to wonder about themselves, to feel the mystery of their own real invisibility. We found also that feelings of great excitement and sometimes of distress came with their first awareness of great spaces and the movement of the earth. We found young children awakening to vague feelings for the passing of time, the realization that once they were not existing and that sometime they might be living when their parents would be dead. In short, as a result of our observations we realized quite clearly that life long ago and life today are basically the same. We became confident that there are elements in the very nature of our world and of ourselves that challenge us to yearn for a larger and more understanding security than our parents and our scientific civilization can supply. We became convinced that as a result of the very nature of life, small children have

emotional experiences that have within them the seeds of religious sentiment; and that the natural way of spiritual guidance would be to begin with these experiences and let the larger understandings grow slowly as the experiences increased.

Does such a natural way of guidance mean then that young children today should be left to flounder in superstition without guidance? Must the modern child begin where the cave people began? Yes — and no! It does not mean that the modern child should be deprived of the guidance which our greater knowledge can give him; but it does mean that each new individual should be permitted to feel to the full the natural challenge in his own real contacts. In short, each child should feel the force of his own direct relations to the universe.

It means, in this general area of life, as well as in all the other areas in which learnings may take place, that we can wisely give our major attention to the child's *having* these primary experiences. It means that as adults we will be alert to them; we will respect their significance; we will sympathize with the children in their feelings; and we will answer their queries not only in ways that will give them knowledge of facts, but in ways that will preserve the emotional challenge. It means, instead of evading these primary experiences by casual and cryptic remarks or by religious phrases which may dry up the feelings of outreach, that we will share with the child the little that he can understand and will let him know that there is more that we, too, keep wondering about. It means that we can trust the very nature of life to keep alive the child's yearning search, and that when he really needs to think of an all-embracing Power, he will come upon the thought, partially at least, on his own initiative. We will feel no need to hurry the growing, by giving words without meaning or by encouraging rituals that are mere copies of outward postures and word saying.

It was with such thoughts as these in our minds that the

stories of Martin and Judy were planned and written. If young children have an opportunity to discover that they are not alone in having such experiences, the very significance of the personal episode is increased. A nursery or kindergarten group affords such opportunities for the exchanging of experiences. But the kinds of experiences about which we have been writing are not always easy to talk over. In many homes parents feel tongue-tied; their only words are the traditional phrases. Furthermore, these primary experiences are so challenging to young children that not infrequently feelings of fear and guilt are left hanging about them. A child needs the encouragement of a story about some other child of his same age, who has had the same feelings as himself, so that he can talk about his own more freely. Martin and Judy are symbols of any children, and listeners can project their own feelings into the stories.

Choosing the episodes for the Martin and Judy narratives was not a casual matter, then, or a mere thinking up of episodes that would interest children. Nor were the plots worked out in order to teach the children to be honest or kind or to tell them about God. The choice of the episodes grew out of our study of the kinds of experiences that had been found to be most provocative of feeling and thoughtfulness. These can be outlined in the following types:

1. Experiences in which young children must face the great forces and things of nature, such as the wind, the rain, the snow, the sun and moon.

2. Experiences in which the contrast between animate and inanimate things becomes apparent. When a child becomes aware that a living baby or animal can feel, and move, and grow, and that a doll or toy koala bear cannot do so, he is brought face to face with the mystery of being alive.

3. In experiences such as those of seeing newborn kittens, hatching chickens, or of watching a newly born baby, wherein a child meets a dramatic presentation of the mystery of life.

Such experiences often bring questions. Where did I come from? How was I "borned"? Where was I when mother was a little girl? The acceptance of the fact that there was once a time when he was not may bring a painful feeling of aloneness and separation. Yet out of this very pain may grow a realization of uniqueness and of private responsibility for one's own life. Anything of deep significance in a child's religion is dependent on this discovery.

4. The discovery of death in animal companions and in the human family. The child's first acceptance of death as a natural part of living marks a significant step in his spiritual growth. To find that one's own life has a beginning and an end brings perspective to the individual's outlook. A young child can sense but a small measure of its meaning, but knowing death comes early. The experience may cast a dark shadow of fear over a child's days, or it may put stamina into his attitudes toward life.

5. Experiences with bodily pain and sickness; these are often crucial in a child's spiritual growth. Sickness sometimes leads to increased respect for the body and to the learning of self-control under painful and trying circumstances. On the other hand, sickness sometimes leads to the growth of fear of unseen dangers, to feelings of undue dependence and helplessness. Some high values and some unwholesome trends are latent as possibilities in children's early experiences with sickness.

6. Play with shadows, which have a universal fascination for children. Perhaps they are reflecting some leave-over of primitive reactions. If so, they need to be relieved of fear and led to understanding and enjoyment of their shadows.

7. Experiences with dreaming, which become conscious during these early years. The distinction between the world of reality (as we frequently call it) and the world of fancy is not easy for a child to make. When he really begins to sense the difference, he is better able to cope with his fears. It must be a time of awakening when a child is first aware that his

thoughts can travel unseen, and that in fancy he can go beyond the boundaries marked by his hands and feet, or his ears and eyes. There is something thrilling in the thought that our greatest powers are invisible — our powers to think, to imagine, and to feel. How can a child really catch the significance of the invisibility of God, until he has first realized the invisibility of his own real psyche?

8. The child's feeling of social relatedness to others, sometimes within the family circle, and sometimes in the larger community beyond the home. These are germinal experiences without which the larger feelings of human brotherhood among all mankind cannot begin. The warm sense of belonging, the discovery that other people have feelings like his own, that each is but one member of a larger group, and that each makes a little different contribution from that of any other person. These are feeling experiences dramatized in one type of Martin and Judy narrative.

9. Experiences that bring feelings of isolation, hostility, rejection. In these, the child is challenged to look for the reasons for these undesirable conditions, to study cause and effect in social relations. Experiences with other children whose conduct is annoying are portrayed. These problem situations call for beginnings in self understanding, and in learning how to identify one's feelings with those of others in order to understand them. Such experiences may lead either to a narrowing of one's interest, or to a broadening of sympathies.

10. Interesting personal achievement — the creation of something new and valuable or the doing of something original. Such experiences are like medicine to the spirit.

11. Experiences in which choices have to be made. Sometimes a present good is compared with a future postponed good. Sometimes the choice made leads to unhappiness. Learning by one's mistakes is often even more fruitful than learning by one's successes.

12. Experiences in independence. There are stories in which Martin and Judy take steps on their own in order to overcome difficulties, and so feel themselves growing in independence and inner resourcefulness.[3]

13. Experiences with ideas of God and prayer. In the third volume are stories which portray Martin or Judy struggling with a thought of God, and taking their first steps in prayer. In these, thinking of God is brought about by the child's own wonderings and the ritual of prayer is presented as a natural activity that has meaning for the child.

14. The celebration of religious ceremonials. In these stories, only those features are presented which can be appreciated by these young children. The feelings that can be shared by all alike are accented.

These then are the major types of experiences that we regard as especially worthy of accent in a program of nursery or kindergarten education where *spiritual* or religious values are of concern. In a limited sense, it may be said that in these stories is to be found the substance of the curriculum for these nursery and kindergarten groups. But the stories are not told because it is important that children know about the two children, Martin and Judy, or because the stories contain certain facts or teachings which children should be told. The Martin and Judy stories are intended to be projections of the life stories of all children (to the extent that imagined people can serve as objects of projection). It is hoped they will highlight the children's own experiences — different to be sure, but also basically similar. Through playing Martin and Judy, children may rehearse their own experiences: they may feel free to talk and to question. In the leisure of play, they may have their quiet moments of wondering. The stories should also suggest ways in which children may have equally challenging experiences of their own.

We have been attempting here to describe a new philosophy for the spiritual guidance of young children, and the story

books represent our effort to implement the philosophy in concrete form. It is based on an emphasis which is being made everywhere by all serious students of child life. We have merely applied it in the field of religious development. This emphasis is on the desirability of following the child's own schedule of natural growth.

A number of careful, scientific studies have been made of babies and young children, who have been observed growing physically and emotionally under conditions where their emerging needs and demands have been heeded and met. These studies have resulted in marked and even revolutionary changes in the care of babies and young children. We now plead for still more extended studies of young children to discover if there may not be a natural schedule of growth in religious sentiments and feelings, which may be accepted as a basic guide in adult methods of spiritual guidance.

It has now been made clear that emotional and physical development cannot be separated. It would seem true also that the spiritual growth cannot be separated from either the physical or the emotional. Yet we believe that an important omission in all such studies has been made to date. There are certain primary and natural experiences universally linked with religious beliefs which have not yet been given the study they merit. There is urgent need to inquire whether the beliefs usually attached to these experiences by adults today enhance the possible feeling values in these experiences, or whether the imposed teachings tend to destroy the germs of feeling and wonder which in fact need a different kind of nourishment. These primary experiences with the basic nature of the universe and of life start to come to young children during these early years. Yet how little attention has been given to discover their meaning!

Perhaps the lag in this area is due partly to feelings of guilt — which no one cares to admit —because as adults we feel an inadequacy in our own religious sentiments and beliefs.

Perhaps many of us in maturing have lost much of the native sensitivity to feelings. Perhaps unconsciously we are afraid to open up the whole field of religious beliefs. It is much easier to stop struggling for a philosophy of life that will include all the unseen as well as the seen. It is simpler to pass religion by or keep it in a formal category, to use only on special occasions. In such a mood, it is also simpler to keep to the traditional and the formal in dealing with our young children.

Whether or not such resistance is holding back capable students of child life from a more scientific approach to children's religious growth, we know there are great difficulties inherent in any such undertaking. Yet we make our plea. In religion also let us *Consider the Children: How They Grow.*

Acknowledgments and References

Chapter 1

1. Aldrich, Charles A. and Aldrich, Mary M. *Babies Are Human Beings.* New York: Macmillan, 1938, pp. 113-114. (Quoted by permission of the Macmillan Company.)

2. Ribble, Margaret A. *The Rights of Infants, Early Psychological Needs, and Their Satisfaction.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1947, pp. 4-7.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

Chapter 2

Opening Quotation: Burroughs, John. *Accepting the Universe.* Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1920, p. 115. (Quoted by permission of the Houghton, Mifflin Company.)

1. Havighurst, Robert J. *Developmental Tasks and Education.* New York: Longmans, Green, 1950, pp. 6, 8. (Copyright 1950 by Robert J. Havighurst. Quoted by permission of Longmans, Green and Company, Inc.)

2. Schweitzer, Albert. *Out of My Life and Thought: An Autobiography.* New York: Henry Holt, 1933, pp. 260-273. Translated by C. T. Campion.

3. Olson, Willard C. *Child Development.* Boston: D. C. Heath, 1949, p. 111.

4. Axline, Virginia Mae. *Play Therapy, The Inner Dynamics of Childhood.* Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1947.

5. Morlan, George K. "A Note on the Frustration-Aggression Theories of Dollard and His Associates," *Psychological Review,* 1949, Vol. 58, pp. 1-6.

Chapter 3

Opening Quotation: Gibran, Kahlil. *The Prophet.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1937, pp. 84-85. (Quoted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.)

1. Manwell, Elizabeth M. and Mengert, Ida G. *A Study of the Development of Two- and Three-Year-Old Children With Respect to Play Activities.* Iowa City: University of Iowa Studies in Child Welfare, Vol. 9, No. 3, 1934.

2. Blatz, W. E. and Others. *Nursery Education: Theory and Practice.* New York: William Morrow, 1935.

3. Read, Katherine. *The Nursery School: A Human Relationships Laboratory.* Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders, 1950, p. 19. (Quoted by permission of W. B. Saunders Company.)

4. National Association for Nursery Education. *Essentials of Nursery School Education.* Chicago: Roosevelt College, National Association for Nursery Education Distribution Center, 1945.
5. Gibran, Kahlil, *op. cit.*

Chapter 4

Opening Quotation: Stevens, Bertha. *Child and Universe.* New York: John Day, 1931, p. 15. (Quoted by permission of the John Day Company.)
1. Hills, Verna and Fahs, Sophia L.
Vol. I *Martin and Judy in Their Two Little Houses.*
Vol. II *Martin and Judy in Sunshine and Rain.*
Vol. III *Martin and Judy Playing and Learning.*
Boston: Beacon Press, 1939-1943.
2. Thomas, Edith Lovell (comp.). *Martin and Judy Songs.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1948.

Chapter 5

Opening Quotation: Ashley-Montagu. *On Being Human.* New York: Henry Schuman, 1950, p. 92. (Used with the permission of the author.)
1. Fromm, Erich. *Man For Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics.* New York: Rinehart and Co., 1947, pp. 96-101.
2. Read, Katherine H. *The Nursery School: A Human Relationships Laboratory.* Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Co., 1950, pp. 162, 163. (Used with the permission of W. B. Saunders and Company.)
3. Washburn, Ruth Wendell. *Children Know Their Friends.* New York: William Morrow, 1949, p. 192.

Chapter 6

Opening Quotation: Longfellow, Samuel. "Behold, I Make All Things New," in *Hymns and Verses.* Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1894, p. 59.
1. Hills, Verna and Fahs, Sophia L. "Who Is Santa Claus?" in *Martin and Judy,* Vol. III.
2. *Ibid.,* Vol. I, 1939, "Surprise! Surprise!"

Chapter 7

Opening Quotation: Robinson, Arlington. *Tristram.* New York: Macmillan, 1927, p. 208. (Quoted by permission of the Macmillan Company.)
1. Jersild, Arthur T. and Others. *Children's Fears, Dreams, Wishes, Day-dreams, Likes, Dislikes, Pleasant and Unpleasant Memories.* New York: Teachers College Child Development Monograph, No. 12, 1933.
2. Jersild, Arthur T. and Holmes, Frances B. "Some Factors in the Development of Children's Fears," *Journal of Experimental Education,* Vol. 4, Dec. 1935, pp. 133-141.
3. Despert, Louise J. "Dreams of Children of Pre-school Age," in *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child,* by Freud et al. New York: International Universities Press, 1949.
4. Fahs, Sophia L. *Should Peggy and Peter Pray?* Boston: Beacon Press, 1939, p. 11. Originally in "Religious Education," Sept. 1932.

Chapter 8

Opening Quotation: Argow, W. Waldemar W. "Voices." Unpublished manuscript. (Quoted by permission of the author.)

1. Alschuler, Rose H. and Hattwick, LaBerta W. *Painting and Personality,* Vol. II. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947.

Chapter 9

Opening Quotation: Counselman, Mary Elizabeth. "Material for a Son," in *Good Housekeeping,* Feb. 1938, p. 207. (Quoted by permission of the author.)

1. Francis, Kenneth V. and Fillmore, Eva A. *The Influence of Environment Upon the Personality of Children.* Iowa City: University of Iowa Studies in Child Welfare, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1934, p. 43.
2. Taylor, Katherine Whiteside. "The Opportunities of Parenthood," in *Family, Marriage, and Parenthood;* Howard Becker and Reuben Hill, ed. Boston: D. C. Heath, 1948, p. 472.
3. Read, Katherine H., *op. cit.,* p. 19. (Quoted by permission of W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia.)
4. Maier, Norman R. *Frustration: The Study of Behavior Without A Goal.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1949.
5. Maier, *ibid.,* p. 153.
6. Pressey, Sidney L. *Psychology and the New Education;* rev. ed. New York: Harper and Bros., 1944, p. 425.
7. Read, K. H. "Parents' Expressed Attitudes and Children's Behavior," *Journal of Consulting Psychology,* Vol. 9, 1945, pp. 95-100.
8. Radke, M. J. *The Relation of Parental Authority to Children's Behavior and Attitudes.* University of Minnesota Child Welfare Monographs, 22. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1946.
9. Burgess, Ernest W. and Cottrell, Leonard S. *Predicting Success or Failure in Marriage.* New York: Prentice Hall, 1939.
10. Terman, Lewis M. *Psychological Factors in Marital Happiness.* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1938.
11. Olson, Willard C. *Child Development.* Boston: D. C. Heath, 1949, p. 338.
12. Dreikurs, Rudolf. *The Challenge of Parenthood.* New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1948, p. 136.
13. Lafore, Gertrude Gilmore. "Practices of Parents in Dealing with Pre-school Children," *Child Development Monographs,* No. 31. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1945, p. 138. (Quoted by permission of Bureau of Publications, Teachers College.)

Chapter 10

Opening Quotation: Bourdillon, Francis William. "Light," in *Familiar Quotations,* John Bartlett, ed., 10th ed. Boston: Little, Brown, 1921, p. 833.

1. Strain, Frances B. *New Patterns in Sex Teaching.* New York: Appleton-Century, 1935, pp. 6, 9. (Quoted by permission of D. Appleton-Century Company.)
2. Magoun, F. A. *Love and Marriage.* New York: Harper and Bros., 1948.

3. Levy, John and Munroe, Ruth. *The Happy Family.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1938.
4. Groves, Groves and Groves. *Sex Fulfillment in Marriage.* New York: Emerson Books, 1947.
5. Tyrer, Alfred. *Sex Satisfaction and Happy Marriage.* New York City: Emerson Books, 1946.
6. Strain, Frances B. *New Patterns in Sex Teaching.* New York: Appleton-Century, 1935, pp. 25-26. (Quoted by permission of D. Appleton-Century Company.)

Chapter 11

Opening Quotation: Whitman, Walt. "There Was a Child Went Forth," in *Leaves of Grass.* New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1924, pp. 306-307. (Quoted by permission of Doubleday and Company, Inc.)

Chapter 12

Opening Quotation: Whitman, Walt. "When Lilacs Last in the Door Yard Bloomed," in *Leaves of Grass.* New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1924, p. 281. (Quoted by permission of Doubleday and Company, Inc.)
1. Anthony, Sylvia. *The Child's Discovery of Death.* New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1940.
2. Nagy, Maria. "The Child's Theories Concerning Death," *Journal of Genetic Psychology,* 1948, Vol. 73, pp. 3-21.
3. Mahler, Margaret S., M.D. "Helping Children to Accept Death," *Child Study,* Fall, 1950.
4. Fahs, Sophia L. "When Children Confront Death," *Parents Magazine,* April, 1943. (Quoted by permission of Parents Magazine.)

Chapter 13

Opening Quotation: Dixon, C. Madeleine. *High, Wide, and Deep.* New York: John Day, 1938. (Quoted by permission of The John Day Company.)
1. Ribble, Margaret A. *The Rights of Infants: Early Psychological Needs and Their Satisfaction.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1947.
2. Spitz, René A., M.D. "Emotional Growth in the First Year," *Child Study,* Spring, 1947.
3. Berguer, Georges. *Some Aspects of the Life of Jesus from the Psychological and Psychoanalytic Point of View.* Translated by Eleanor S. and Van Wyck Brooks. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1923, pp. 8-9. (Quoted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.)

Chapter 14

Opening Quotation: Kagawa, Toyohiko. "Discovery," in *Songs from the Slums.* Nashville, Cokesbury Press, 1935, p. 66. (Quoted by permission of The Cokesbury Press.)
1. Dixon, C. Madeleine, *op. cit.,* p. 129. (Quoted by permission of The John Day Company, New York.)
2. *Ibid.,* p. 128.

3. Fahs, Sophia Lyon. "Should Peggy and Peter Pray?" *Religious Education,* Sept., 1932. (Reprinted in pamphlet form by Beacon Press, Boston, Mass.)

4. Fahs, Sophia Lyon. "Shall We Teach Our Children to Pray?" *Parents Magazine,* Jan., 1935, p. 245.

Chapter 15

Opening Quotation: Thoreau, Henry. *Walden or Life in the Woods.* New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1947.

1. Allport, Gordon W. *The Individual and His Religion.* New York: Macmillan, 1950. (Quoted by permission of the Macmillan Company.)

2. Marrett, R. R. *Faith, Hope, and Charity in Primitive Religion.* New York: Macmillan Company, 1932, p. 21.

3. Hills, Verna. *Martin and Judy.* Vol. I. Boston: Beacon Press, 1939. Introduction by Sophia L. Fahs.

Bibliography for Parents and Teachers

BOOKS

Aldrich, Charles A. and Aldrich, Mary M. *Babies Are Human Beings.* New York: Macmillan, 1938. This book has been the pioneer in suggesting to young parents that they relax and enjoy their babies.

Allen, Winifred Y. and Campbell, Doris. *The Creative Nursery Center: A Unified Service to Children and Parents.* Family Service Association of America. 192 Lexington Avenue, New York City, 1948. For those who realize that "every child is my child."

Alschuler, Rose. *Children's Centers: A Guide to Those Who Care for and about Children.* New York: William Morrow, 1942. This book will have special value for those who wish to start a nursery group in an underprivileged area.

Alschuler, Rose and Hattwick, LaBerta. *Painting and Personality,* 2 vol. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947. An extensive and careful study of the free paintings of young children to discover the psychological needs expressed.

Baruch, Dorothy W. *New Ways in Discipline: You and Your Child Today.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1949. A positive approach to helping the child become self-directed and co-operative.

Benedict, Agnes E. and Franklin, Adele. *The Happy Home.* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1948. Rich in suggestions for family activities, entertainments, and crafts.

Black, Irma S. *Off to a Good Start.* New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1941. A book for parents who want to give their children a good start in life.

Bradbury, Dorothy E. and Amidon, Edna P. *Learning to Care for Children.* New York: Appleton-Century, 1943. This book is especially helpful for high school girls who are assisting in homes or nursery groups.

Dixon, C. Madeleine. *Keep Them Human: The Young Child at Home.* New York: John Day, 1942. No parent library is complete without one book by Madeleine Dixon.

Garrison, Charlotte G., and Sheehy, Emma. *At Home With Children: The Guide to Preschool Play and Training.* New York: Holt, 1943. Art, books, music, toys for the young child at home are discussed.

Gesell, Arnold, and Ilg, Frances. *Infant and Child in the Culture of Today.* New York: Harper and Bros., 1943. A basic book in child development.

Groves, Ernest R., Groves, Gladys H., and Groves, Catherine G. *Sex Fulfillment in Marriage.* New York: Emerson Books, 1947.

Mackenzie, Catherine. *Parent and Child.* New York: William Sloane, 1949. Interestingly written abstracts and reviews of material of interest to parents. Much of this material has been first published in the *New York Times Sunday Magazine.*

Magoun, F. A. *Love and Marriage.* New York: Harper and Bros., 1948. Since the happiness of parents in their marriage is reflected in the well-being of their children, the book is here included.

Perry, Ruth Davis. *Children Need Adults.* New York: Harpers, 1943. A valuable book for parents and teachers in weekday and church schools.

Read, Katherine H. *The Nursery School: A Human Relationships Laboratory.* Philadelphia: Saunders, 1950. A wise and understanding approach to nursery education. Invaluable to parents and teachers alike.

Ribble, Margaret A. *The Rights of Infants. Early Psychological Needs and Their Satisfactions.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1947. A physician in hospital practice writes of the need of infants for love.

Sheehy, Emma. *There's Music in Children.* New York: Henry Holt, 1946. Both parents and teachers will delight in this book.

Spock, Benjamin. *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care.* New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1945. No home should be without this book.

Strain, Frances Bruce. *The Normal Sex Interests of Children from Infancy to Childhood.* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1948. Any parent library is richer if it has at least one of Mrs. Strain's books, for she has been a piooneer in advancing our understanding of the child's sex development.

Wolff, Werner. *The Personality of the Pre-School Child. The Child's Search for His Self.* New York: Grune and Stratton, 1946. A stimulating report of a study of the psychology of a young child's approach to life.

PAMPHLETS

Arts Cooperative Service. 340 Amsterdam Ave., New York City. *Work and Play Materials for Children from Two to Seven.*

Bureau of Publications. Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City.

Baruch, Dorothy W. *Understanding Young Children.* 1949.

Hymes, James L., Jr. *Discipline.* 1949.

Redl, Fritz. *Understanding Children's Behavior.* 1949.

Hymes, James L., Jr. *Being A Good Parent.* 1949.

Hunnicutt, C. W. *Answering Children's Questions.* 1949.

Children's Bureau. Federal Security Agency, Washington, D. C.

Home Play and Play Material for Preschool Children. Publ. No. 238.

Your Child from One to Six. Publ. No. 30.

Child Study Association of America. 132 East 74th St., New York 21, N. Y.

Auerbach, Aline B. *Discipline Through Affection.*

Staff of C.S.A.A. *What Makes a Good Home?*

Staff of C.S.A.A. *When Children Ask about Sex.*

Menninger Clinic., Kansas City, Kan.

Bartemeier, Leo H. *The Practical Application of Basic Mental Hygiene Principles by the Cornelian Corner.* Bulletin No. 4, 1948.

Office of Education. Federal Security Agency, Washington, D. C.
Davis, Mary Dabney. *Schools for Children under Six.* Bulletin No. 5, 1947.
Gabbard, Hazel G. *Working With Parents: Handbook.* Bulletin No. 7, 1948.
Public Affairs Committee. 22 East 38th St., New York 16, N. Y.
Hymes, James L., Jr. *Enjoy Your Children* — 1, 2 and 3. No. 141. 1950.
Hymes, James L., Jr. *How to Tell Your Child About Sex.* No. 49. 1949.
Neisser, Walter and Edith. *Making the Grade as Dad.* No. 157. 1950.
University of Minnesota Press. Minneapolis, Minn.
Faegre, Marion L. *Your Own Story* (for reading to a child).

PERIODICALS

Childhood Education. Association for Childhood Education International. 1200 15th St. N.W., Washington 5, D. C.
Child Study. Child Study Association of America. 132 East 74th St., New York, N. Y.
Monthly Service Bulletin. American Institute of Family Relations. 5287 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles 27, Calif.
News and Notes. Arts Cooperative Service. 340 Amsterdam Ave., New York, N. Y.
Parents Magazine. The Parents Institute. 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York 17, N. Y.
Understanding the Child. National Association for Mental Health. 1790 Broadway, New York City 19, N. Y.

AGENCIES — AS SOURCES OF MATERIALS

Association for Childhood Educational International. 1200 15th St. N.W., Washington 5, D. C.
Arts Cooperative Service. 340 Amsterdam Ave., New York, N. Y.
Child Study Association of America. 132 East 74th St., New York, N. Y.
Creative Playthings. 867 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y.
Division of Education, American Unitarian Association. 25 Beacon St., Boston 8, Mass.
Division of Education, The Universalist Church of America. 16 Beacon St., Boston 8, Mass.
National Association for Mental Health. 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.
National Association for Nursery Education. Distribution Center: Roosevelt College, Michigan Blvd., Chicago, Ill.
National Council on Family Relations. 1126 East 59th St., Chicago, Ill.
United States Office of Education. Federal Security Agency, Washington 25, D. C.
United States Children's Bureau, Federal Security Agency, Washington 25, D. C.

Four outstanding books for youngsters based on the research in CONSIDER THE CHILDREN

MARTIN AND JUDY SONGS — $3

Compiled by Edith Lovell Thomas

With 48 full-page illustrations in color, musical scores, lyrics, and a wealth of "tested" suggestions for "acting it out."

Like the famous MARTIN AND JUDY series, this book is based on years of psychological research and testing. Object: to discover just which experiences of childhood have the most lasting effects in the lives of human personalities.

The songs, pictures and suggested activities were built around these basic experiences. This book is more than "amusement" which children will recognize and understand — here are scientifically planned presentations to help children develop healthy attitudes which will stand by them all their lives.

MARTIN AND JUDY *in Their Two Little Houses* — $2

By Verna Hills

With 22 full-page illustrations in color by Charlotte Ware

"The reader and the child both get an education that will add to the health of the child's growth." — *Christian Herald.*

"The book helps us to understand why we should provide *experiences first* before we try to teach by what we say." — *Children's Religion.*

MARTIN AND JUDY *in Sunshine and Rain* — $2

By Verna Hills and Sophia L. Fahs

With 26 full-page illustrations in color by Charlotte Becker

"These books, which have many full-page drawings in black and red, have a particular place in many families: I have often heard of them and sometimes have seen them in action. They read aloud admirably, and in fact are meant to be heard." — *New York Herald Tribune.*

MARTIN AND JUDY *Playing and Learning* — $2

By Verna Hills and Sophia L. Fahs

With 26 full-page illustrations in color by Eleanora Madsen

"This is the third volume of a carefully-worked-out series about a small boy and girl who have the experiences all children do, and wonder about them. Now Martin and Judy are at school. and one sees how they — and their parents — meet school and home experiences." — *Parents' Magazine.*

Four outstanding books for youngsters based on the research in CONSIDER THE CHILDREN

MARTIN AND JUDY SONGS — $3

Compiled by Edith Lovell Thomas

With 48 full-page illustrations in color, musical scores, lyrics, and a wealth of "tested" suggestions for "acting it out."

Like the famous MARTIN AND JUDY series, this book is based on years of psychological research and testing. Object: to discover just which experiences of childhood have the most lasting effects in the lives of human personalities. The songs, pictures and suggested activities were built around these basic experiences. This book is more than "amusement" which children will recognize and understand — here are scientifically planned presentations to help children develop healthy attitudes which will stand by them all their lives.

MARTIN AND JUDY *in Their Two Little Houses* — $2

By Verna Hills

With 22 full-page illustrations in color by Charlotte Ware

"The reader and the child both get an education that will add to the health of the child's growth." — *Christian Herald.*

"The book helps us to understand why we should provide *experiences first* before we try to teach by what we say." — *Children's Religion.*

MARTIN AND JUDY *in Sunshine and Rain* — $2

By Verna Hills and Sophia L. Fahs

With 26 full-page illustrations in color by Charlotte Becker

"These books, which have many full-page drawings in black and red, have a particular place in many families: I have often heard of them and sometimes have seen them in action. They read aloud admirably, and in fact are meant to be heard." — *New York Herald Tribune.*

MARTIN AND JUDY *Playing and Learning* — $2

By Verna Hills and Sophia L. Fahs

With 26 full-page illustrations in color by Eleanora Madsen

"This is the third volume of a carefully-worked-out series about a small boy and girl who have the experiences all children do, and wonder about them. Now Martin and Judy are at school and one sees how they — and their parents — meet school and home experiences." — *Parents' Magazine.*