The proof of the pudding is in the eating of it, and so the test of an education would seem to be how it actually works out, how successful are the men and women so educated. Opinions, however, differ as to what constitutes success; is it a bank account, church standing, scientific reputation or personal happiness? Smith, prosperous in business, rolling along in his automobile thinks rather pityingly of poor Jones, an impractical sort of fellow, who writes scientific articles, but can never afford a trip to Europe nor to join a decent golf club. Jones, on the other hand, elated by the discovery of a new insect, which will probably be called by his name, in his spare moments thinks with some pity of the failure of Smith, who started life with some decent enthusiasms, some responsiveness to the finer issues of life, some capacity of self-sacrifice, but gradually lost them as he became immersed in piling up a fortune. Brown, who has neither discovered a new insect nor accumulated any money, but whose family life is a great delight to him, sees nothing but failure in the life of Smith and of Jones, neither of whom can get along with his wife.

There is no universally accepted standard of success in life; one is forced to admit different goals and therefore different methods of education, and each one will favour that type and those methods which fit in with his philosophy of life or personal prejudices.

The physician tends to look at the matter biologically; his goal in education is the adult well adjusted to his environment, with healthy organs but also with a healthy balance between the conflicting trends of human nature; an adult not merely well nourished and with immaculate teeth and tonsils, but meeting the tasks of life with the necessary output of energy and with pertinacity, not shrinking from nor evading personal problems, not giving to the realities of life false values, determined by individual idiosyncrasies, by earlier experiences, by uncorrected family or social prejudices; handing over to habit the simpler activities of daily life, regulating soberly the instincts, digesting disappointments and bereavements, giving and taking in the spirit of social solidarity, facing the tests of marriage and parenthood in a direct and open manner, throwing himself into his economic tasks with cheerfulness and satisfaction.

Character Training as Important as School Instruction for Efficiency and Health

In the formative period the child should of course acquire a certain amount of information, and skill in intellectual and manual operations; both the nature and extent of the information, and the best methods of tuition are important topics of discussion. But the breakdowns in life—the nervous invalidism, embitterment and depression, misinterpretation and accusation, ill-balanced enthusiasms and fads of religious, philanthropic, intellectual or aesthetic nature, family disharmonies, futile day dreaming—do not arise because the individual has studied Homer and Euclid instead of Spanish and

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the stock exchange reports, nor because he has followed the methods of the
important interest of expressing his individuality. Montessori points out
that the failures are more influenced by the fact that in the develop-
ing individual less attention is paid to the personal problems of the child
than to the accumulation of information, less attention to the instincts,
the emotions, the interests, the mental conflicts than to memorizing and faci-

t repetition; yet during this period habits of adaptation are formed, which are
to be of crucial importance for the happiness and efficiency of the adult.

The state, which realizes the importance of literacy sufficiently to make ed-
rcation a personal deed, not leaving it to the personal desires. Its edcu-
amational apparatus pays little attention to the training of character. It is
easy to arrange for the systematic instruction of large groups of children in
arithmetical, language, geography, history, etc. It is another matter to arrange
for systematic groups in regard to more important matters going to be of fundamental importance for the happiness and the social
value of the individual. Perhaps such training can never be quite systematic;
perhaps the training can never be by group methods; for it is no longer the
giving of information that is in question, but training in feeling and doing.

While the importance of this aspect of the training of the child can hardly
be doubted, the question may be raised whether this part of the training of
the child does not belong essentially to the home, while the function of the
school is different. Of course, the school should not aim at supplanting
the home; no external influences are of more importance for the formation of
character than the atmosphere of the home; but the training during the first
five years of life has an influence of profound significance on later charac-
ter. But while the school should not supplant, it should supplement the
home; it should co-operate with the home, and bring to the home an
influence and a support which no other agency can supply. Along with the parents
the training of the character of the child and the formation of correct habits of thought and action, the regulation of the
instincts and the emotions, the cultivation of a sensitiveness to the true
values of life.

Influence of the Instinctive and Emotional Life on School Problems

But even should the school desire to split the child into halves, handling
one over to the parents for character-training while it retained the other
half, it would still not have shaken off the wider problem. The child brings its whole self into the school room, its emotions and in-
terests and special personal attitudes, and even the routine task of instruc-
tion is modified by these factors. Learning is modified by the attitude of the
child toward the teacher, this attitude is an act of great complexity, to understand which we may need to know something of the
home and of the attitude to the parents; interests in the school tasks may be
seriously interfered with by day-dreaming, and the roots of this may introduce
us to the sexual life of the child and his inner life of fantasy; failure in
the school tasks may be conditioned by sensitiveness and embarrassment and
nervous fear, the origin of which can only be revealed by a detailed character
study; lack of docility and restlessness in the school room, with a tendency
towards pranks and lack of seriousness, require to be understood if they are to be
intelligently dealt with; teasing and bullying and apparent cruelty require
investigation; pilfering and untruthfulness, truancy and apparently wanton
misconduct, may be examples of conduct which call for careful study of the
individual child, and an honest endeavor to provide the child with the con-
tions most favourable for its development.

The school, therefore, can not disclaim responsibility for some attention to
the personal problems of the individual child; compensation for the
failures of the home, showing how important the state considers education for the maintenance and advance of the value of its citizen body, and if the human value of its citizens

is to be the main aim of the school system, then not only will these personal
problems of special school children require careful attention, but the chief
weight of education will come gradually to be laid on this aspect of the
training rather than on routine instruction in the familiar school topics.
The success of the school system will be estimated according to its success in
promoting the development of character and good habits and healthy
balance.

Already the school has gone a certain distance in this direction; it has seen
that to treat a child as a mere numbered school unit, morally bound to
swallow at a certain rate a certain amount of information, is a grave injustice.
It has seen that a child with an empty stomach cannot absorb much
grammar nor arithmetic; to add the figures on the blackboard one needs to
see the blackboard, which slight deafness may be the cause of much fatigue and
irritability. The school, therefore, has taken an interest in the empty or
abused stomach, the defective eyes and ears, the diseased teeth and tonsils, the
healed scar.

The school having thus accepted some responsibility for attention to
stomach, teeth, tonsils, etc., must accept some responsibility for the child
who owns these organs, for the real child not the mere school unit. The real
child is not merely an assembly of organs plus a receptacle for school
information, he is a complex bundle of highly organized instincts, emotions
and attitudes; and attention to these reactions of the child is even more
important than attention to his teeth. These are the elements which give to the
individual much of his special character and worth; their management is of
cardinal importance for the training of character, while at the same time they
intimately affect the progress of instruction.

Concrete Case Illustrating the Necessity of Studying the Personal Problems of the School Child

The close relationship between the traditional problems of the school
and the wider and more important problems involved in the personality of
the child and his total reaction to his environment may be illustrated by a
concrete case.

John Smith aged thirteen was a problem to his teachers and a nuisance;
his honesty was beyond question, he frequently lied, his pranks however
amusing were distinctly unsettling in the school room. Four teachers formulat-
ed their views of this upsetting school unit.

The English teacher reported: "His efforts to keep up in his work have
been so very irregular that I cannot explain it on the ground of mere laziness
or indifference, he does not know the meaning of application and, while not
mentally deficient, seems quite unable in certain moods, to retain the funda-
mentals of previous study. This is due to shiftlessness, as I think it to be
in part, I suggest a severe reprimand." The history teacher reported: "John
Smith has very good ability. His poor work is the result of loafing and lack
of interest including attention in class. He is quite an enigma." The mathe-
matical teacher reported: "I know of no reason why John Smith's work
should not be good... Frequently does no work during the week, that is,
hands none in and yet passes fair tests. Of course, continuance of such
work means gradual loss of grip and consequent failure." The Latin teacher
reported: "My impression of John Smith is that he has plenty of ability, but
very little energy. He very rarely hands in his written work on time and
usually says he is "too busy.""

From these reports one sees that John Smith is an unsatisfactory pupil
and to one teacher "quite an enigma." But what is striking about these
reports is that there is no reference to the boy himself, his real in-
terests, his attitude towards life, his problems, his moral growth, his
fears. Although the school career of the boy was threatening to prove
a failure no attempt seems to have been made to look outside of the school
room for any explanation. We found mentioned “lack of interest,” “inattention,” “very little energy,” no application,” but these stereotyped phrases teach us nothing as to the why of the matter, what is going wrong with the boy, what are the driving forces in his nature, and how they can be applied to advantage. In these reports we see no reference to the home, no curiosity as to the boy’s relations to his parents, his personal feeling for his masters as to his output of energy away from school, his special tastes, sex life, possible feelings of discouragement, and their source. The teacher of algebra sees no reason why the boy’s work should not be good, but the English teacher wondered that he “just hates algebra”; surely some reason for poor progress.

If the teachers had considered John Smith not as a pupil, the victim of a school curriculum, but as a live boy, who had once been a baby, had been brought up by a mother and a father, they would have developed a healthy curiosity as to the why of his failure. They would have regretted that the history of the early life of the boy was not at their disposal, that the whole balance of the unconscious forces, the direction of his affections, the trend of his ruminations, his mental conflicts and methods of meeting personal difficulties, in fact the very essence of the boy was quite unknown. They would have wondered whether the boy’s output of energy was not handicapped by emotional factors, the source of which might be elsewhere than in the school. As a matter of fact the boy was frank and free at games and showed a quite energetic disposition when he was carefully observed under holiday conditions. He was observed to have a somewhat diffident attitude as if he were not quite sure of himself, and as if he felt that he was liable to be criticized or viewed with disapproval. He seemed to be weighed down by the feeling that he was quite up to the task before him, whereas he was quite willing in exercise or diving. He responded well to encouragement which inspired him with confidence in himself.

The boy seemed to be living under the chronic weight of the feeling that he was not quite up to the task before him, and that this attitude was due to the earlier authority of the father. The boy tended to live up to the father and where the father has modest ideals of efficiency and not much tolerance, the task does not weigh on the child. In this case the father was a man of exceptional ability, with very high standards of efficiency; to live up to such a father may be a stimulus or an incubus, depending on the home and on the task. The boy might well explain this attitude; we know how important an early determinant of character is the child’s relation to his parents. The boy tends to live up to the father and where the father has modest ideals of efficiency and not much tolerance, the task does not weigh on the child. In this case the father was a man of exceptional ability, with very high standards of efficiency; to live up to such a father may be a stimulus or an incubus, and the boy with more modest endowments than his father, which were probably responsible for his early school training, had labored under the sense of lagging behind what was expected of him. This chronic feeling of discouragement had probably been the most important single determinant of his general waywardness, don’t-care attitude, and unsatisfactory school career. On the basis of this tentative reconstruction of the boy’s difficulties he was given an atmosphere of encouragement; a policy of tolerant watchful waiting was recommended, with moderate demands as to school attainments and no attempt to force progress at the risk of discouragement; the father and teachers co-operated in supplying the boy with the conditions which his special problems seemed to demand, and the results justified the effort.

Teachers Will Find in a Sound Child Psychology Help and Inspiration

The above history may show how even in relation to instruction and school discipline the problems of the home and of the school are intimately connected, how the emotional background of the child’s life subtly influences school progress, how the familiar annoyances and disappointments of the class may be required for their understanding of the personality of the boy and of all the factors which make up his environment. One is entitled to demand of the teaching profession in general some familiar...

...arity with these problems; in every training school for teachers there should be a thorough course in child psychology, a psychology willing to deal with the whole child, and that the professional training of the teaching profession is not adequate to the task. In every training school for teachers there should be a thorough course in child psychology, a psychology willing to deal with the whole child, and that the professional training of the teaching profession is not adequate to the task.
orizes easily is little indication of development; the fact that a child gives a teacher no trouble may merely indicate lack of initiative and character. We wish to know how the child tackles a job, what interest docs he bring of school information at his disposal should only have its due weight and no more.

On the Practical Steps to Be Taken

If these views in general are accepted—and sooner or later I believe they will have to be accepted—and if an honest attempt is made to translate them into action, what are the first steps for a school system to take to live up to these responsibilities? Instead of sketching a utopian school system in a community guided by intelligence, let us assume an average school system run by average authorities with an average community with average taxpayers. We may safely assume that on a plea of economy they will continue to underpay the teachers, and that they will be far from offering salaries at all commensurate with the importance of the teacher's task. The classes will continue to be much too large on the same basis of economy. The teachers, therefore, are liable to continue for some time overworked and underpaid. However, in their training they might be taught into the fundamental problems of childhood and some familiarity with the indications of trouble, they will be sensitive to the same in the children who are daily under their eyes; they will be able to draw to the attention of the school to the need of the protection and care of the individual child. The ideal situation would be if the teacher had only a reasonable number of pupils in her class, and had some energy and time for a disposal for discussing with the parent the home problems of the child, and visiting the home if advisable. As the teacher seldom has the time or energy available, the problem may be referred to a visiting teacher or school nurse, who must have had some good training in mental hygiene and in the special problems of childhood. It will be long perhaps before the average teacher is qualified to give the best advice in relation to the problems that come up, but it should be possible within a few years to have available a body of these special intermediaries between the home and the school, whether they be visiting teachers or school nurses with special training in mental hygiene. One of her functions would be to be familiar with all the hospital and dispensary facilities of the community. In this way there would be placed at the disposal of the school the best advice in relation to the problems of childhood.

The School Is the Natural Health Centre for the Children of a District

So far I have discussed education chiefly in relation to the school period, but the education of the child has begun long before it goes to school. The education or training of the child begins when it is put to the mother's breast; the basis of the child's later reactions is being laid when the child is forming its habits with regard to food, and sleep and the toilet; traits of character which are handicaps in later life may be fostered by injudicious management in the nursery; the basis of later repressions, of later inability to deal frankly with sex factors, is laid in repressions connected with the habits of the toilet, and with the first naive curiosity of the child as to sex differences, childbirth, etc. These early reactions of the child are familiar to the nurse and the mother; only the child psychologist is blind to them, or if not blind to them considers them not suitable for discussion. Adult traits of character of the greatest importance are often determined by the emotional relations to father and mother which are established early in life; undue fostering of the emotional dependence of the child on the parent may do much to cripple the individual's social efficiency as an adult, and may make him find the world a harsh stepmother. The child who finds himself small world by tantrums and other technique has to learn at a later day that the real world has certain inexorable laws, and may regret that the existence of these inexorable laws was not brought home to him in the nursery. The general ignorance of the principles of the correct training of children during this early period is a social fact of very great importance; it presents a situation which demands organized treatment. The most practical steps for dealing with it seem to me to be already suggested by our discussion of the relation between the school and the home. The school nurse, visiting teacher, worker in social service, who has to take up the problem of a school child, has to deal not merely with a child, but has to deal with a situation; and to give the child the help it is entitled to, the situation has to be dealt with intelligently.

The responsibility of the home cannot improve the situation for the school child without helping the mother in her general insight into the problems of childhood. She will inevitably have to consider the mother's attitude to the other children, will she have to see along what lines mother and father train their habits and traits of character; she may only be glad in the presence of the worker, who has a sympathetic insight, to bring up her problems with regard to the younger children, and to avail herself of wise counsel. So through the school children the school workers will for some time be close to the homes where they can bring them into close contact with the children who are under school age, and in a community where the school is doing work of this nature, where some mothers have got help with regard to their 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds and 5-year-olds on questions of diet, and thumb sucking, and tantrums and night terrors, and other nervous manifestations, other mothers, whose children are all below school age, will come for help to the same source. Show some mothers that practical help is given; these mothers will look after the necessary propaganda, and the mothers of the children under five will soon be clamoring at the doors of the school clinic for help for their children. Can the school refuse their appeal and will it not have to answer it by seeing that the school clinic becomes the mental hygiene center for all the children of the district, no matter what is the age of the children? The school will have to insist on the children being in close contact with the school in all the home cannot improve the situation for the school child without helping the mother in her general education of its children seriously, and that it is giving to its children those aids to the development of personality and character, to which from infancy they are entitled.
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