No. 47

Play and Playgrounds

BY

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If he steals aught the whilst this play is playing,
I will pay the theft.—HAMLET

Playground and Recreation Association of America
1 Madison Avenue, New York City

Price, Ten Cents

Reprinted from a leaflet
of the American Civic Association by
THE PLAYGROUND ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
1 Madison Ave., New York City

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For fuller details of the views expressed in this pamphlet see
Play and Education, by Joseph Lee. Macmillan Co., 1915

PLAY AND PLAYGROUNDS

I. WHY HAVE PLAYGROUNDS?

THE thing that most needs to be understood about play is that it is not a luxury but a necessity. It is not simply something that a child *likes* to have; it is something that he *must* have if he is ever to grow up. It is more than an essential part of his education; it is an essential part of the law of his growth, of the process by which he becomes a man at all.

You cannot watch a child playing without being convinced that the thing that he is doing is serious. Whether it is a baby trying to put his toe into his mouth, a boy climbing on a chair, with varied and nerve-destroying results in the nature of what he will afterwards learn to call "ground and lofty tumbling," or a little girl treating the diseases of her dolls—or whatever else the child is doing—you will see, if you watch his face, that he is giving his whole mind to it, and is as much absorbed as you become in your most serious pursuits. In truth, the play of children, in the main, is not play at all in our grown-up sense of the word. It is play in the sense of being spontaneous, agreeable, undertaken for its own sake and not for an ulterior object; it is not play in the sense of being mere relaxation or diversion or a matter of secondary importance.

It is true that children's play is not always serious. *Non semper tendit arcum Apollo,* which, being interpreted, means that even Mr. Roosevelt cannot be strenuous all the time; and children also do sometimes relax and indulge in play in the grown-up sense. They distinguish it under the name of "fooling." But the characteristic play of childhood is not of this sort.

Play is a serious matter to the child. And the child is right. Nature's purpose as declared in the play instinct is a serious one. It is the most serious and vital purpose she has in regard to him. This message that gradually unfolds itself in him, this set of sailing directions, that we lump together under the name of the play instinct, constitutes not merely a prescription of a useful regimen; it is a part, the finishing and crowning part, of nature's law of growth. The growth of the individual, as of the race, is to a vital extent growth through action. The creature

becomes what he is as a result of what he does. Nature decrees certain activities and builds the body around them. She makes sure that we shall be fit for her purpose by putting the purpose inside and hammering us into shape against it. The play instinct is like the tune put into a piano organ, only that it builds the organ as it goes along. As the physiologists say, *La fonction fait l'organe.* It would almost seem as if the child's own use of language, in the importance he always assigns to the verb, indicates an insight into the way he himself is made; as if he were speaking partly for himself when he calls the cow the "moo," the dog the "bow-wow," and the sheep the "baa." He seems to prophesy that the animal is an embodied activity, as he himself is, to have divined that the cat is built around the verb to catch, that the wolf is an animated conjugation of the verb to seize—the one an animated claw, the other a living pincers—as surely as the torpedo boat is the death-carrying shark, or the locomotive engine the puller of trains. Only, in the one case the instrument is made from the outside *for* its purpose; in the other case it is made from the inside *by* it.

And of the activities that build the child or the animal an important part is conscious activities directed from the mind. So that the creature is built not only by his action but by his conscious action. He is built by himself. We are all self-made in this most literal sense.

And the name given to this conscious part of the action by which the creature is formed, to this portion of the purpose of Nature in regard to him that she has entrusted to himself to carry out, is *play.* Play is a part of the same great law of life and growth in obedience to which the child is here at all, the same law that makes the buds open and the grass come up. It is the voice in which Nature speaks when she tells the child what he is to be. The boy in his play is obeying, in most literal sense, the injunction whispered continually to every fiber in his body: "Be a man." Thus play represents in education Nature's prescribed course. What we may choose to do in school or elsewhere is an elective, very valuable in providing that we shall grow up wise and useful, fitted to our particular surroundings. Play represents the vital part without which we cannot grow up at all.

Many people who have realized the importance of children's play think that it requires no special provision, for the very reason that it is so instinctive. They assume that the satisfaction of so universal an instinct is inevitable. But it is not inevitable. Eating is a universal instinct among healthy people, but there is such a thing as starvation. The impulse is inevitable, in the one case as in the other, but there may be nothing there to meet it, or what is there may be not food but poison. Play requires its appropriate objects—tools, medium, partner, playmates; and these things are not self-providing. The mother is the first playmate, as well as the first source of material sustenance. But mothers do not always survive childbirth, and the loss is almost as heavy in the one capacity as in the other. People sometimes speak as if the child were capable of evolving his own world out of nothing. He is perhaps a little better at doing so than grown-ups, but even he may find the task too hard for him—as a man may have the playing instinct of a Paderewski and yet not be able to condense a piano out of thin air by the sheer force of his ability to use it if it were only there.

So, when you think of your own childhood and remember that playing was as instinctive as breathing, and that, as it seems to you in retrospect, you always found

plenty of chance to play without any special provision being made for that purpose, remember also that there was room to play and things and other children to play with, and consider whether there may not be children in our modern cities or on lonely country farms less fortunately placed. And sometimes even good conditions can be improved.

And, besides the children with no playground, there are the children with a bad playground, those in whom the play instinct has become not stifled, but perverted; children whose growth is in consequence twisted and deformed. The whole question of juvenile law-breaking—or at least nine-tenths of it—is a question of children's play. As Judge Lindsay has told us, a boy who breaks the law is, in nine cases out of ten, not a criminal. He is obeying an instinct that is not only legitimate but vital, and which, if it finds every lawful channel choked up, will seek an outlet at the next available point. The boy has no especial desire to come in conflict with the laws and usages of civilized society. He shows, it is true, in most cases, no morbid or precocious aversion to doing so. If there is a man clothed in dignity and a blue coat especially hired to chase you if you will only take the necessary means to gain his interest—*and if there is nothing else to do*—it is a wasting of opportunities, a flying in the face of Providence, as it were, not to make the most of what fortune so considerately sends. But tag is not the only game, and the policeman is not the only one who knows it. Nor is the avenger of the outraged bell-wire his only substitute. Give a boy a chance at football, basketball, hockey, or "the game"; give him an opportunity to perform difficult and dangerous feats on a horizontal bar, on the flying-rings, or from a diving-board; and the policeman will need a gymnasium himself to keep his weight down. This is not theory, but is the testimony you will get from any policeman or schoolmaster who has been in a neighborhood before and after a playground was started there.

Is play a necessity? Yes, if the boy lives and is a whole boy. If he is above ground, and the best part has not been starved quite out of him, play there is certain to be, if not in one form then in another.

The "boy problem," as we call it, is really the grown-up problem. The boy is all right. He breaks our laws, but he does so in obedience to a law that is older than ours, a law that has never failed to get its way or else to impose a penalty —and to collect it. The penalty, as is the way with such, is collected of the victim. It is being collected now in our jails and penitentiaries, in weakened and perverted lives; the normal and inevitable results of allowing the best force that Nature has put into the child, the force that was meant to build him up and make a man of him, to go to waste or to be turned into abnormal or anti-social channels.

Against the deeper law it is we who are the transgressors. "They reason ill who leave me out," may be said of Nature as well as of the spirit. And when "the children were left out in the planning of our cities," when we closed Nature's path against the growing child, we made it mathematically certain that he should seek some other path or cease to grow at all. If opportunity for play is denied, and by just so far as it is denied, stunting and perversion are the absolutely inevitable results.

What constitutes an opportunity for play? It is different at different ages. Let us take each age by itself and see what are its demands and how they can be met.

II. WHAT TO HAVE

1. FOR CHILDREN UNDER SIX

A. WORKABLE MATERIAL

If you see a child under six playing in a city street, the chances are that if he is doing anything besides running about and squealing, he is sitting on a curbstone playing with the dirt in the gutter. And it is an even chance that he has a broken bottle or a tomato can which he first fills and then empties out on the sidewalk or on the steps of the house, and then, after some study and manipulation of the output, fills again.

Now that child is doing something universal, something that all children want to do; and from him we can learn about all there is to know about playthings and play material for children of his age. The dirt is the important thing. But it is not its dirtiness that attracts. He is too young to appreciate that. On the sea-beach, or where the masons have left a pile of sand in the street, you will find the same child doing the same thing. What he wants is material, material to work in, material that he can use, something that will be docile, responsive to his hand and mind, something plastic, not with a definite form or preconception of its own, but ready to do what he tells it.

First, if he is very small or has no receptacle to put it in, he will take a handful of the dirt or sand and simply lift it up and let it drop.

Next he will want to hold a form given by his hands.

For this purpose the material should be a little damp, as in the mud-pie. And soon the child will use box-covers or other molds for shaping it.

A sand-box is accordingly the center of the playground for this age, and such playgrounds are often called sand-gardens.

But sand on sand is nothing. Note the child's use of the sidewalk or steps. One needs an operating table, some hard, flat surface, where the phenomenon can be isolated, and where pies can be put and seen. There should accordingly be a shelf, formed by the cover folded back horizontally or otherwise.

Besides the dirt and the sidewalk there was the tomato can. Tin pails and spoons have a fairy-like tendency to vanish. Often the children will bring them for themselves, and also the box-covers to serve as molds.

From sand the child goes on to demand material of many other kinds. Second in importance come blocks. These should be brick-shaped, not fantastic ready-made towers and pinnacles. For still what is wanted is not something that you have made for him, but a chance to make something for himself—material that he can use, on which he can impress his own character and his own thought. A good size is that of the real brick. Blocks small enough to be carried conveniently and unostentatiously in the pocket are apt to fade insensibly away in districts where children are required to furnish the kindling wood.

Then comes paper-folding and sewing of all kinds, and clay modeling. Children love to use their hands—to make, build, construct, mold, dissect. As the cat conjugates catch, we conjugate the infinitely more suggestive verb manipulate. The story of the hand has been the story of the mind, the story of man; and the child's instinct takes the old road as naturally as the fish swims or the young bird learns to fly.

B. THINGS

Besides material there should be toys, or at least a variety of things to use and play with—little sticks, preferably colored, to stick up in the sand and make a garden, little bits of wood for fences and walls. Children will play with almost anything, and except for a few old favorites, almost anything seems equally good. Stevenson, the child seer, has spoken well for them in this as in so much besides:

"The world is so full of a number of things
I think we should all be as happy as kings."

A very practical lady, who carried on the sand-gardens in Boston for nearly twenty years, generally went around to the toy shops and bought whatever they were selling off. Children like to drag almost anything that makes a noise. Another child in a cart best answers this requirement. Anything suggesting a horse is acceptable. Driving-reins with bells are apt to give satisfaction. Children at this age begin, also, to use other things that will be mentioned in the next section.

C. DRAMATIC PLAY

The play of this age is dramatic. It consists largely in impersonating. The mind first learns things by getting inside of them, by being what it studies. Children under six illustrate the Pythagorean doctrine of being many creatures in turn; only that in their transmigrations they take on the bodies of trees and boats and fire-engines instead of being limited to the confines of the animal kingdom. The element of impersonation colors almost all the play of this period. Children not only play doll and horse and soldier, but in their building they make houses and palaces and subways, and use them. Accordingly, their playthings must be plastic to the mind as well as to the hand. Literal resemblance to the thing personified is of no importance. A clothes-pin with a rag around it is a good doll because it has the first quality wanted in a doll—that of being uncommitted. A good, efficient, able-bodied doll, like the American girl, is at home in any situation in life, from princess to kitchen maid, to which she may be called. And one doll in her time plays many parts. She has got to, or lose her job.

An element of suggestion is good—hair on the head-end of a doll, a horse's head on the top of the hobby-horse. But a very little suggestion is enough; just a nail to hang things on—like those plots that Shakespeare borrowed for his plays. And when the nail comes out—the hair or the horse's head comes off—the romance usually survives, unimpaired.

D. SOCIAL

The play of this age is social. Children like most to play in a circle. Being in a circle is in itself almost a game to them. Witness that marvel known as "Ring-around-a-rosy." What is it? Sheer social sense plus a feeling that something—

a grown-up person doesn't know exactly what—is going on. And the society of their contemporaries is not merely what they like; it is what they need—for the sake of rest, if for nothing else. A boy of four who has for years had the whole care of the family on his shoulders—the detailed direction and supervision of the life and movements of his father and mother, the servants and the stranger within the gates—such a boy needs sometimes to relax, to lay aside the cares of office and unbend. On the playground he has his opportunity. There he is among his peers. He is no longer required to control the order of events. He finds others entirely ready to relieve him of all care and anxiety in the matter.

So that play at home is not enough. We need playgrounds even in the country, perhaps especially in the country. Plato says that all children of each neighborhood, between the ages of three and six, ought to meet daily, under the direction of nurses, for orderly play. (Laws, vii, 794.)

This is, I believe, the earliest mention of the kindergarten. And some such meeting-place must be provided in the country as well as in the city, under the direction either of nurses or teachers, trained as Plato and Froebel have desired. The best head of a playground for this age is a kindergartner—a person, that is to say, trained in applying the ideas of the man of genius who has shown us our children as they are, skilled in methods of suggestion to them and in recognizing when to leave them alone.

2. BIG INJUN

Next comes the period of self-assertion: the period when the child revolts from make-believe and longs for something real; the age of investigation, of mischief, of skepticism, and therefore of learning, of the critical, clear intelligence demanding proofs; the age of contest, of self-measurement against others and against the world. This phase of development begins in both boys and girls at about the age of six, and its characteristic manifestations become intensified, especially in boys, during the succeeding five or six years. In some respects the characteristics of this period seem, indeed, to be at their height at about the age of fourteen to sixteen, although another element has then entered and taken first place—the element of loyalty that we must speak of later on.

REALITY

The keynote of this period is the desire for reality. What has driven make-believe out of the child's life is the love of that which shall not be make-believe, the longing for objective truth, the hunger for hard-pan. The mind has passed from the age of intuition to the age of experiment. It has, sufficiently for its present needs, conceived of the essence of the principal factors in its world, and is now bent upon establishing the frontiers, the edges, of things. The child feels a necessity to rub and scrape and bang himself up against the world, to see and realize in most feeling and concrete way what it—and what he himself—is made of.

MISCHIEF AND DISCIPLINE

It is the search for reality that is the essential element in the love of mischief. The reason a boy wants to turn on the water, to play with the matches, with firecrackers, guns, horses, sailboats—the reason why in everything that he selects to

do he seems to show such wonderful and unerring instinct for precisely the most troublesome, noisy, and generally objectionable thing within his restricted range of choice—is simply because it is the noisy and troublesome things that have the most life in them. The boy is out for big game; it is the thing with the most reality in it that best satisfies his need. He is man the experimenter, man the conqueror, coming into his kingdom. Air, fire, water, tools—with edges to them—trees, animals; the sea, the earth, and all that in them is, are his to use if he can find the secret, discover the nature and the working of them.

This interpretation of the tendency to mischief does not mean that it ought to be allowed free scope on a playground or anywhere else. On the contrary, such permission would falsify the child's reckoning and defeat one of the objects of his search. One of the things he is testing is the reality of your social laws and institutions. He is trying to get a rise out of you, to ascertain your reaction under the different stimuli that he applies. If you look with bland and equal complaisance upon harmless exuberance and upon rough and flagrant infringement of the interests of peace and property and order, he must inevitably conclude that the two lines of conduct are equally worthy and acceptable. And what is interesting to observe is that he will not be pleased by the discovery. A child will cry when he scorches his finger or falls through the ice, but he would not care to live in a world of water that was not wet or fire that did not burn. The child's passionate search for reality must not be baffled or misled by any tampering with the buoys and landmarks that society has placed to mark the safe and successful course. Neither, on the other hand, must it be checked and snubbed or merely neglected. It is a manifestation of the law of his growth, indicating its main current and direction at this particular period of his life. As such it should be guided and utilized.

OUTINGS

Intellectually, this is the age of curiosity, when, as Frœbel has pointed out, the boy turns over every stone to see what is under it, climbs a tree in the back yard to look over the fence and discover a new domain, returns from a walk with mice and spiders and other weird and distressful specimens in his pockets. A child of this age should accordingly be in the country, especially in summer. For it is in the country that the child's world, the counterpart and fulfillment of this prophetic curiosity that possesses him, is to be found. The summer tide of childhood should set away from cities to summer camps, country week, expeditions to the beach and farm; and play provision should largely take these forms. A city playground can successfully carry on a summer camp of its own—as our Civic League playground in Boston did—during the dead season from the middle of July to the end of August, when (especially among children over ten years old) activity on the playground is apt to languish.

COUNTRY IN TOWN

If the child cannot be brought to the country, the country should be brought to him. Summer playgrounds for small children should be, so far as possible, in parks on the grass, under the shade of trees. (It was formerly supposed that children kill the grass, but it has been demonstrated that, except when closely concentrated, they do not; and "Keep off the grass" signs are now banished, at

least so far as children are concerned, in all civilized communities.) Nor is there any need that playgrounds specifically so called should be so hideous and devoid of all growing things as they almost always are. Trees certainly take very little room and are useful for goals and bases. There can sometimes be shrubs in the corners. I shall speak of children's gardens a little later on. Mr. Olmsted's designs for playgrounds in Chicago have recognized the fact that play and ugliness are not inseparable.

NATURE TEACHING

A playground in summer may well combine the features of a vacation school. Children, even in the country, do not, as a rule, get the best out of their comradeship with nature without somebody to furnish at least an occasional hint or clue. A child cannot be expected to improvise all the discoveries of science for himself. In the absence of an interested parent with leisure to give, a teacher of some other sort is necessary to the best development and fruition of the play impulse on its intellectual side. At the very least, a teacher can do something to stimulate and direct the passion for the collecting of stones and shells, of bones and bugs and butterflies that is characteristic of this period. He can conduct walks of exploration, for which children have a strong taste. If the teaching takes the form of a vacation school there should be order and discipline within it, if only for the satisfaction of the children. As I have indicated above, the child craves not a wobbly universe but one with a frame and a backbone inside of it.

EXPERIMENTATION

We speak of nature study, but "study," at least in the old-fashioned sense, is not exactly the word for the sort of contact with Nature to which the child's search for reality impels him. There is nothing cold or platonic about his relation to his favorite playfellow. He wants to touch, to handle, to experiment. He is a chemist, physicist, botanist, who is truly wedded to the laboratory method. And he has good reason for believing in it. When we say that a child likes to *monkey* with a thing (just as we might have said of children of the dramatic age that they delight to *ape* the life about them), we are paying unconscious tribute to the authentic derivation of his favorite method. It is these tendencies first to ape and afterwards to monkey that are at the bottom of the intellectual superiority of the particular family to which we are proud to belong.

CRUELTY

In making the acquaintance of living things, the tendency to handle, to experiment, often turns to the killing and torturing of animals and insects and to the pulling up of plants, but such manifestation are not the only kind, or the kind from which the child derives the greatest satisfaction. It has been shown by Mr. Hodge, of Worcester,* that boys can, even in a few weeks, be converted from killing frogs and torturing spiders to a sympathetic study of their ways of life. Truth, a knowledge of facts, is still the aim behind the particular manifestation; and, in boys quite as much as in men, knowledge, where any living thing is concerned, means sympathy.

* See the pamphlet on "The Country Boy," by Mr. George E. Johnson, Superintendent of Schools, Hyde Park, Mass., printed by the Massachusetts Civic League, E. F. Hartman, Secretary, 3 Joy Street, Boston.

NURTURE: ANIMALS

The nurturing instinct is as strong in most boys as it is in girls, and the playground can develop it. Boys are usually very tender with little children where there is opportunity and right suggestion. The familiar experiment of putting the toughest boy in charge of some of the apparatus used by the little children is apparently always successful. At Seward Park in New York they used to have rabbits and pigeons, and also on the Civic League Playground in Boston. Throwing crumbs to the fish is a classic amusement not only in the Tuileries Gardens, but in many other parks and playgrounds the world over.

GARDENS

The appeal of life to life, of the growing thing to the child, is very strong, and every playground should, if it be in any way possible, have a row of children's gardens around the edge—a garden of twenty square feet for each child. The six inches next the fence, where the vines grow, may be specially supervised by the teacher because of its public importance. But the rest should be left to the children's own care, at least to such an extent that natural law—the law of reward and retribution, of reaping as you have sown and not otherwise—shall be allowed to teach its lesson. When a bug comes along and starts eating the leaves of the plants, the teacher must have the strength of mind still to keep her hands off; she must learn that that bug is a better teacher than she is, and has been longer in the business; that he represents Nemesis and is inculcating a lesson that we cannot get along without.

The teaching on the gardens can be made a part of the children's regular school work, and the vegetables and flowers may be taken home; so that this feature helps to connect the playground both with the home and with the school. Home gardens, if you can provide the necessary stimulus and supervision, are better still.

SLOYD

The constructive impulse which in small children finds its expression in playing with sand or blocks now develops into paper-folding, clay-modeling, sewing, carpentry, making baskets, and a great variety of manual occupations. Its characteristic bias at this age is the same as the bias of the whole nature, namely, toward reality of achievement. If you can introduce some form of sloyd work during the summer you will meet the true play impulse of the children more squarely, perhaps, than in any other way. There is often a chance on the playground to carry further than can be done in the classroom the fundamental sloyd principle of reality. The small children will be glad to serve the state by carrying off stones and rubbish in their carts. The bigger ones can help to make benches and fences and back-stops, to shingle the roof of the house or the shelter, to fit up the rooms, and to lay out football fields and diamonds. Boys are sometimes encouraged to make window-boxes for themselves and others. A boy that I knew did all the splicing for the swings, and has since taken the course on the Massachusetts nautical training ship and become a full-fledged sailor. In country places much more ambitious things can be done. In Andover, Massachusetts, Mr. George E. Johnson,* in the best country vacation school I have heard of, had the boys first cut and haul the logs and then build the log cabin in which the school's final exhibition was held.

* Now professor in the education division at Harvard.

WORK

Children should not be expected to do much of the drudgery of taking care of the ground, at least not without payment, any more than grown-up people would like to do the same for their own public streets and squares. A system of time checks similar to that in use at the George Junior Republic—the checks to be used in paying the club dues, and, perhaps later, in the purchase of catchers' gloves and similar desirable objects—was tried with some success on a Boston playground.

CONTEST

But the child's most passionate search for reality during this period of which such search is the keynote is for reality in himself. He wants to be somebody—and to prove it. It is a necessity with him that he should weigh and measure himself against others and against the world. "I can run faster than you can." "I can throw a stone further than you can." "I can jump higher, climb better, dive deeper and come up dryer, than you can." "My father knows more than your father." "My uncle is richer than your uncle." "My big brother can lick your big brother." (He may not have a big brother, but the first rule is: "Thou shalt not refuse a contest or admit an inferiority;" and he will stick to it. The social power of unblushing assertion receives its recognition and development during this period.) Such and such like are the preliminary pleadings through which the question is narrowed to a final and definite issue.

The form of the play, however, is not usually that of the dry abstracted contest, which determines only superiority in a single form of excellence, unconnected with achievement. Boys will occasionally run a race—"from here to the corner, one ter three go." But there is not enough real life in a mere demonstration of speed to hold their interest very long. The desired reality is found chiefly in games or stunts: not in running faster, but in catching or getting away; not in throwing straighter, but in hitting a bird or a squirrel, hitting your competitor with a snowball or throwing him out at first; not in lifting a greater weight, but in knocking your adversary down, or reaching a particular branch or window that he dare not climb to.

Because of inherited instincts, and of the stage of growth reached by the muscles and nerve centers, the elements of the games of contest that characterize this period will be chasing, hunting, wrestling, throwing at an object, hitting things with a stick, and climbing. The standard games, accordingly, are the chasing games:—tag, hill-dill, hi-spy, and later prisoner's base (the boy in these games having a marked tendency to pounce upon the quarry and throw him down); and a great variety of running games of sides, such as "trees," "white men and Indians," "robbers and policemen," and the like; throwing and hitting games, such as bean-bag, ring-toss, duck-on-a-rock, battle ball, hockey and baseball; and there will be all kinds of chasing, wrestling, pushing and fighting of a more or less casual kind. Climbing is an ancestral habit that now strongly asserts itself; and I have found that where climbing and chasing can be combined, as in what may be named "monkey tag" ("jaguar and monkeys," we used to call it) a very popular game results. Ladders about seven feet from the ground, forming at least one possible circuit with various ways of access and of hasty exit, and with plenty of soft sand underneath, answer the minimum requirement of such a game. I have not fully tried this experiment upon a public playground, and cannot testify whether it is reasonably safe.

GAMES

The great games are those situated where several streams of vital interest intersect, like a good piece of real estate at the corner of two business streets. At the age we are considering, the dominant games must lie on the great thoroughfare of Self-assertion; but as we pass down that we come to two or three notable corners and observe the great structures reared thereon. There is baseball firmly planted where the impulses of throwing at a mark, striking with a stick and running all meet; there is football where chasing, wrestling, accurate throwing come together; basketball, with chasing and throwing at a mark; and hockey, with chasing and striking. In all of these there may be also team play, greatest element of all—to be spoken of later on—but their appeal even to the Big Injun age is a cumulative and a mighty one. These are the games that you ought to have on your playground, if you can. But supposing there is not space for these best games? What shall we do then? There are a hundred others that are appropriate to this age. (See the many excellent books of games, and see the classified list in the Playground for 1917.) But our first aim must be to find not a hundred games, but one. It is essential to any one carrying on a playground for children at this period of development to recognize the fact that, though different games hold sway at different times of the year, nevertheless at any one season for any given set of children one game, and only one, is going to be dominant and to command nine-tenths of their attention and their zeal.

This one-game tendency increases as the characteristics of this particular age develop. The child may, it is true, carry on other games of a subordinate nature—amusements of his lighter moments, avocations in which he will occasionally unbend. But the main business of life, the real work in which you engage on your way to school, in recess, on your way home, during the afternoon, and after supper, will always be, in any particular "crowd" at any given time, the one special game which happens at that moment to be in the ascendant. The morning that the first boy plays marbles, you will see a hundred others, though there was not one the day before. The same is true of the first top and the first baseball, and so on throughout the year. The reason for this extraordinary unanimity is, I suppose, partly in the instinct of imitation; but there is also a deeper reason. Sir Thomas Malory, in his Morte d'Arthur, tells of a knight who was noted for killing dragons and strange monsters, but was not much good at overcoming other knights. Now a boy has no use for a knight whose talent takes that particular form. He does not care to excel in a game that nobody else is playing. His soul can find satisfaction only in winning, or in at least striving to win, at the game that everybody plays. His reason is the same that turns the American man toward business. We do not care for walkovers. In England politics may be the game; in Germany it may be war. Here it is running banks and railroads and their like, and those are accordingly the pursuits that have the greatest attraction for the strong.

Another reason for trying to give to one game a permanent popularity is that you are doing well if you can make even one game thoroughly successful. The test of true success is not in what the boys will do while some older person is playing with them; nor are the requirements entirely satisfied by what they will do on the playground in groups in which such leader is not present. The real test is what they will play in the streets and on empty lots; what game you can start that will really take up the mind of boydom throughout your neighborhood. When the Civic League provided hand-ball courts at the North End Park in Boston, it made a hand-ball court of every blank wall in that district. And anybody who will make

prisoner's base thoroughly the fashion in any city (as it now is in Philadelphia) will make a playground of every street not too much given over to the intruding interests of traffic.

What is your one game to be? It is not easy, especially in the latter part of the period we are considering, to give to any other than the great ball games the true all-persuasive popularity; and yet in a city conditions are often such that some of these games, baseball especially, are impracticable for the great majority. What will you substitute? Of course, if some particular game holds sway in the neighborhood, and is adapted to the playground, you will be wise to make use of that. Children are very conservative, and it would be an easier undertaking to stem the tide of fashion in Easter hats than to revolutionize their notions as to which game is really the one. If it is a new game, the one you like best yourself will often be the best to teach. As to the general question of a good substitute for the great ball games, the answer has not yet been found, though the games of smaller area, with bigger balls, are coming pretty fast. The solution, when we find it, will not be in a hundred games, but in one or two for each season of the year.

INSTRUCTORS

The difficulty of giving to any game, especially to any new game, the true popularity and vogue that a game, to serve its best function, ought to have, results from a marked characteristic of the age that we are now considering. There is a critical attitude of mind, together with a fierce individualism in children (especially in boys) between six and eleven years old, that in many cases makes anarchy almost inevitable if they are left wholly to themselves. A boarding-school teacher of my acquaintance, whose special province had been looking after boys of this age during their play hours, told me that the only kind of definite occupation he had ever known them capable of carrying on if left to themselves was to set upon one of their number and tease him. This seemed to be the highest social institution they were able to support. To ascertain whether any group of children, your own for instance, needs a leader, do not simply look back upon the days of your boyhood—the days when there was always snow in winter and the fish always bit—but watch them and see what they actually do—Wednesdays and Fridays and all. You will perhaps find that their life is less strenuous and much less well filled than you had supposed.

A boy, it has been well said, is an engine with the steam up. He is also at this Big Injun period, to a large extent, an engine without a track and without an engineer. He is possessed by a restless force and a necessity of doing something—and something, moreover, that shall have real life in it—but is left with an inadequate power of finding out, in the paths of peaceful life at least, just what that something is.

It is because of this extreme individualism that a play leader of some sort is necessary, unless among a group of children in which there is a strong tradition of some good game carried on by the older ones and taught to the younger as they become old enough to play it. It is undoubtedly well that children should teach each other, that they should evolve their own social order, and, to some extent, invent their own games. But because self-help is a good way, it does not follow that we should trust to it altogether. The process is apt to be an expensive one to the neighbors; and it is one which, if allowed to drag on too long, is even more

expensive to the children themselves. It is especially at this age that Satan gets in his most effective work in finding mischief for idle hands to do; for it is the age at which hands feel most intensely their vocation to be doing something, and find least internal guidance as to what is to be done. The play leader, on the other hand, if he remembers that his function is to abolish himself, to make his own presence and suggestion unnecessary, will do but little harm and may be the means of doing immense good and of preventing many and often fatal mistakes and the waste of precious time.

TEACHING AND ORIGINALTY

People sometimes assume that the amount of originality is necessarily in inverse proportion to the amount of teaching. I believe that, if the teaching be judicious, the opposite is true. Originality works not in a vacuum, but upon data presented from the outside. Learning a new game is to a child not a debilitating, but a liberating experience, opening up new opportunities for the exercise of invention. The country child is not weakened, but set free when his parent or teacher points out the riches that lie around him, and so unlocks the door between him and his mother nature, with her great and varied storehouse of those very treasures that are prophesied in his own instinctive interests, and in contact with which his happiest development is to be found. The scope for the exploring of new regions is proportional, not to the degree of ignorance, but, on the contrary, to the length of the frontier already established in the mind. A child who has been to the kindergarten will be more capable of inventing games than one who has not, just as the educated man is not less but more resourceful than the uneducated. The more the circle widens, the longer its circumference becomes. There is no fence around the universe; its borders recede as you approach them. Provided plenty of time is left in which the frontier can be pushed forward, provided children are left in their actual playing as much as possible to themselves, the teaching that enables them to play will enlarge the scope of their originality. The great national games are a most important part of our inheritance, but they are not evolved by each set of children; they are imparted, taught, by one set to another. The same is true of the games of the smaller children—London-bridge, puss-in-the-corner, and the rest. They are the fruits of the slow accumulations of all the generations of children in the past; the precious legacy of eternal childhood to the children of the present day. And they are not a legacy that comes down in the blood or in the spinal column, but one that is handed on partly by one child to another, but chiefly through the teaching of their elders. Especially where the chain has been broken, where, through untoward circumstances, the tradition has been lost, is it necessary that the inheritance should be passed on through outside channels lest in such cases child-civilization revert to the barbarism of the centuries before the great games were evolved. If you are unwilling that children should be taught games, you ought first to try it on yourself. Foreswear golf and tennis, skees and yachts and automobiles, waltzes and whist, existing music, pictures, architecture, and invent your own games and playthings for yourself!

As a matter of practical experience, the opinion of those who have done actual playground work is unanimous to the effect that leadership on a playground for children between six and eleven years old is a necessity. The child of this period is not a finished creature, but an incomplete and partial one. The elder brother or

leader is his necessary complement. It is the case of the baby and the mother over again.

A play leader costs something, it is true, but there is danger of our being pennywise in this matter. In a big city especially, where the playground costs many thousands of dollars, it is poor economy to save the salary of a man or woman who could increase its effectiveness tenfold—and that is a very modest estimate, as experience has shown.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF PLAY

Before you decide to leave any set of children of the Big Injun age inexorably to their own devices, without a playground properly managed and equipped (upon the theory perhaps that out of evil good will eventually come), consider the issues that are at stake. The likelihood that such neglect will lead to lawless courses I have spoken of; but lawlessness is perhaps the lesser of the two dangers which in such case we necessarily incur. The greater of the two is not the perversion, but the entire loss of play experience and the training that it gives.

To appreciate what the boy loses who does not play with the other boys, we must recognize the superlative standard of effort and achievement which play alone can exact. The discipline is more severe than can possibly be elsewhere attained. A small boy throws a ball so as to curve in a way which a few years ago was thought to be impossible; another small boy hits the ball with a round stick, while a third urchin in the distance turns his back, runs as fast as he can, and finally twists round and catches the ball over his shoulder. When you consider how small a part of the curve that the ball was making this third boy saw before he started to run, and how accurately he had to judge where it was coming down, you will see that the feat is not an easy one. Try it, and if not an expert you will understand still better. The concentration of effort is such as not even the fiercest schoolmaster of the old school ever dreamed of exacting or would have supposed it possible to exact. A boy who is almost turning himself inside out in his efforts, but who fails in any point of the game, is spoken to by his companions in language that I will not venture to repeat and with a severity which no grown person is sufficiently hard-hearted even to attempt. The strenuousness of his effort is no paliation of his offense. There is no plea that "little Johnnie did his best." The standard is inexorable. Good intentions don't go on the ball field; you must deliver the goods.

It is the thing you do the hardest that produces the most enduring effects; your deepest experience leaves the deepest crease. It is not in the school-room, but on the ball field that the boy's real life, the part of it that is most serious to him, is passed.

THE REAL LAWBREAKERS

If by denying him all legitimate outlet for the play impulse, or the guidance which in a less artificial age would be furnished by the sports and by the primitive and imitable pursuits of his elders, you drive the child to mischief and lawbreaking as a substitute, it is you that are the real lawbreaker and not the child.

Never believe, whatever the evidence superficially considered may seem to prove, that a child's impulse toward self-assertion is ever in itself a lawless one. On the contrary it is, always and forever, the most lawful thing there is. What a boy feels down underneath all these noisy forms of self-assertion, the thing that

impels him to come out at all hazards with some deed or word that shall be all his own, is the dim groping conviction that this as yet formless and inarticulate self of his, however despised and disregarded by others, is not in truth despicable, but worthy of infinite respect; that it is a new thing under the sun; that he bears within himself a new and authentic revelation of the law—a revelation which it is his business now and evermore to declare.

And the boy feels, although he feels it unconsciously and would be utterly incapable of putting his meaning into words, that it is by such obedience to his inner self alone that he can attain his true and normal growth; that with him it is now or never; that if certain essential qualities of his nature—address, courage, manliness—are ever to get their development, they must get it now. In the life of a human being, as in that of any growing thing, there is a time for all things. There is a time for the leaf, a time for the flower, and a time for the fruit. If the boy does not do daring and difficult things and does not measure himself against other boys in games and contests, he will never grow to be a man. The chance once missed will never come again.

To the boy both doors, the door of lawbreaking and the door of healthy play, are labeled "manliness." To him what lies behind is hidden. It is for us who know where each door leads to decide which of the two shall remain open and which shall be closed.

APPARATUS

The principle announced by the great English educator, Edward Thring, is a sound one. Whenever you can get a piece of wood or other inanimate object to do a certain piece of work for you, don't call upon the nerve tissue of your teachers to do that piece of work. Apparatus can largely meet the desire of the boy to show how great he is by the performance of marvelous feats. It has also the two other functions of serving to attract boys who may come to perform on the rings and stay to play a game, and of giving the shy boy who does not happen to belong to any particular gang something to do until he gets to be one of the playground crowd.

Not all of the apparatus, however, that one usually finds in an outdoor gymnasium is such as the children can, under ordinary circumstances, be induced to use. That part of it which they do use is principally that in the use of which the element of falling comes in. Little children like very much to run down a bank, and any kind of inclined plane is a very good piece of apparatus for children from the time they can walk. A board tilted up at one end is used in Japan in playgrounds especially provided for the soldiers' orphans. As the children get older, the plane can be tilted a little more and used as a slide. They will coast on it not only all winter, but all summer also. Sometimes it is a boy on a sled, sometimes a boy on a board, and sometimes just a boy. This piece of apparatus is perhaps not so popuar with the mothers as it is with the children. It should be made of maple or of some kind of metal, to avoid splinters. It is astonishing how small a coast a child will enjoy. I have seen a boy of four coast all the afternoon on a wedge of snow 1 foot high and 4 feet long.

Then come sliding poles, which should be made of metal. Every form of coasting appeals to children, including coasting on the waves, the favorite pastime of Hawaii, which I have seen extremely popular at a summer resort.

Very important is the old-fashioned tilt, with its development into the teeter ladder, which you hang under instead of sitting on top of it. Children should

never be allowed to stand on benches so as to reach the teeter ladders higher than they otherwise could do, and there should be plenty of sand underneath them. With these precautions I have not found them dangerous.

Swings are extremely popular. I have been to the Columbus Avenue Playground in Boston, on dark winter afternoons when the thermometer was in the neighborhood of twenty and the wind was driving the dust and cinders across the playground like a sand-storm in the desert, and I have rarely found an empty swing. There is some question as to how much swinging amounts to. Some people think it a form of sleep, but I believe that for most children it is largely an exercise of the imagination. The emotional appeal is a great part of the attraction in all these falling plays; and with the emotion the imagination also is stimulated. Swinging comes as near to foreign travel as one can get on a city playground surrounded by brick walls. I think it is partly the swinging motion that gives a certain amount of popularity to going hand over hand under a horizontal ladder and skipping one or two rungs. Giant strides are also good.

Then there is the swing that you hang under instead of sitting on it, namely, the trapeze. You jump to catch it from a platform three feet high reached by steps, and at the end of the swing let go and see how far you can jump.

This is perhaps the most popular apparatus. But the traveling rings are a close rival. Flying rings, with their great possibilities for weird revolving stunts, are a legitimate postgraduate course for the Big Injun in his higher stages of development. For the sake of stunts also, horizontal bars should be provided, vaulting horses are good, and parallel bars perhaps permissible if carefully watched. There should be a reasonably soft space of sand for tumbling—not merely of the casual and involuntary, but also of the more deliberate sort. Tan-bark will always become as hard as the conscience of the man who looks after it.

QUIET GAMES

A playground that is carried on in summer ought not to be wholly devoted to lively games. Even a child cannot put in ten hours a day at strenuous physical exercise. Besides the constructive work, nature study and gardening, that I have spoken of—sewing, clay modeling, paper-folding, sloyd, and the like—there should also be quiet sedentary games and occupations carried on in a shady place; and it is no great disadvantage if the place is indoors. Probably the most popular game for the bigger boys is checkers. The boys can make their own boards, and, by sawing a broomstick in sections, their own pieces. A bench 4½ feet long will seat two boys at a game, though perhaps the resulting stooping posture is not especially desirable.

3. AGE OF LOYALTY

At about eleven—sometimes as early as nine—comes the age of loyalty, the age of the group game and the gang. The Big Injun spirit has not indeed disappeared. It is, in fact, stronger than ever and still shows itself even in the great group games themselves; but it is now no longer the leading spirit. A mightier has come to take its place.

In the little round games of the dramatic age children get their first sense of social unity. At the Big Injun period the social sense seems to decline as the games become more individualistic and competitive; nevertheless, there is in the very maintenance of the rules of the game, whatever it is—in the carrying on of any game at all—a social organization involved. Then gradually within the games themselves the social instinct begins again to show; first, perhaps in the series game, the one in which the boys feel themselves to be not merely this boy and that boy, but a *string of boys* (as, for instance, in some forms of leap frog), all doing the same stunt in turn; then come loosely organized games of sides—first, of the "hill-dill," and later of the "prisoners' base" variety—and finally the great group games, in which the competition is not between individuals, but between groups of children, of which football is the greatest and the type. Running parallel to almost the whole series, is our great national game, suiting itself to every age, from the scrub game, at which the Big Injun seeks to stay in all the afternoon while the other boys hunt balls for him (the very happy hunting-ground of the Big Injun period), up through games of temporarily chosen sides to the regularly formed and organized teams—themselves perhaps representing a school or some other larger organism—in which each boy has his special part assigned, by the performance of which he renders his service to the whole.

These group games are, in my opinion, the best school of citizenship that exists. In playing these games the boy is not going through the forms of citizenship—learning parliamentary law, raising points of order and moving the previous question—he is being initiated into its essence, actually and in a very vivid way participating in the thing itself. He is undergoing the actual and habitual experience of losing the sense of his own individuality in that of a larger whole; experiencing citizenship, not learning about it.

The boy belongs to the football team during a game, and partakes of its consciousness, with an intensity hardly found in the associations of later life. The team has a nervous organism almost as tense as that of an individual, and (after one of those wonderful problems in arithmetic that the quarter-back gives out) it will strike on a given point with the combined power of its eleven constituent members—members in a true sense—with almost as complete a unity of impetus and of intention as that with which a trained boxer will strike with his fist. To the boy playing football this losing himself in common purpose is not a matter of self-sacrifice but of self-fulfillment. He is coming into his birthright, satisfying his human necessity of becoming part of a social or political whole. What is being born in that boy is man and citizen, man the politician; and it is my belief that in most instances this political or social man will get himself thoroughly and successfully born in no other way.

That is what the gang impulse means. We read every day of the evil doings of the gang; but the impulse that makes the gang is not a lawless impulse, but (here again) the most lawful thing there is. It is indeed a manifestation of the very spirit of law itself; it is the social spirit, the thing that all laws are intended to express. That it should lead the boy to lawlessness is not due to the perversity of the boy or to the evil nature of the spirit; it is due to our own perversity in denying to this most lawful impulse some lawful method of expression.

Therefore there must be on the playground provision, if possible, for these great national games which, with basketball and hockey filling in the winter

months, pretty nearly bring the year around—all except the period from the middle of July to the middle of September, when the boy ought, by good rights, to be relaxing in some more varied, vagrant and less strenuous pursuit.

The question of space, however, here confronts us. It is a national misfortune that our great game is one requiring a prairie for its accommodation. But substitutes are being found through the use of larger and softer balls and through games like volley ball that require less space. Football also may be made a most space-economizing game. It would be a great thing if the size of the official field could be made smaller. It would, I believe, improve the game even for college athletes by increasing the amount of scoring and making a score imminent at all times. With boys of fifteen or so I have found a field 25 yards long by 30 yards wide more popular than a large one, whenever they were playing for fun and without reference to the greatness and glory of playing like real collegians. At all events, practice may be carried on in a very small space indeed. One of the best boys' teams I have known was annually developed in the basement of a church 52 x 31 feet, less a stairway and six brick posts.

The gang spirit, and even the team spirit, does not however include the whole of loyalty. Besides being intensified, it must also be refined and enlarged. The head of a boys' institution once said to me: "When they first come in here they steal *from* the institute, later they steal *for* it." The sense of citizenship can be enlarged to include the whole playground, the whole school, and can be led on toward including the whole city. Boys can easily see that George Washington was playing the game and Benedict Arnold was not. Once the team sense is established, there is a possibility of making it inclusive. Specific lessons in property rights are taught by the children's gardens above referred to. A boy who has had his own hard-won harvest stolen has received new revelation of the meaning of law, and so of the larger social unit by which law is made and upheld.

And, as a means of teaching citizenship, the playground should be, as far as possible, self-governing. I have said a play leader is a necessity. Without him there is danger of a relapse into mere anarchy and chaos. But when, within the child himself, the social order once appears, when the bacillus of association is once introduced, let him, so far as possible, work out his own salvation. You may have to umpire prisoner's base or any new game of low vitality. Not so when the real virus has taken hold. When a baseball game among boys over twelve breaks up in a riot, let them fight it out; they are too fond of the game not to arrive eventually at some *modus vivendi.*

When the constituency becomes comparatively distinct as in a gymnasium, some sort of self-governing plan may succeed.

I repeat, because of its importance, that we are looking for games that will grow, for apparatus that will run itself, and for an instructor who is present when he is not there and not merely when he is.

4. GENERAL POINTS IN PLAYGROUND CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT AND LOCATION

A. AN ALL-ROUND PLAYGROUND

The more a playground combines different ages the better it will be. They attract each other. A kindergarten circle, especially, is a perennial source of interest to people of all ages. It is well that the family, boys and girls, little children and parents, should find interests and amusements together. The small parks in Chicago, which combine playgrounds for little children, wading-pools, indoor and outdoor gymnasiums for boys and men and for girls and women, ball fields, library, and buildings in which clubs can meet and dances can be held in the evening; and which have also a setting of shrubs and flowers, in most startling contrast to the hideousness of the average playground, exemplify this principle in a high degree. The same thing can be done by substituting the properly socialized school for the special recreation building.

B. CONSTRUCTION. (Compare what I have said above about apparatus)

I believe in fencing around a city playground. It helps to keep order and it makes the children feel that the playground is a real institution, a thing you can belong to. Without a fence they will all run to watch every fire engine that goes by. With a fence, though with so many openings as to form no impediment to doing the same thing, they follow the example of Admiral Hawkins—stay and play out the game. For the same reason, I believe in having a fence around the children's corner and another around the apparatus intended for the middle-sized boys.

For cities where land is very expensive, Rev. R. Kidner has made the suggestion (also independently made by Dr. Gulick) that the playground ought to be many stories high.

Every playground ought, if possible, to be flooded for skating in the winter. I have not mentioned skating under any of the different ages, but in truth it ought to be mentioned under each. Judging from actual observation, it seems to be far the most popular use to which playgrounds can be put. Hockey can be kept within bounds—to the satisfaction of the players and the safeguarding of the innocent public from wounds and sudden death—by means of a plank set up on edge and held by braces.

C. SEASON

Playgrounds should be carried on all the year round, at least for the bigger children. This makes possible the getting of a better man for the head, and it makes the work cumulative by keeping together during the winter a set of boys and girls who take a special pride and interest in the playground. For children under ten, April first to December first is the most important time.

D. HOURS

The hours should be afternoons after school, evenings in the fall and winter, a day of about seven hours on Saturday and in summer. If you have several people to divide the hours between them, the summer evening is an important time, especially where there are grown men who come to pitch quoits or play ball.

E. INSTRUCTORS

For children below thirteen, women are the best, and as the principal season for small children omits the winter months, school teachers can often do the work. Salaries are so different in different places that I refrain from committing myself on that point.

As for men instructors, graduates of the Young Men's Christian Association International Training School, at Springfield, Mass., are well trained in the principles of physical education, in gymnastics and in the team games, and make good leaders. One can sometimes get a very high-class man from a college, but, being the man you want, he is also wanted elsewhere, studies law in the mornings, and leaves for New York. The question of where to get leaders has not been solved.

Whoever you get, make him be there at the hours when he undertakes to. This may seem somewhat elementary advice, but I have not found it easy to get young men whose conscience was entirely reliable on rainy afternoons when there seemed to be nothing doing. Remind them that they are under contract, that their work is the training of moral character, and that example is mightier than talk. The head of every playground should be primarily an educator, both of individuals and of neighborhood spirit. His job will soon include the running of the indoor social center.

F. HELP FROM THE BOYS

The playground should have roots in the neighborhood life. The children of the neighboring schools, especially of the ages from eleven to thirteen inclusive, should receive their nature study in connection with gardens cultivated in severalty upon the playground. Some apparatus might be made by sloyd classes: ring-toss, benches, checker-boards. Masters and teachers, if they do not coach or umpire, should at least look on at the important match games between the schools and classes. "When you take part with the boys on the playground, the problem of discipline disappears." So testifies a schoolmaster of much experience. Enter the boy's world and he will be more willing to accept you as a guide in entering yours. Remember that what you are trying to do is not to pump in learning, but to reach the vital spot. Your various subjects are avenues by which the real thing within, the real boy, may, if the Lord wills, be reached. Do not avoid the one path that is most likely to lead you to the shrine.

The teams during the school season should be school and class teams. But have the local clubs, churches, settlements, also represented during vacation, and perhaps on Saturday afternoons and whenever space can be found for them.

G. COVERING THE GROUND

Take a pair of dividers and draw a quarter of a mile circle around every playground in your city adapted to the use of children under eight years old, and you will see whether the ground is covered for them. Draw half-mile circles around playgrounds suitable for children from eight to seventeen. There is a penumbra wider than this, of several miles in fact, but full effectiveness has only about the half-mile radius. How fully such influence can be made to extend across social and racial barriers is not yet clear.

There should be great athletic fields in the parks and in the suburbs, where

baseball, football and skating successively hold sway. Such fields affect the usefulness of every playground in the city by affording a place where teams, developed perhaps under discouraging local conditions, can have a fair chance to show what they can do in a match game. Every good-sized park, moreover, should have its tennis grounds and its golf course, and so should every country town. Places where boys and girls can play together are an essential part of the playground outfit of any civilized community.

Every school ought to have a playground of thirty square feet for every child who attends. That is the minimum prescribed in England and in certain European cities. It allows room for the boys to push and thump each other, and for more organized but not too formal play, and also for its use as a regular playground in the afternoon, when a considerable percentage of those who attend the school will unfortunately be kept at work running errands or selling papers. These school playgrounds will furnish a great part of the local playgrounds needed for the small children.

III. HOW TO GET IT

1. The first thing to do is to get the local people interested, especially those living in the immediate vicinity. You ought to interest:—any local political organizations; clubs, whether of men or women, including mothers' clubs; any child-helping society; anybody interested in juvenile court or anti-child labor; charity organization society; Y. M. C. A.; settlements and boys' clubs; school authorities; teachers and pupils in the neighboring schools; churches, trade unions; the neighboring property owners (the effect of the playground in lessening the attention of boys to neighboring shrubs, gardens, and fruit trees would be a matter of interest to these); the police.

Get people to help the playground with a little money or material for apparatus, or to supervise for specified periods each week.

All these organizations and individuals ought to be asked, of course, to bring the matter to the attention of members of the local government by speaking and writing to them and sending petitions. The school children and boys' and girls' clubs may be asked to circulate petitions. They will care more about the playground when they get it if they have to work for it.

2. There should be a general public agitation to affect the opinion of the municipality as a whole. Having an edition of the local paper devoted to the subject, with perhaps illustrations taken from playgrounds alreadys in use, is a good way. This should be followed by a series of editorials, if possible, and letters from leading citizens; and public lectures would help to interest the press and the people.

Prepare a statement for general circulation, citing leading authorities and stating need of play, and of clean sport.

Have the library set aside some playground books and get new ones.

3. Of course, starting a good playground by way of an object-lesson is the most effective way, and might be especially important if there are no good playgrounds already in operation near enough for the citizens to be familiar with them.