

a room. As physicians, we must demand that the schoolroom, admirable as are its aims and its motives, must relinquish at least one-half its claims upon the time and strength of our children; that at least half of their education should be carried out in nature's school—the open air. Our schoolrooms should be relieved of the mere nursery duty of keeping children out of harm and of mischief, with which they are now loaded, and the playground should be organized, supervised, and recognized as a vital and coördinate branch of our scheme of education. The playground is the chief field for the development of body and mind; of training for social life, for organization and combination with his fellows. The real life of the child is lived not in the schoolroom, but on the playground. One of the most valuable influences of the school is the effect of children upon each other. But this can be attained in its perfection only upon the playground. Cut down the school hours one-half and double the playground hours, and you will have done more for the physical, mental, and moral health of young America than by any other possible step.

Better a playground without a schoolhouse, than a schoolhouse without a playground.

THE CHAIRMAN: The President of the Association, Dr. Luther H. Gulick, will speak on "The Century's Children."
Dr. Gulick.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: CHILDREN OF THE CENTURY

BY DR. LUTHER H. GULICK

Some years ago a bit of twisted human life—a waif—was discovered and cared for by some good friends. His distorted form was carefully shaped into the most healthful position it could assume, and in that position was firmly and tenderly bound. He was taken to the country, where the birthright of all children is plentiful—sunshine and pure air. Tasteful and nutritious food nourished his body, while happy companionship and



"SMILING JOE"

From the Hospital for Tuberculous Children at Sea Breeze. The New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor

occupation unfolded his social nature. So "Smiling Joe" became a source of courage and hope instead of a mere recipient of charity.

Believing that if others could see the kind of results accomplished there would be given freely that financial support which every such work involves, the picture of "Smiling Joe" was taken,—smile, plaster cast, and all,—and with a few explanatory words was widely published, with results that justified the belief upon which the action was taken.

During all the ages of his history man has delighted in seeing that which was strange, grotesque, extraordinary. In order to take advantage of this desire the world has been ransacked for strange and curious creatures. Even in our own times we make holidays of occasions when aggregations of trained men and women, horses, dogs, and even cats present marvelous feats to view.

But it is not only features of strength, skill, daring, beauty, and the like that attract; the abnormal still has its fascination. The "fattest lady in the world" will be found in a side show, while near her, so as to form a suitable antithesis, is seen the "living skeleton," and further on are found the "bearded lady" and the "dog-faced man". All form more or less innocent and diverting objects of contemplation. The time has not long passed, even with us who speak the English tongue, since, in addition to such attractions as these, there were offered for our delectation deformed persons and animals, microcephalic idiots called "Australian children". Some of these deformed creatures were made so for purposes of exhibition. The most horrible and piteous spectacles were the children who, taken soon after birth, were bound for life in some extraordinary position so that bone, muscle, and organs all developed into grotesque wholes, which it would be as revolting as it is unnecessary to describe.

It is a far cry in the history of social growth from the time when money was paid to see the purposely deformed to the time when the publication of the picture of "Smiling Joe" is the effective means of securing this self-same money for relief and prevention of such deformity.

This single illustration must suffice to bring before you one of the most important strides ever taken by the social whole. This stride has carried our kind from the condition

when sympathy was individual, to the time when it became social. Sympathy for the suffering and distress of even those who are unseen by us is now the common and compelling tradition among all civilized peoples. Whether it be for a Dreyfus in France, the suffering caused by a famine in India, or an earthquake in San Francisco, or a deformed and suffering child on the street, the community as such now responds.

Contrast, for example, the spontaneous outburst of sympathy expressing itself in the immediate and substantial material aid to Count Zeppelin on the occasion of the recent destruction of his air-ship, with the cold indifference with which the heart-breaking struggles of Bernard Palissy were received by his neighbors and contemporaries during his long years of work and failure and final success. This national sympathy is something new in the history of the world. It has become socialized in a special sense.

Were I to spend the whole of the time available to me this evening in merely naming the societies organized definitely to aid or defend children in some way, I could name but a small fraction of those working in this land alone. Hence, as an indication of this general movement, let me mention the names of a few of the better-known societies organized for the welfare of children in this one city: Association for Befriending Children and Young Girls; The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; The Public Education Association; The Society for the Reformation of Juvenile Delinquents; and all the activities in behalf of children which are carried on so extensively in the Charity Organization Society and the Society for Improving the Condition of the Poor.

Were I to proceed to the enumeration of mothers' and parents' clubs and other similar organizations, as well as to include the smaller and more specialized groups, I should reach an additional and exceedingly large number.

So far I have not referred to the greatest of all institutions for children, initiated by private endeavor, but now carried on by the people as a whole—the public school system. Here we find an organization caring for, roughly speaking, 700,000 children. One hundred and fifty thousand more may be added as the number taught by parochial and private schools. These institutions were practically all of them developed during the latter part of the century.

It is impossible to conceive of such a movement, or rather of such an aggregation of movements, occurring at one time, as being due to chance or to mere coincidence. It can mean but one thing: not merely a world-wide development of sympathy expressing itself in social organization, but a new attitude of the world toward children; an appreciation of the fact, clearly seen by the prophets and poets of previous ages, that the hope of the future lies in childhood. Great as is the importance of health and opportunity for adults, health and opportunity for the young—for those who are still predominantly plastic—are now seen to be indefinitely greater.

Each age of a people that is still growing is marked by epochs. The great achievements of mankind have been initiated and have come to fruition not merely by the gradual increments secured by constant struggle, but also by pulses, by periods of intense development. During each age some idea or feeling has grasped a people. Then have come results, achievements, or new levels of social relations such as have not existed before.

To mention but a few such movements, selected because of their being generally recognized rather than because of their absolute importance,—recognizing that they are symptoms, visible signs, rather than causes,—let me refer to the Renaissance in Italy; to the Elizabethan age of literature in England; to the development of modern philosophy during the eighteenth century; to the fact that those three great lights of modern science, Darwin, Huxley, and Tyndall, were contemporaries; that the harnessing of the forces of nature by the utilization of steam took but a century; and the thousand forms of electric appliances have come in during the last twenty-five years.

Were I to take the history of the development of a single science, such as medicine, there would be found not only the gradual increase of skill and power which comes by the accumulation of experience, but that the work, even here, had gone by pulses. Among the thousands of workers one would discover some fresh fact, some new interpretation,—such as that of Pasteur, who showed to the world the bacterial nature of fermentation,—and at once the new fact, the new point of view, the new bit of machinery, was used by hundreds of keen observers and similar discoveries were made in cognate fields, until the whole subsience of bacteriology was developed. That is, a vein of ore is discovered and is at once worked by thousands.

Progress, then, consists not merely of those harvests which are reaped from year to year, from century to century, from millennium to millennium, but also in those discoveries, inventions, ideas, or even hopes which enrich and characterize their age.

The appreciation of the significance of childhood, then, I believe to be one of the epoch-making, world-lifting ideas which, as much or even more than any other, will be seen to have characterized our period. The possibility of taking children, while soul and body are still plastic and growing, and placing them on a level higher than that hitherto occupied by our race, is superlative in its meaning and importance. It offers such an opportunity for the higher flights of our kind as is offered in no other way.

The playground movement is then one of the larger factors in an epoch-forming element of human history. It consists of a recognition of the fact that life, while absorbing nourishment for both body and soul from without, really develops from within.

We now see that the school is not the only community factor necessary to the wholesome development of the child. We do not forget that in the school the child must be put in possession of the achievements of the ages. It is necessary that he learn to read, to write, and to manipulate intelligently the symbols of number; he must be able to handle those instruments of labor that distinguish civilized from savage man. He must learn how to handle his own self so as to be most effective. If, in addition to those fundamental requirements, the school can give to the child a grasp of how he came to be (history and geography), of what the voices of each age have said (literature), of the principles and the practices of some of the arts (manual training and the like), the promise of the future is much strengthened.

But granting that the school accomplished adequately all these objects, still there remains an unmet necessity, for we are and must be both individually and group directed. That is, the individual must learn not only mastery of himself,—muscles and nerves, emotions, even ideas,—but he must at the same time become trained to take his place and help on the whole social mechanism. He must become adjusted to that harness of traditions which carries the results of our racial experiences,

and be prepared to take his place in maintaining the new race experiences of democracy, or self-group control. This development can only come from within. Neither of these things has been or can be imparted by formal instruction so as to be effective. Achievements of this kind belong to the great school of personal experience. Here lies the function of the playground. It gives to the individual the opportunity for mastery of his body under conditions of increasing difficulty in its varied physical activities. It also gives the opportunity for the social experiences of democracy of self and group government. It is the school of physical and social self-discovery and self-direction.

The school is and must be, in final analysis, an autocracy, for the lessons of obedience to authority belong with that acquisition of race learning already mentioned.

When people live close together, as modern life conditions demand, obedience to authority is required. Without this there can only be chaos. To give but a single illustration of this, during a school fire it is necessary that each pupil and each teacher obey the rules implicitly. This involves standing and waiting until the time for the occupants of the room to march. It involves keeping step and remaining quiet. That there have been no disasters during fires in school buildings in New York City is due fully as much to this obedience as it is to the fire-proof construction of the buildings or other safeguards. Highly progressive social life, that is, real freedom, is only possible in a community where obedience to law is the rule rather than the exception. In the nature of the case, the school must have obedience as its corner-stone if it is to be useful. On the other hand, individual and social control and initiative are of equal importance. The playground, then, if it is to accomplish its first duty, if it is to meet the deeper need of the times, must be a democracy.

This does not mean that there shall be no freedom in the school, nor that there shall be no control in the playground. It does mean that where there is no obedience in the school, and where there is no freedom in the playground, each has failed at its vital point. The schoolmaster must, in the final analysis, be an autocrat. The playground director in final analysis must be a carrier of the voice of the whole; that is, he must lead, rather than command, activities.

Free play is a misnomer, if by it we mean uncontrolled play,

but the control is and must be other than that of the school-master. It must be that control which springs from the necessity of all having freedom. The true play director is the carrier of social tradition, not only those traditions which carry the form of play, dances, ceremony, and games, but even more than this, those traditions which prevent the strong from trampling on the weak, that give to each equal opportunity.

The vision of "Smiling Joe" then stands for us to-night as a symbol of the world achievement of organized social sympathy and a deep appreciation of the meaning of childhood.

The playground movement represents training for self-direction. It is not a special problem for those of the north, south, east, or west; the rich or the poor; for those who live in the city any more than it is for those who live in the country. It is the answer to a fundamental need of human nature, the importance of which is being peculiarly emphasized by the present epoch of human progress.