

PARENTAL EDUCATION IN RELATION TO THE

PRE-SCHOOL CHILD

XIII

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"Parenthood is the greatest gift of the gods. It is a form of immortality. Every heart that throbs in a child's breast maintains an unbroken rhythm that stretches back through countless generations of motherhood into the dim beginnings. Like all the great gifts, parenthood is bought with a price. But its trials and responsibilities and cares are all a part of the glorious plan for tempering and sweetening the lives of men and womsn. The parent needs the child as much as the child needs the parent."

One cannot imagine a world without any children in it for it is perfectly obvious that the human world cannot continue into the future without them; and it is just as obvious that there cannot be children without parents. Moreover, the kind of children out of which the world of the future is to be made depends on the kind of parents, because the parents give the children, not only life itself but the most important part of their care and training.

Herbert Spencer once said: "Is it not an astonishing fact that, though in the treatment of off-

spring depend their lives and deaths, and their moral welfare or ruin, yet not one word of instruction on the treatment of offspring is ever given to those who will hereafter be parents?"

Within the last decade, however, there has developed in this country a vast and growing interest in the young child, particularly of the preschool age, and in the much more neglected subject of training for parenthood. Approach has been made from a number of different points of view by a variety of research groups, behaviour clinics, nursery schools and groups of parents themselves. There has been increasing recognition of the fact that the mere being a father or a mother is not in itself sufficient to prepare the individual for the complex and difficult task of rearing children.

Each period of history seems to be dominated by some special educational emphasis. At present it is concerned with the education of preschool children and with that of parents.

In one way, parent education is personal, being the individual concern of each parent in securing knowledge for the purpose of solving his or her problem. Parent education, however, tends to become a

social movement because (1) family life is a social process; (2) the family exists as an integral part of a larger society; (3) family life is conditioned by community life; and (4) adult learning is a social enterprise. Because of these factors and the rapid spread of the movement there is still much to be done. There are, however, many organizations cooperating in parent education as the Federal government, university extension and home economic departments, kindergartens, nursery schools, child study groups, clinics, etc.

The Home Economic Association has been active since 1926 in a national program of "Parent Education." The first movement was undertaken by the United States Department of Agriculture following the passing of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914. This Act provided for the diffusion of useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics to the people of the United States in order to encourage these pursuits. Since the passage of this act the forty-eight state colleges have offered extension courses in home economics in order to aid homemakers with their problems of diet, clothing and the proper housing of their families.

In 1917 the Vocational Educational Act was passed which authorized the expenditure of federal and state funds for adult classes in homemaking offered by the public schools. This vocational program includes child care and management.

A new conception of the scope and purpose of parent education was given through the opening of the Merrill-Palmer School of Homemaking in 1920. Its objective is the study of those conditions which make for the allround development of the child and the education of its parents so that they may cooperate in providing an adequate home environment.

Colleges and universities quickly followed in establishing nursery schools as laboratories in the teaching of child development. There are now more than forty having nursery schools with which the home economics departments cooperate in the program of parent training. Their program is three-fold which includes resident and extension classes for parents and courses for potential parents offered to undergraduate college students. The objectives for the undergraduate work are personal development of the student, the development of satisfactory attitudes toward home life and parenthood, and the acquisition of fundamental infor-

mation, technecs and abilities which will help them in their relations to the problems of family life.

The resident work offered to parents by college is, mostly, limited to those parents whose children attend the nursery school. A few universities as those of Minnesota, Cornell, Illinois, California and the Georgia State Agricultural College are especially interested in developing resident courses for parents. Those offering extenseion courses are the state colleges of Illinois, Missouri, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Oregon, Michigan, New York, Minnesota and Georgia. Each of these has one or more specialists in parent education as a member of their extension staff.

These courses reach women in the cities, towns, and rural communities throughout the states. Usually the clâsses meet for six or eight lessons and cover some of the important aspects of child behavior, habit formation, parent-child relationship, or such topics as home management or environment. Some states have project work in addition to these class meetings from which gratifying results have been obtained. An increasing number of fathers have been reported attending these classes. Small, well-selected traveling libraries have been prepared by the state libraries for the use of parents enroled in extension classes.

In most states the public schools are offering courses in child care and family relations to high school girls. The aim of these courses is to give an appreciation and understanding of children and their needs, and a better understanding of some of their own problems, as members of a family group. Los Angeles, California, has a day nursery in charge of a competent woman who is aided by girls in the elementary and high school grades. In Vermont, a child is temporarily adopted so that the Junior High School students may study it. In Faribault, Minnesota, they have an eighteen weeks course in the seventh grade in the care of the baby, personal hygiene, habits, food and clothing, while in Holland, Michigan, a ten weeks course is given to eighth grade girls, fifty percent of whom care for babies outside of school.

Thus we may see how far reaching this movement is. "Parent education has served to unify the educational agencies within the communities as has no other educational program. The problems of child development and those of maintaining right family relationship are so perplexing, demand so many types of information, and the development of such a variety of abilities, that no one subject matter field nor one educa-

tional agency can alone cope with them. The most effective parent educational program in a community is built up through the coordinated efforts of all the educational agencies working together under trained leadership."

In the White House Conference emphasis was placed upon the importance of wholesome family life and good parents for the development of the child and it was further stated that many of their recommendations could not be put into effect without the cooperation of parents and the home. This emphasis in the home shows the advance of social knowledge. In the first two conferences only a passing reference was made to family and home conditions.

The last White House Conference showed the modern trend of child welfare in having a committee to study the family and parent education. The importance of both the home and the family to human welfare has long been recognized. It has, however, long been regarded in a sentimental light because of its strong emotional ties. And now is the time to provide for it such assistance as scientific effort is able to devise. Science has brought to the

family increased knowledge of personality development, good physical surroundings and educational methods. Specialists in economics, sociology, psychology, biology and other related fields have uncovered some problems of the family and they are now working to discover what the human values in family life are, what factors go into a good family atmosphere and what activities can advantageously be used to further the development of the child.

And again, the family is offered definite scientific knowledge of the technics of efficient living. Home management courses show how wise and beautiful house planning eliminates fatigue caused by unnecessary steps and labor, furthers the health of the family and increases the pleasures of family life. It also aids in the budgeting of time and money and purchasing of food, clothing and services.

All the contributions of the sciences will not help though unless they become a part of family living. This knowledge will not be a help unless it is published in understandable form for them. Definite help is given them by lectures, magazine and newspaper articles, clinics, parents' institutes and programs of child study sponsored by various organizations throughout the country. And as this information

about family life and child training becomes more effective parent education will increasingly help in the solution of difficulties facing family life today. It will be the means of strengthening the family, both within and without, against the inroads of a changing civilization. In addition all the various agencies that touch the child or the home in one way or another, such as the doctor, the public health nurse, the minister, the teacher, the playground director, the scout master, the social worker, and even such impersonal agents as the newspapers, the magazine, and the radio, have the responsibility of assisting in the furtherance of family relationships in the interest of a sound national life.

"The whole conference has one encouraging message for parents. Although parenthood seems to be a more difficult job now than it has ever been before, a concomitant development of the complexities of modern civilization is knowledge to further the satisfactions of family life. Furthermore, scientists and parents are both beginning to recognize that this knowledge can only be put into effect in the interest of the child through active cooperation within the home."

Dr. Louis T. Allen of the Federal Bureau of Investigation

Dr. Louise Stanley of the Federal Bureau of Home Economics, head of the Committee of Family and Parent Education prefaced her reports with a reassertion of the importance of the family as the most fundamental mental agency in child development and education.

It is pleasant to note that the committee, after taking into consideration the statistics on marriage, divorce and the diminishing size of families and the birth rate as possibly indicating family disintegration, believes that the changes taking place in the family are superficial and not fundamental, because they find a number of considerations to weigh against these factors. And because of the family's survival against all odds, the committee thinks, is a certain indication that it fulfills deep-seated needs of the human race.

In respect to the fundamental values of life, the committee finds that neither physical environment, cultural background nor social status is the most important but the interaction of personalities within the family. And further the committee points out that it is quite impossible to separate the complicated emotional satisfactions of family living

which pervades its whole texture, from the more tangible and measurable functions that it performs.

These are classified as control of environment, inculcation of social values, orientation, and liberation and recreation.

In regards to the child the most inclusive is the control of its environment as exercised by the family--the function it performs in giving the child his name and his status in the community, in defending his physical security, and in its power of offsetting through its own influence the effects of any unfavorable outside environmental influences. Here the committee states that the family must be built on a firm foundation--a basic income which has not as yet been stated but the committee is convinced that "A nation that values its future development will take steps to see that this basic income at least is available to all its people." The shifts and changes in economic conditions should be looked on by the family as something to use in strengthening and conserving the fundamental human values in family life.

"One reason for the present demand for parent education, the committee finds, is in the confusion brought about by the break in authoritarianism and the traditional upbringing of children, resulting in a failure of the old order of passing practices and ideals of child care and training from one generation to the next. This "inculcation of social values" in the children of the family as a part of the family function is as much a matter of family environment as of conscious effort, the committee believes, justifying the observation that "behavior is caught, not taught." Thus the attitude of the parents toward learning may provide an intellectual stimulus to the child, even in the absence of any effort to give him instruction or training in skills, and the physical environment of the home--providing the child with a quiet place and materials for developmental activities--may have a similar effect. From observation of adults it appears also that the basis for aesthetic taste and appreciation is laid in early childhood, and that here too the physical environment of the home and the tastes of the parents, as expressed in their everyday living, have their effect upon the

child. Even more apparent is the child's unconscious absorption of notions concerning sex, marriage, parenthood and family life from his life and observations in the family. "Happy is the child," believes the committee, "who is born to well-adjusted parents who naturally inspire confidence and affection and provide through the example of their living a serene and wholesome environment."

"As the medium for giving the child his sense of orientation in the social whole--as a member of his family, his country, his world, and the universe--the committee finds the family of supreme importance. In this small center, the committee points out, the child has his most important experiences in learning to adjust himself to life as one social person among many."

"Under the terms 'liberation and recreation' the committee calls attention to those services the family performs in giving the child, as well as the adult, a relief from restraint, serving as a regenerating influence in contacts with the outer and more impersonal world."

Social factors influencing American family life are professional or occupational status of the working member of the family, national origin, geographic distribution, and density of population. In manufacturing cities it has been found that marriages occur at an earlier age and families are larger and that farm families are larger than others in rural districts. Another interesting point is that the negro approximates the native white in family pattern; that, in fact, there is a greater difference between urban and rural family life among whites than between negro and white family life. Again, the committee found that foreign-born families tend to continue their rural pattern of life in America when they come from a rural culture, while those who come from urban cultures, as the Russian Jews, live much the same as the native urban whites.

Family life changes with the size of the community, the percentage of persons over fifteen years of age who are married increasing as the size of the community decreases, sterility being more common in cities than in rural communities, the size of fami-

ly varying with the size of the community, as does the number of mothers employed in gainful occupation outside the home, the proportion of illegitimate births and the divorce ratio. As to housing the committee finds that the number of families in excess of the number of dwellings increases as the community increases in size, while the number of homes owned decreases.

Out of 9,000 school children studied the committee found that the city children were better adjusted to life than were the rural ones.

"All the findings of the committee leads naturally to its conclusion--that there is a need for special education in preparing youth for family life, ultimate marriage, and parenthood, and, moreover, for specific training in mental hygiene and human behavior for all who touch the home or the child in a professional capacity. Parent education, it believes, is an important means of resolving the conflict between family tradition and social and economic forces now active. It is the means, concludes the committee, by which all the problems facing family life are brought into conscious consideration, traditions in this field are evaluated in the light of present-day living

of present-day living and knowledge, and new methods of adjustment are evolved. The committee makes a brief survey of the parent education movement of today--the means it employs, the content it deals with, the agencies through which it works.

"In the reports of all the committees of the White House Conference, whether dealing with the findings of specific studies or stating broad principles based upon their findings, reaffirm a point long recognized but perhaps never so earnestly looked upon as in the last decade, namely, that the responsibility for children well-born and well-bred--and so, ultimately, for the quality of the nation's people--rests primarily with that all-important social group, the family, and that the parents who are the founders of that group must be not only physically well-prepared for their task, but also well-trained through specific education for the manifold duties and pleasures of parenthood--in other words, that parent education may well be one of the nation's foremost considerations."

Up to the present time parent education has de-

vised no unique methods of procedure in the conduct of its teachings. The methods used may be divided into two classes, those working with parents individually and those working with groups. Among the first class may be listed (1) the clinic, chiefly and immediately concerned with the solution of pressing problems; (2) the consultation service for parents, giving individual help with specific problems; (3) school conferences and visits which are quite informal; (4) correspondence; and (5) individual study. The group method we find is used by most educational agencies because it is of definite advantage in reaching more parents than in the individual method, is less expensive, and gives an opportunity for the pooling of experiences. And again, group study usually emphasizes the preventative rather than remedial work. These are (1) lectures by specialists; (2) discussion groups which have more value than the passive-audience method; (3) study groups consisting of people who attempt to understand the underlying philosophy of family adjustments and the methods of child care by definite study.

Techniques used in both these methods are (1) observation of children; (2) demonstration teaching; (3) participation and practice by parents; (4) home visiting.

Materials now in use are: (1) manuals for leaders; (2) materials for guidance and teaching; (3) reading materials, (a) magazines as the Parent's Magazine, Child Welfare Magazine, the Quarterly, Progressive Education, Childhood Education, Mental Hygiene and Hygeia. Articles are also found now in Harper's, Century and McCall's; (b) pamphlets of brief, simple discussions are put out by various agencies and government bureaus; and (c) books written for Parents or containing materials which can be used or adapted by them continue to appear.

As can be seen, there is a great danger of plunging into a pathless field without realizing the scope or limitations in parent education. "It is obvious that it cannot be taught in a single course or even in a group of courses. Essentially it is a movement with varied functions, concerned with the whole of life, of the individual and for the full extent of life, for the first lessons in

parent responsibility are taught when the child first knows his parents and continue as long as he is a member of a social group. Its scope should encircle the outer horizons of all the specialties that give it meaning and its content should be a constantly changing organization of functional material which has its source in the integrated life of whole personalities."

Let us turn now to the child and we find that the fundamental principle of child study to be remembered is that he is not an adult in miniature but a more dynamic being. The adult needs only to live but the child must live and grow! In general the results of such study as reached by psychiatrists show that though childhood is a preparation for adulthood it is passed through by the child entirely for its own sake. Adult characteristics should not be forced for the children who absorb fully the various influences and characteristics of each preceding age get the best possible preparation for adulthood.

The data for physical growth is particularly significant. "The very laws of growth make these the most formative of all years. The younger the creature, the more rapid its growth. When measured by percentage of increment in weight and height, the growth activity of

the first six years is incomparably greater than that for any subsequent period of six years." Doctor Richard E. Scannon, one of the outstanding students of anatomy has summed it for us. "Thus from birth until about two years there is a period of extremely rapid growth comparable in some degree with that seen in fetal life. This rapidly decreases, however, and from two to ten years the rate of growth is slow and constant, being so nearly uniform that this phase of the curve is almost a straight line."

Since it is true that in these early years of childhood there is extremely rapid growth and also that during this period there is a high susceptibility to disease infection makes preventive medicine, proper nutrition and hygienic regime indispensable for maximal physical development.

Mental growth is equally important and rapid during these first six years as indicated by the studies of Gesell, Watson, Baldwin, Woolley and others.

"From his initial squirmings and unorganized movements the infant gradually learns to focus his eyes, to reach for an object, to grasp, to hold, to cut, to make, to sew, to hammer, to saw, to handle, and in short to manipulate most of the things in his own environment.

to his own satisfaction. Before school age he has grown in postural control from a helpless infant to a sitting, crawling, walking, running, jumping, hopping, skipping, dancing, climbing and sometimes swimming child. To his first experiences in tasting, feeling, hearing, and seeing he adds multitudes of later experiences and the variety of objects encountered, but also upon the fullness and richness of these experiences."

During this period language also develops rapidly from the initial birth cry to a large vocabulary of words. A recent study shows that the average vocabulary for six-year-olds is 2,562 words, with a range of from 1,620 to 3,340 words. Other studies show figures as high as 6,837 words at five years and 4,616 at six years. From the merest babblings words are combined and sentence forms are developed step by step.

"The language progress which a child makes from three years to five years of age is typified by his ability to use prepositions appropriately, his employment of descriptive words and his tendency to deal with larger units of thought, his ability to bring

clauses and sentences into logical relation both in imaginative and practical narration. Indeed within his limits he becomes an entertaining raconteur, whereas four years earlier he was unable to articulate a single word."

Developmental importance is also seen in the acquisition of routine habits and of adjustments to family life and group living. Such habits as those of feeding, of elimination, of washing, of dressing, of retiring and arising, are well fixed by the time of school entrance. And it is during this period that the parent-child relationship is set up. Much will depend on the parent in this relationship--whether it is to be one of overdependency of child on parent or one of increasing independence and control for the child whether there is intelligent sympathy or indulgent sentimentality. Also the feeling of comfortable security or of insecurity, a love for brothers and sisters, for father and mother, or jealousy and antagonism during these years.

And now there are the emotional adjustments to be made by the child. This is the age when anger, tantrums, stubbornness, negativism, nausea, and a host of other mechanisms are acquired to thwart adults and over-

come inhibitions to desires. If adults continue to inhibit natural, wholesome activity or if the child is repeatedly successful in such methods of evasion as listed above, personality traits will develop which are difficult to eradicate in later years.

Fears also often indicate a definite trend of personality and needs intelligent guidance to save the child from serious handicaps for wholesome living.

Again, this is also the period for building wholesome attitudes and correct information about reproduction and sex.

The picture of rapid growth and manifold activity as seen in the studies of children during these first seventy-two months of life are convincing evidence of the fact "that the preschool period exceeds all others in developmental importance."

In his address at the opening session of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection at Washington, President Hoover said, "We approach all problems of childhood with affection. Theirs is the province of joy and good humor. They are the most wholesome part of the race, the sweetest, for they are fresher from the hands of God. Whimsical, ingenious, mischievous, we live alive of apprehension as to what

their opinion may be of us; we put them to bed with a sense of relief and a lingering devotion. We envy them the freshness of adventure and discovery of life; we mourn over the disappointments they will meet."

The fundamental purpose of the conference was to set forth an understanding of those safeguards which will assure them of health in mind and body. Competent mother, for instance, cannot count the bacteria in the milk or the thousand and one other things of like nature. These things are beyond the reach of the individual parent so are the safeguards and services to childhood which can and should be provided by the community, the state and the nation. Questions of child health and protection require much learning and action and are not beneath the dignity of statesmen or governments. If we could have but one generation of properly born, trained, educated, and healthy children, a thousand other problems of government would vanish.

There are three groups of problems: (1) the protection and stimulation of the normal child; (2) the aid to the physically defective and handicapped child; (3) to the problems of the delinquent child. Statistics show that out of 45,000,000 children:

35,000,000 are reasonably normal
6,000,000 are improperly nourished
1,000,000 have defective speech
1,000,000 have weak or damaged hearts
675,000 present behavior problems
450,000 are mentally retarded
382,000 are tubercular
340,000 have impaired hearing
18,000 are totally deaf
300,000 are crippled
50,000 are partially blind
14,000 are wholly blind
200,000 are delinquent
500,000 are dependent

In this total of 10,000,000 deficient, more than 80% are not receiving the necessary attention though our knowledge and experience show that these deficiencies can be prevented and remedied to a high degree. We still have the "35,000,000 reasonably normal, cheerful human electrons radiating joy and mischief and hope and faith. Their faces are turned toward the light-- theirs is the life of great adventure. These are the vivid, romping, everyday children, our own and our neighbors with all their strongly marked

differences--and the more differences the better. The more they charge us with their separate problems the more we know they are vitally and humanly alive." And also, we have 1,500,000 specially gifted children wherein lies the future leadership of the nation.

To preserve in its fulness the normal parent-child relationship is of central importance and much inspiration and guidance can be obtained in recognition of such. In this respect, I think President Hoover would agree with the following quotations:

"I do not know of a better shrine before which a father or mother may kneel or stand than that of a sleeping child. I do not know of a holier place, a temple where one is more likely to come into closer touch with all that is infinitely good, where one may come nearer to seeing and feeling God. From that shrine come matins of love and laughter, of trust and cheer to bless the new day, and before that shrine should fall our soft vespers, our grateful benedictions for the night. At the cot of a sleeping babe all man-made ranks and inequalities are ironed out, and all mankind kneels reverently before the living image of the Creator. To understand a child, to go

back and grow up sympathetically with it, to hold its love and confidence, to be accepted by it, without fear or restraint, as a companion and playmate, is just about the greatest good fortune that can come to any man or woman in this world, and, perhaps in any other world, for all we know."

"Know you what it is to be a child? It is to be something very different from the man of today. It is to have a spirit yet streaming from the waters of baptism; it is to believe in love, to believe in loveliness, to believe in belief; it is to be so little that the elves can reach to whisper in your ear; it is to turn pumpkins into couches and mice into horses, lowness into loftiness, and nothing into everything, for each child has its fairy godmother in its own soul; it is to live in a nutshell and count yourself the king of infinite space." Francis Thompson

Many people think of the preschool period, to get back to earth, as one that will take care of itself, growth, being to them, something which is physical, irrepressible and predestined. To wait until the child is of school age for formal education is alright but organization of personality and even of the training of intelligence begins in early babyhood. Dr. Gesell

once said, "Though he may not learn to read in the preschool years, he is mastering the alphabet of life."

The purpose of education in its broadest sense is to provide the best environment for the complete development and growth of children. Its aim is to prepare the American child physically, mentally and morally to meet more fully the responsibilities of tomorrow than we have been able to meet them today. Only when the children advance beyond their parents will there be progress. Many people think of the preschool period as one that will take care of itself but as has been stated before, developmentally, the first six years are the most important in childhood. We find also that all later experiences are built upon or develop from these first ones.

Until recently, education has been directed to higher institutions, moving from above downward, and not until the needs of the colleges, the High schools and the elementary schools were well established have the youngest and the weakest members of society been considered. Now, though the importance of the preschool period is again recognized and is being popularized, it is not a new idea but dates back to early

times for Plato incorporated it as part of his ideal state. In 1816, Robert Owen opened a nursery school in connection with his experiments in New Lanark, Scotland, in which he stressed the importance of habit formation. In 1824, he came to America and purchased the village of New Harmony to establish an ideal state. Two years later he opened an infant school and within a year had one hundred children in this nursery school conducted by the wife of Joseph Neef who was an associate of Pestalozzi. Thomas Huxley said of him: "I think that every one who is compelled to look as closely into the problem of popular education must be led to Owen's conclusion that the infant school is, so to speak, the key to that position; and that Robert Owen discovered this great fact and had the courage and patience to work out his theory into a practical reality is his claim, if he had no other to the enduring gratitude of the people." In England the Fisher Education Act of 1918, which gave the power to local educational authorities to establish nursery schools for children from two to five years of age, "whose attendance at such a school is necessary or desirable for their healthy physical and mental development," is a very significant endorsement of

Robert Owen's pioneer work.

Following this act other nursery schools and training centers soon developed but the progress has been limited greatly by lack of funds-- Miss Emma Henton describes present conditions as follows:

Many of these institutions were established in slum areas and were recognized as at least one means of solving a difficult social problem....Although the workers were keenly alive to the vital importance of an educational program for children of this age, their duties were so many and varied that most of the time they were acting as either nurses or social workers, cleanliness, fresh air, and medical supervision being the main factors in a healthy regime....A recent visit to a few of our English nursery schools revealed the teachers full of vision and enterprise, working against odds, with little or no sympathy or support from authority, with large groups of children, without adequate or trained help, and with very limited equipment." In 1925, there were twenty-five nursery schools in operation here. The purpose then, of establishing the nursery school in England, was primarily sociological in character since its object was to save the child from the negative influence of economic poverty.

The schools on the continent cannot be classified as nursery schools^{but schools} for children under five years of age are numerous. In Belgium Dr. Decroly, "the John Dewey of Europe" has a class of eighteen children from three to six with which he emphasizes sense training and habit formation. There is a kindergarten with one hundred and seventy children between the ages of two and six, forty of whom are under three.

In Switzerland, La Maison des Petits, is incorporated into the public school system. Individual achievement records are kept according to a chart which outlines the child's intellectual development. This school has more contact with the homes than many others through monthly visits of teachers to the homes and through meetings with the parents where teaching methods are discussed.

Mussolini decided that Montessori, the famous educator, had something to contribute to Italian education and had her return to give a six months course to both lay and religious teachers.

In Vienna, Austria, kindergartens are being situated in the municipal apartments for the working classes. and are operated for research and educational experiments.

In Pestalozzi-Froebel-Haus in Berlin there are three

hundred and fifty students preparing for kindergarten teaching who use eight hundred children between the ages of three and six for practice teaching. The teachers keep a diary and also individual records of the pupils progress. The family histories of the pupils are secured by the Jugendamt, the public department of child welfare.

The working out of the five-year plan in Russia is still a matter of speculation for the rest of the world. We find them definitely interested in pre-school education and just how this is worked out is of interest.

"Until the age of three the child is the responsibility of the department of health. Characteristically the care begins before birth with the release of the mother for a period of twelve to sixteen weeks from all labor, with full wages.....

Much has been done and is still being done to educate the mothers properly to care for her child. Mother and child posters are innumerable and widely distributed. Mother-and-child museums are numerous, well-equipped, and much visited.....

As usual, in the Soviet Union, this work is carried on not only officially by the department of health,...

but also cooperatively by trade unions, in factories, and by cooperatives in their stores. Recently, special instructions have been worked out for the organization of Mother and Child Welfare Corners in Cooperative stores. In addition to posters there will be exhibited, in glass cases, samples of suitable dishes, underclothing, outside garments, shoes, toys, literature.

In connection with every trade union or state factory there are preschools for education and care of the children of their workers. In addition to the creche there are hearths, kindergartens and playgrounds for children of all ages to eight. These are financed from the culture fund of the factory, but professionally supervised either by the Health Commissariat, for children under three, or by the Education Commissariat for older children.....

As it considers the preschool institutions as means of freeing the working and peasant woman from the enslavement of household cares and as a means of including them in the social life of the country, the Commissariat of Education gives particular attention to that part of its activity and strives to secure for the or-

ganization of the kindergarten, hearths and playgrounds the collaboration of various municipal and rural authorities.

Let us turn now to our own country and see what is being done in this field. One of the most important phases of the movement is that which relates to the nursery schools. The old day nursery, which was founded as a philanthropic adjunct to our economic system is very unlike the nursery school of today. This institution serves all classes, and has been claimed by Bertrand Russell as an indispensable device for the education of all children. Briefly outlined, its program embraces a thorough study of the child by pediatricians, psychologists, educators, nutrition experts and psychiatrists. The child's history and home environment are studied and a careful record of progress kept. Parents meet at the school regularly for observations and training which is both theoretical and practical. Best of all it does not hamper the child for its program is interesting, the environment and personnel pleasant, conditions which approximate the ideal for scientific purposes.

The nursery school's approach to the child "is an

endeavor to put into actual practice the thing that is being taught us from every platform....that the child must be considered as a whole being, physical, intellectual, emotional; the leaders must have not only knowledge of child psychology, but inhibitions so perfect in function as not to prohibit them from anticipating trouble, raising issues, arguing, demanding, showing anxiety or otherwise making dramatic and interesting the conduct they wish to erase from the child's behavior patterns."

It is now the belief of many educators that the nursery school is a definite step in "solving out problem of trying to integrate personalities, which are rife among our school children."

Since 1880 there have been many related social forces developed that have influenced the progress of preschool and parental education as the steady growth of interest in the health problems of the normal child, in child study, in cooperation between home and school, the mental hygiene movement, and wise management in the home, so that the characteristic interests of the various members of the family can develop.

Prior to the establishment of the modern nursery school we find such organizations as the Child Study

Association of America, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, the American Child Health Association and extension programs of Home Economics in Colleges organized in parental education efforts.

The Child Study Association began in 1888 with three mothers interested in studying the history and progress of education as it applied to their own problems of child training. Two years later found thirty members in the group and the name "Society for the Study of Child Nature" adopted. As the society increased and branches organized, it was deemed necessary to have a central organization which they called the "Federation for Child Study" and still later in 1924 it was incorporated under the name "Child Study Association of America" and now trains leaders, publishes pamphlets and a monthly magazine.

Of interest here is the organization of college women under the direction of Dr. Millicent Shinn. "In the fall of 1890, steps were taken providing for the presentation of a plan by which those members who were interested could united in a systematic study of the development of children, with special reference for securing the best basis for their later intellectual life."

Schedules were made out for the observance of child life and the cooperation of specialists secured. College graduates kept diaries and filled in record sheets, answered questionnaires, read literature and corresponded until interest in the subject waned. It was revived, however, in 1923 as the American Association of University Women with a program of study as their object. It has been farreaching in its effects but most important of all has been the education of college women to be better parents.

The parent-teacher movement stresses the essential contact between home and school. The National Congress of Parents and Teachers was first organized under the name, National Congress of Mothers in 1897, being led by Mes. Theodore W. Birney. It adopted parent-teacher cooperation as part of its program. This line of development became so popular that for some years it almost overshadowed the original purpose of the organization....the training of parents in the care and understanding of little children." Dr. Felix Adler gave the keynote of the movement today when he said: "that parenthood is a vocation requiring knowledge, applied intelligence and the wisdom that results from the combination,"

The Congress expanded rapidly until many branches were formed and the "Child Welfare" magazine was established. Realizing the importance of cooperation between these two great influencing factors, the home and the school, a nation-wide campaign for parent-teacher associations was entered. This popularity widened its scope so in 1907 its name was changed to National Congress of Mothers and Teachers. Once again, in 1924, its name was changed. This time because of the number of men who became interested and is known today as the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

The American Child Health Association as it is known today is the combination of the American Child Hygiene Association and the Child Health Association of America. This organization endeavors to bridge the gap between the research worker and the problems in the home and classroom. In 1912, the Federal government established the Children's Bureau which studies child welfare, making reports and investigations. In 1914, New York State established the first State Department of Child Hygiene. In 1921, we find the first real link between the Children's Bureau and state or-

ganizations in the passing of the Sheppard-Towner Act.

The National Committee for Mental Hygiene was organized in 1909. From the study of insane adults it quickly took up the study of prison inmates and then turned to studies in the juvenile courts. So a program for prevention of delinquency was developed with the consequent interest in needs of the normal child, the outcome.

The Visiting Teachers movement begun in 1906 was organized in 1919 and is an indispensable aspect of the mental hygiene movement and contributory to the present program of preschool and parent education.

Let us turn now to that institution wherein we find the linking of parent and preschool education most effective, the nursery school.

Nursery schools have many common objectives but still somewhat varied purposes. Very few in the United States are philanthropic in purpose for practically all of them aim to serve as a supplement to, rather than as a substitute for the home.

The main objectives of the modern nursery school are: (1) to provide for controlled research; (2) to establish experimental laboratories for the study of

educational methods; (3) to furnish facilities for training preschool teachers; (4) to provide for the cultural and general training of college women; (5) to permit parents to participate in the group care of little children; (6) to demonstrate the best methods of child care; and (7) to train junior and senior high school students.

More or less specialized types of nursery school undertakings are seen in The Play School for Habit Training of the North Bennett Street Industrial School, the nursery school for crippled children at Rainbow Hospital, the Montessori nursery school of the Child Educational Foundation, and the Guidance Nursery at Yale.

The spread of nursery schools have been rapid in this country. From 1924 to 1928 they have risen to national importance in eleven states. In these four years we find the establishment of eighty-five in twenty-four different states. There are also many small privately owned ones throughout the states.

In her pamphlet on "The Nursery School in Relation to the Health of the Pre-school Child" Mary Cover Jones, Ph.D. says:

Although the nursery school regime has not been standarized to any extent, a representative nursery

school has a health program which includes, wherever possible, five provisions: a healthy environment, training in health habits, health examinations, instruction to parents in child hygiene, and research projects in various phases of child health.

Perhaps the first item "a healthy environment" can best be illustrated by describing the daily routine in a typical nursery school such as we have had at the Institute of Child Welfare at the University of California.

The children are brought at nine o'clock to the reception room where they are greeted by a nursery school teacher or the Institute physician. The initiated child opens his mouth, sticks out his tongue and waits, as a matter of course, for the inspection of his nose and skin. If there is no evidence of a cold nor of a suspicious skin eruption, he passes on into the locker room where he finds his own locker by means of a picture-symbol--such as a tricycle, a teddy bear, or an umbrella--hangs up his outside clothes; gets into his play overalls and sweater, and goes either to the toilet, or directly outdoors for play. The playground affords plenty of open space, a small open

play house, a jungle gym, a slide, sandboxes, a clay table, and painting easels. Moveable apparatus is plentiful, inexpensive, and constructive--barrels, boxes, benches, which become trains, boats, moving vans, or houses at will. Tricycles, wagons, baby buggies, balls, sand toys, bright colored cloths for "dressing up" provide further incentives for activity.

The city nursery school may be forced to use roof space for its playground, but "outdoors whenever possible" is a maxim for nursery schools the country over.

At the Institute nursery school in Berkley, the story or music hour and the mid-morning and mid-afternoon lunches are part of the outdoor activities. The mid-morning lunch consists of tomato or orange juice, with codliver oil when it is prescribed by the physician. There is a rest period before lunch for all the children, but the length varies with the needs of the individual. All of the children, with as little adult aid as possible, wash their hands and faces and comb their hair in readiness for lunch. The lunch menus which are arranged by the nursery school psychologist, aim to provide a well-balanced meal which furnishes about one-half of the total food-intake for the day, and which takes account of the likes and dislikes of

the group as they have been determined by observation. Lunch is eaten at low, attractively set tables, three or four children and a teacher at each table. One child at each table serves the lunch.

After lunch comes another session in the bathroom, when preparations are made for the nap. All of the children who are accustomed to the sleep period occupy one large airy dormitory. Each has his own cot and covers, at a comfortable and safe distance from his neighbors. Extra rooms are available for those few children who have difficulty at first in adjusting to the sleeping conditions. The length of the nap depends upon the individual--half an hour suffices some of the older children while the younger ones may sleep for two hours. After the nap comes milk and crackers, out of doors, and play until the children are called for at four o'clock.

The daily program, as outlined here, describes in general what would be found in most of the all-day nursery schools in any part of the country. Some schools require tooth-brushing and gargling in addition to washing the hands and face. In certain localities where home meals are less nutritious, milk is served first--to prevent a too ravenous assault upon food.

In other schools it has been found that milk must be withheld to insure completion of the main dishes. Schools in some sections take children for a longer period, from 8 to 5, in order to accommodate working mothers; other schools provide only the morning program.

Isolation and exclusion for colds may be more rigid in some groups than in others. Age of attendance may vary from the preschool center which takes children as soon as they can walk, to the one which takes only three-year-olds. Most nursery schools set the upper limit at the age of entrance to kindergarten. However nursery schools may differ, each sincerely believes that its province is to offer, for a few hours a day, opportunities for development which the best homes cannot duplicate.

The second item in our program--"training in health habits"--might be considered as one of the courses in the nursery school curriculum. We are often asked--what do the children study in your school--what do you teach them? There are no formal classes, of course, but there are educational purposes and an abundance of learning situations--the "subject matter" for our pupils. Good habits are stressed and those which lead

to self-reliance and social adaptability are especially encouraged. Correct biological habits are not only indispensable in themselves, but they furnish as well an entering wedge toward self-reliance. The control of elimination, attitude for nourishing food, and sound sleep are some of the habits to be acquired. The child must learn also such auxiliary techniques as the ability to feed himself, button his clothes, and wash his face.

For each of these and many other processes there is a carefully considered form of procedure. For example, in establishing control of elimination, although the aim is complete independence of adults, the child must be led to this objective through intermediate stages. At first he is taken to the toilet at stated intervals--after a few weeks or months of training, this is dropped and he is merely asked if he wants to go. Finally the responsibility for keeping dry is left entirely to him.

The third item in our program--"health examination"--has two aspects. One, the daily inspection for colds and communicable disease, has been described. In addition there is a more thorough periodic examination to survey physical progress. This follow-up includes a

monthly record of height and weight, and a semi-annual thorough examination . Vaccination and inoculation with diphtheria toxin anti-toxin are among the entrance requirements for every child. We feel that one of the most important by-products of our health examination is the good rapport established between the child and the physician. The medical staff considers the child's cooperation more important than the physical measurements--and by repeated experiences in the doctor's office the child acquires a confident attitude toward the medical examination.

The fourth requirement on our health program--parent education in child hygiene--is accomplished through several Institute agencies. Although some of our parents have family physicians to whom they refer many of their health problems, the informality of the nursery school contacts makes it easy for the parents who wish, to come for medical advice or practical suggestions for establishing a hygienic regime. Our monthly discussion meetings with parents of the nursery school children include a number of subjects which deal with general topics of health.

The most intimate contacts with the parents come through the habit clinic which is a part of the Insti-

tute. In the future, all of the nursery school children are to go through this clinic as a matter of routine. The nursery school physician is a member of the habit clinic staff, too. The child's physical condition is considered in relation to his general behavior, and where necessary, parents are given medical instruction or referred to their family physician for treatment.

Our fifth and last provision on the program is research in child hygiene. Since only part of the child's day is subject to control for research purposes, and since the projects are formulated in the interest of the children as a primary consideration, investigations in the health field are confined largely to simple analysis of the routine developmental data. For example, in the field of nutrition, since the child's diet, is not subject to control, and since we wish to provide an optimum diet, in so far as we are able, research must be confined to observations on individual reactions to foods. At the institute a daily record sheet for each child, filled in by a teacher at each table, records the time taken to eat, the foods which are refused, returned, or replenished, an appetite rating and general remarks as to the child's motor skill,

emotional attitude, or other related items. The children are allowed choices for two of the dishes at each meal. For example, they may have broiled liver or liver hash and for dessert baked or raw apple.

Whether or not we accumulate sufficient evidence to testify as to the importance of the preferences of young children, we will have some interesting insight as to the constancy or fickleness of each child's choice. In addition, the child has acquired that additional training toward a mature reaction in situations involving food.

Again, the problem of colds is attacked from the point of view of its practical significance in the nursery school regime. Can we predict a cold from the number of coughs or sneezes before it has reached the communicable stage? Will body temperature have an earlier indication than are possible from inspection? What is the relation of colds to humidity, or exposure to the ultra-violet rays, to age? These and similar studies can be undertaken with facilities such as a nursery school affords."

In conclusion, let us state the purpose of the Merrill-Palmer school which is "to provide an environment where the little child may be freed for satisfactory growth, it seeks knowledge of the little child in order to impart knowledge; it seeks to teach through

giving practical experience to students. It further more seeks to share its experience with the parents of the nursery school children in order to win their intelligent cooperation in the nursery school program and in order to give them what they so much desire--added knowledge and wisdom which will make for better environment for their children and the children to come."

Let us hope that through the stimulus given parental and preschool education we will find the American child of the next generation "prepared physically, mentally and morally to meet more fully the responsibilities of tomorrow than we have been able to meet them today" keeping ever in mind that only when the children surpass their parents will we progress.

