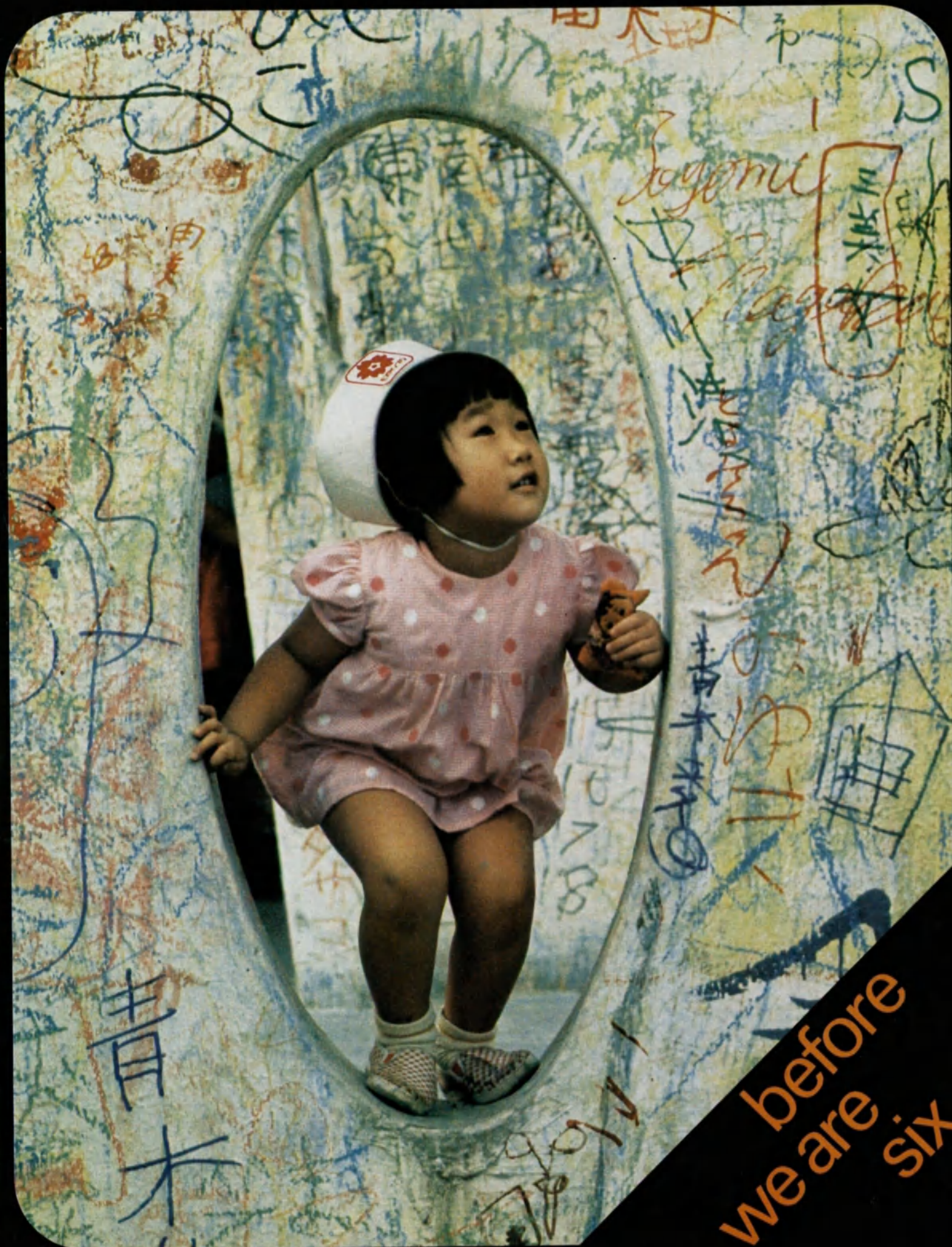


The Unesco Courier

A window
open on the world

May 1978 (31st year) 3.50 French francs



before
we are
six



Photo © Luc Joubert-Musée des Arts Africains et Océaniens, Paris

TREASURES
OF
WORLD ART

131

Zaire

Satirical mask

The Bapende (or Pende) people, who live in south-west Zaire between the Kwango and Kasai Rivers, are prolific carvers of masks, notably the distinctive *mbuya* masks which are worn during circumcision rites. *Mbuya* masks are usually caricatures of comic characters such as the idler and the self-indulgent man. During the circumcision ceremonies they are donned by dancers who through song and mimicry satirize these figures of fun. Shown here, wooden *mbuya* mask (63 cms. high) of an old man.

PUBLISHED IN 18 LANGUAGES

English Japanese Dutch
French Italian Portuguese
Spanish Hindi Turkish
Russian Tamil Urdu
German Hebrew Catalan
Arabic Persian Malaysian

Published monthly by UNESCO

The United Nations
Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization

Sales and distribution Offices
Unesco, Place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris

Subscription rates

1 year: 35 French Francs

2 years: 58 FF

Binder for a year's issues: 24 FF

The UNESCO COURIER is published monthly, except in August and September when it is bi-monthly (11 issues a year). For list of distributors see inside back cover. Individual articles and photographs not copyrighted may be reprinted providing the credit line reads "Reprinted from the UNESCO COURIER", plus date of issue, and three voucher copies are sent to the editor. Signed articles reprinted must bear author's name. Non-copyright photos will be supplied on request. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned unless accompanied by an international reply coupon covering postage. Signed articles express the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of UNESCO or those of the editors of the UNESCO COURIER. Photo captions and headlines are written by the Unesco Courier staff.

The Unesco Courier is produced in microform (microfilm and/or microfiche) by: (1) University Microfilms (Xerox), Ann Arbor, Michigan 48100, U.S.A.; (2) N.C.R. Microcard Edition, Indian Head, Inc., 111 West 40th Street, New York, U.S.A.; (3) Bell and Howell Co., Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, Ohio 44691, U.S.A.

The Unesco Courier is indexed monthly in the Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, published by H. W. Wilson Co., New York, and in Current Contents - Education, Philadelphia, U.S.A.

Editorial Office

Unesco, Place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris - France

Editor-in-Chief

René Caloz

Assistant Editor-in-Chief

Olga Rödel

Managing Editors

English Edition : Howard Brabyn (Paris)
French Edition :
Spanish Edition : Francisco Fernandez-Santos (Paris)
Russian Edition : Victor Goliachkov (Paris)
German Edition : Werner Merkli (Berne)
Arabic Edition : Abdel Moneim El Sawi (Cairo)
Japanese Edition : Kazuo Akao (Tokyo)
Italian Edition : Maria Remiddi (Rome)
Hindi Edition : H. L. Sharma (Delhi)
Tamil Edition : M. Mohammed Mustafa (Madras)
Hebrew Edition : Alexander Broido (Tel Aviv)
Persian Edition : Fereydoun Ardalan (Teheran)
Dutch Edition : Paul Morren (Antwerp)
Portuguese Edition : Benedicto Silva (Rio de Janeiro)
Turkish Edition : Mefra Arkin (Istanbul)
Urdu Edition : Hakim Mohammed Said (Karachi)
Catalan Edition : Cristian Rahola (Barcelona)
Malaysian Edition : Azizah Hamzah (Kuala Lumpur)

Assistant Editors

English Edition : Roy Malkin

French Edition :

Spanish Edition : Jorge Enrique Adoum

Research : Christiane Boucher

Illustrations: Arlane Bailey

Layout and Design : Robert Jacquemin

All correspondence should be addressed to the Editor-in-Chief in Paris

page

4 BEFORE WE ARE SIX

by Henri Dieuzeide

6 MILESTONES

10 SCHOOL IS OTHER PEOPLE

The African village community is one big family of teachers
by A. Babs Fafunwa

16 WHAT'S IN A GAME?

How the children of Zaire play to learn
by Kimenga Masoka

18 SHOULD WE RE-THINK THE PRE-SCHOOL SYSTEM?

by Liliane Lurçat

22 LOVE IS NOT ENOUGH

by Burton L. White

24 INDIA'S MOBILE CRECHES

by Meera Mahadevan

27 FAMILY AND STATE—A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

by Aleksandr V. Zaporozhets

28 IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO LEARN

by Boris Nikitin

30 JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

The children's champion
by Mohammed A. Sinaceur

31 WHO TEACHES THE TEACHERS?

by Dorothy Fleming

33 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

34 IN BRIEF

2 TREASURES OF WORLD ART

ZAIRE: Satirical mask

I-IV NEWS FROM UNESCO

Special supplement



Cover

Like a chick emerging from an egg, this tiny Japanese girl climbs through a hole in a calligraphi-covered wall at the Osaka World Exposition. Recent educational research seems to suggest that the pre-school years from 0 to 6 are the crucial period for the development of basic personality and intelligence and that for all of us the writing is on the wall before we are six.

Photo Jouanne © Atlas Photo, Paris

Before we are six

In ten years time there will be 900 million children of pre-school age in the world

by **Henri Dieuzeide**

In most countries, formal education systems recognize the child only from the age of 5 to 6, when compulsory schooling normally begins. Yet from birth to the age of 6 the child's development is much more rapid than at any other period, both psychologically and physically. From the age of 2 or 3, though still largely dependent upon adults and under their guidance, the child begins to establish relationships outside the immediate family and becomes capable of developing certain forms of independent behaviour. A process of assimilation begins through which the child learns to live. In this issue, the *Unesco Courier* examines the ways in which various pre-school institutions throughout the world help this process along and contribute to the all-round development of the child's personality.

THE concept of pre-school education, as we know and accept it today, is the culmination of a long international effort representing a century and a half of research, experiment and achievement. The phenomenal increase in the number of pre-primary school institutions since the end of the Second World War has been largely inspired by these achievements and by the notion that children should be treated as complete personalities and accepted, respected and appreciated as individuals.

A variety of forms of pre-schooling have been devised: Indian *Balwadies*, or rural schools, derived from very ancient rural institutions, Sudanese *Khalvas*, nurseries run by religious communities, the recently introduced British playgroups, French *écoles maternelles*, German *Kindergarten*, and other types of nursery school, all bear witness to the desire of communities to help the infant to acquire, during the early years, a firm foundation for later life.

Such systems vary considerably in scope ranging from the *Sabatinas* in Salvador which bring together the children of the district or village once a week, to the Israeli *kibbutzim* in which all the small children of the community are looked after 24 hours a day. They also depend on a wide range of different bodies, from local authorities, governments, companies and movements to private groups (which form almost a third of the total).

HENRI DIEUZEIDE is director of *Unesco's* division of structures, content, methods and techniques of education, and director of *Prospects*, *Unesco's* quarterly review of education. He was formerly director of educational radio and television in France and a department head at France's National Pedagogical Institute. He is the author of several books on education, including *Les Techniques Audio-Visuelles de l'Enseignement (Audio-Visual Techniques in Education)* which has been translated into six languages.

The principles on which they operate are everywhere more or less the same. The children regularly attend these institutions where they are helped to express themselves better in their own language, to pick up the elementary rules of hygiene and good health, to discover rhythmical self-expression, to dance, sing and draw, to mould sand and model clay, to make objects, to observe nature, to respect the plants and animals around them, to sort and classify objects by type and by shape, and above all to live together and become responsible.

It is estimated that some 40 million children under six now attend such establishments, three times as many as 20 years ago (1). In many countries the tradition is by no means recent. Infant schools in Europe go back to the early 19th century, to the eve of the industrial revolution which saw the start of a period of research and experiment in education beginning with Friedrich Froebel (Germany), who was born in 1782, and continuing with Ovide Decroly (Belgium), Ellen Key (Sweden) and Maria Montessori (Italy), who died as recently as 1952. But there were precursors of the present system many centuries ago, such as the rural nurseries of Asia and Koranic schools in Moslem countries.

It is true that, before Froebel, pre-schooling was the prerogative of the elite; the most privileged social classes, and indeed the richer countries, found it easier to obtain, or provide, pre-primary education than their poorer neighbours. But the principle of such education is now universally accepted, and regarded increasingly as an essential tool for the democratization of society.

But since Pastor Johan Friederich Oberlin opened the first nursery schools in 1767

(1) This figure does not include the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Stepping out into the future, this Yemeni child is one of the world's 765 million children under the age of six. Recent research suggests that these are the crucial formative years with 50 per cent of the attainments that go to make up the seventeen-year-old's general intelligence level being acquired before the age of four and a further 30 per cent between the ages of four and eight.



in some of the remoter villages of Alsace, the facts of the situation have changed with the growth of society.

The natural family unit that used to assume responsibility for the first steps in education has been unavoidably disrupted by the industrialization of certain societies or by the desire in the rest of the world for economic development. In most countries, the majority of women leave their home, or their family business (whether it be a farm or a workshop), in order to work elsewhere, either regularly or seasonally. A link-up between family and society has become essential, particularly since this very process of development makes new and more urgent demands on the content of pre-primary education.

In Hungary, where women make up 44 per cent of the working population, crèches and kindergartens offer day care with meals, seasonal summer day care or full board six days a week. In Senegal, the fact that the rainy season requires women to work long hours in the rice paddies has resulted in the setting up of special nursery schools for two months of the year. In India, tens of thousands of mothers who work on building sites leave their children in mobile crèches during the day. (see page 24).

All child psychologists, moreover, now agree on the enormous bearing that the first four to five years of a child's life have on the formation of its personality, as regards both the development of logical and linguistic skills, emotional balance, and ability to establish social relationships.

Purely from the point of view of intellectual development, recent research seems to indicate that some 50 per cent of the knowledge which goes to make up a general intelligence level by the age of seventeen is already acquired by the age of four, while the following 30 per cent is acquired between the ages of four and eight. Most of the time spent in school by pupils between eight and seventeen is therefore devoted to acquiring the remaining 20 per cent, which suggests that the way resources are currently being allocated to each type of school needs to be reviewed.

Some economists even go so far as to claim that if the educational authorities systematically channelled the appropriate funds into pre-schooling they would make a substantial saving on subsequent educational expenditure. However that may be, it is now clear that, so long as its cost can be kept within reasonable bounds, pre-primary education could be a decisive factor in bringing about greater justice and in offering all pupils a better chance of succeeding in life, precisely because it would help alleviate the social and cultural handicaps affecting many children (inability to handle language or abstractions, malnutrition, lack of medical care, the failure to detect physical handicaps, and so on).

But the task ahead is a daunting one, if only because of the sheer scale of the problem. There are at present 765 million children under six in the world and in ten years time there will be nearly 900 million. This means that of ten children aged between three and six only one now enjoys any kind of organized pre-schooling.

Milestones

Despite very wide variations in geographical environment, material living conditions, social and cultural background, children throughout the world present a number of characteristics in common and pass through the same stages of development. The table of development "milestones" given here is taken from a study carried out by the International Children's Centre at Unesco's request. But since children are individuals, the acquisitions listed are not milestones that a child *must* pass at exactly the age stated. They are points of reference in the development of motor activity, sensory perception, speech and relations with other people. Many others could be cited which parents will discover for themselves through observation and experience.

Photo © Monique Manceau, Paris





FROM BIRTH TO 3 YEARS

From birth to 3 months

- spends most of the time sleeping
- learns to follow a moving object with his eyes, look at a face, and smile in response
- reacts to noise
- recognizes his mother (visually, but especially by sense of smell and hearing and perhaps by sensory perceptions difficult to define)
- involuntarily holds on to an object placed in his hand
- babbles spontaneously and responsively
- communicates with those around him, reacts to the psychological state of his mother (calm, excited)

From 3 to 6 months

- begins to take hold purposely of an object within reach and holds out his hand to an object offered him
- brings objects to his mouth
- laughs heartily and utters shouts of pleasure in response to adult's play
- begins to look for a lost toy
- catches hold of objects not between thumb and index finger, but between the palm and the last four fingers

From 6 to 9 months

- can crawl towards an object or a person
- begins to be able to remain upright if he is held in position
- grasps small objects between thumb and index finger
- amuses himself by throwing objects
- utters several syllables without verbal meaning
- recognizes the faces of members of his family and may be afraid of strange faces

From 9 to 12 months

- can get to his feet unaided and can walk when held by two hands
- repeats a sound which he has heard
- learns to pronounce two or three words
- shows great interest in exploring the world
- repeats the syllables which he has pronounced and to which those around him have given a meaning

From 12 to 18 months

- walks on his own and explores the house and its surroundings
- can pronounce five to ten words
- manifests jealousy (tears or gestures of anger) and reactions of rivalry in play with his older brothers and sisters—these normal manifestations of rivalry and even aggressiveness represent his introduction to group life

From 18 to 24 months

- walks up and down stairs first held by the hand, later alone, supporting himself
- indicates his eyes and nose
- learns to feed himself
- begins to be toilet trained in the daytime (stools, then urine)—toilet training greatly depends on cultural habits; the age may vary
- shows great interest in the actions of adults and tries to imitate their movements

From 2 to 3 years

- learns to jump, climb, and hop on one foot
- develops his speech considerably, using "I" and "me", begins to ask questions
- can reproduce a circle on paper or in sand
- begins to play properly *with* other children—the age of 2 really marks the beginning of socialization

FROM 3 TO 6 YEARS

From 3 to 4 years

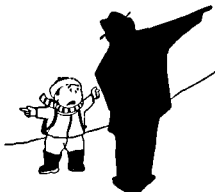
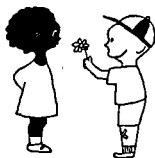
- walks around on his own, visits neighbours
- learns to dress and undress alone
- recognizes two or three colours
- speaks intelligibly, can state his name, sex and age
- asks many questions
- shows affection for younger brothers and sisters

From 4 to 5 years

- leaps, jumps, swings
- draws a figure with head, principal limbs and parts of the body
- copies a square and a triangle
- knows how to count his fingers
- protests vigorously when prevented from doing what he wants
- takes an interest in the activities of adults

From 5 to 6 years

- knows how to climb trees and dance to music
- speaks correctly, stops using childish language
- draws a figure with head, trunk, limbs and hands
- begins to distinguish right from left, yesterday from tomorrow
- takes an interest in the activities of the home and the quarter
- takes an interest in the age of young people and old people
- detests authority imposed on him, and carries out orders slowly





Furthermore, certain types of pre-schooling are over-compartmentalized or excessively oriented merely towards preparation for primary school instead of being conceived as the first phase in a long process of continuing and all-embracing education.

Lastly, there are certain limitations to the formulae that have been adopted, possibly because researchers have failed to examine closely enough whether the various systems now being used are not too rigidly linked to a particular cultural pattern, i.e.

One tenth of the population of the world

It's hard work growing up, but even at rest these boys and girls in a Pakistani day care centre (left) and a Chinese crèche (below) are learning to live in society. Opposite page : A Mayan chief gazes benevolently across the centuries at a 20th-century Mexican girl at play in the famous Palenque ruins, Chiapas State, Mexico. In 1975, there were 327,068,000 Asian and 51,690,000 Latin American children under the age of five, almost a tenth of the total population of the world.

Photo © United Nations, New York



Photo Ménard © A. A., photo, Paris

that of the Western world. The educational authorities of the developing countries, who are keen to develop children capable of adjusting to rapid change and displaying flexible and creative behavioural patterns, are faced with the problem of how best to achieve a smooth transition between a child's original culture and the constantly changing modern culture in which he will have to live.

It has now become obvious that the pre-schooling system in its present form cannot be extended to all three- to six-year-olds in countries with limited resources because of the tremendous cost involved. Although no-one would dispute that pre-schooling is now a reasonable necessity, not a luxury, and although educationalists are more or less agreed on the intellectual and moral principles on which it should be based, fresh approaches and ingenious new systems still need to be defined almost everywhere if pre-primary education is to be more closely geared to the social and cultural environment as a whole.

This is why an increasing number of countries are now striving, with the help of Unesco, to identify and co-ordinate existing material and human resources with the aim of developing "streamlined" systems of mass pre-primary education. They want to determine, for instance, how at local level the community can be made more aware of the needs of childhood through the insertion of educational content into all the groupings of young children it organizes. They are also keen to define a childhood policy likely to inspire the same concerted educational effort from all sorts of establishments, whether they be crèches, day nurseries, infant schools, educational centres, religious institutions, or welfare centres. This raises institutional difficulties when, for example, a Ministry of Health may vie with a Ministry of Education for the responsibility of co-ordinating activities for the very young, or a Ministry of Social Affairs may be pitted against a Ministry of the Family.

There is also a psychological problem between the various people involved at the local community level; doctors may feel they have overall authority where a child's future is concerned, but such responsibility is often claimed by social workers, while teachers are not infrequently regarded as subordinates whose duty it is to bow to the authority of the specialists. Experience shows, however, that these problems can be solved when they are tackled with determination.

Another crucial factor is increased participation by families in the educational process. It is not enough merely to persuade mothers to comply with the basic rules of nutrition and hygiene; attempts must be made to create within each family the material and psychological conditions most likely to encourage the child's intellectual, emotional and social development (new types of behaviour, play, exchanges, environment).

In many South American and Asian countries, there is a tendency to turn the pre-primary teacher into a social action worker whose influence extends over the whole community. In this context, certain



Photo B.D. © Missi-Photo, Paris

"parents' school" schemes, which use the radio to broadcast regular advice to mothers or to nursery school teachers on educational techniques, have made an important contribution to pre-primary education.

This approach is usually combined with the use of communal buildings to house classes of children, the manufacture of the necessary educational furniture and toys with cheap locally produced material, and the recruitment of various types of voluntary staff who are given a brief training period focused on the psychological development, education and health of very young children.

The people making up such staff can vary, depending on the country, from adolescents and students to non-working wives, retired school-teachers and grandparents. They are sometimes called upon to assist a professional teacher, but when vast mobilization efforts are undertaken, as for instance in Peru, they occasionally have to be able to cope with the full range of everyday educational tasks. Experience has shown almost everywhere that the merits of such schemes are not merely economic; parents are more willing to accept a type of pre-schooling that associates the family with the community.

The purpose of Unesco's action in this field is not to encourage communal pre-primary education at all costs and to the detriment of the family. Aware as it is of

the difficult problems that have to be faced daily by parents all over the world, Unesco is working hand in hand with governments and educationalists to strengthen and perfect schemes that can combine and harmonize the reciprocal roles and influences of family and school.

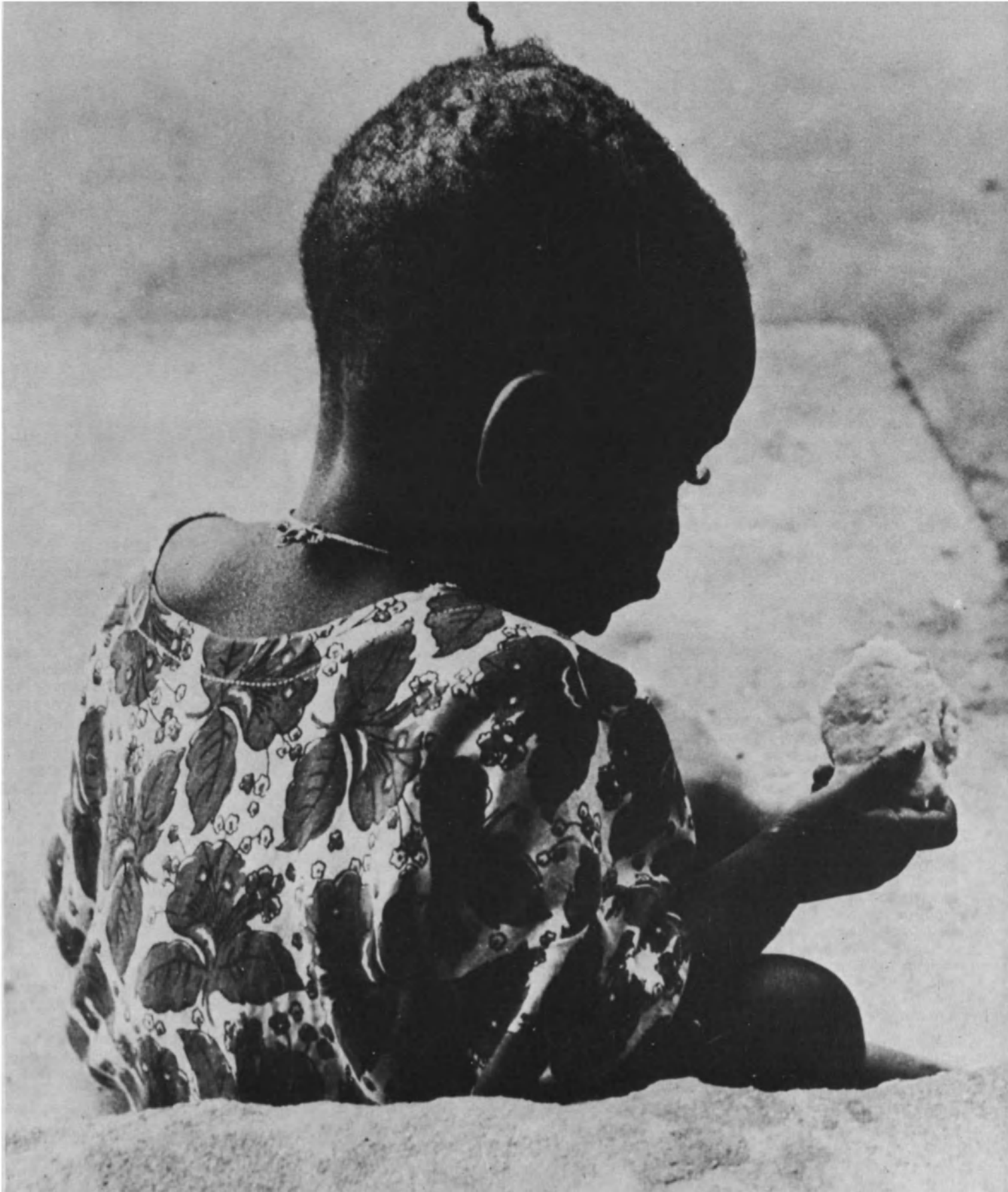
In recent years, through meetings of experts (USA, Czechoslovakia, Malaysia), publications such as *The Child from Birth to Six Years Old* and *World Survey of Pre-School Education*, its advisory services in Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria, Venezuela and Mexico, the encouragement of pilot schemes (Sri Lanka, Jordan), and co-operation with UNICEF and the relevant non-governmental organizations such as the World Organization for Early Childhood Education, Unesco has sought to encourage the idea that pre-school education is a real priority for its Member States and, above all, to convince them of the need to summon up the necessary determination and imagination to devise ever more efficient forms of action in this area.

With all this in mind, Unesco hopes to make International Year of the Child (1979)—which aims to encourage Member States to increase their efforts in this field, for instance, by setting up national commissions for children—an important stage in the development of pre-schooling involving the whole community and suited to the needs and resources of each country.

■ Henri Dieuzeide

School is other people

Photo © G. Bern, Paris



For African children the village community is one big family of teachers

by **A. Babs Fafunwa**

LEARNING starts early for children in Africa, and more often than not begins at the mother's breast. Fed regularly, weaned when the time is ripe, the African child spends the first five years of its life in a close relationship with its mother. During this early stage, the child is reared by the mother, not by the family as a whole.

In a polygamous African family, there may be several "mothers"; and they all play a part in caring for the youngest generation. But ultimate responsibility for each child lies with its true mother, who carries it on her back wherever she goes, puts it to bed, looks after it when it is ill, and teaches it to speak. Full of curiosity, the baby watches her every gesture, and learns to interpret her smiles, her frowns and her tears.

Little by little, this lively curiosity reaches out beyond the mother's world. Somewhere between the ages of four and six, the grandparents—and sometimes uncles and aunts—begin to take part in the children's education, sending them on little errands, teaching them to be obedient and to respect their elders (this is a very important matter in African society), and to

observe certain rules of behaviour. The grandparents also teach them the history of their family or of their people.

African education is "global". In other words, each social institution has a role in providing the moral and practical teaching that will enable young boys and girls to take their rightful place in the community.

The traditional educational system is based on age-groups, or on affinities within these groups, whose limits are defined differently by different peoples.

Age is very important to Africans. It confers economic and social privileges, particularly as far as the distribution of prey, rewards and wealth are concerned. In many Nigerian ethnic groups, men—and women, too—tend to claim that they are older than they really are.

The objectives of traditional African education are many and varied, but the ultimate goal is to produce individuals who are honest, respectful, clever, co-operative and mindful of the established order. Character training is, in fact, the keystone of the system.

African children love to explore their immediate surroundings, to observe and imitate the actions of adults and to discover new horizons. In this, they are no different from other children, whether in Europe, Asia or elsewhere. What distinguishes them is their way of doing things, and above all the spontaneity with which, in societies that have retained their links with the past, they jump about, climb trees, dance or move to a rhythm, simply because their brothers and sisters or their elders are doing so. No sooner, in fact, have they discovered their limbs, than they discover how to use them.

African children perhaps differ from their European counterparts in that they have completely untrammelled access to the stimulating world of music and dance. The movements of the African dance, in their infinite variety, offer the best possible physical exercise for growing bodies. No teacher or dancing-master is needed: the children join in naturally, following the steps of adults or other children. Dancing and music are also a means of transmitting the culture of a people, and of performing together as a group.

In a study of the Yorubas of West Africa, M.A. Fadipe has described certain practical aspects of the education of young children:

"As soon as her daughter is of age, it is the mother's duty to teach her the rules of hygienic and well-mannered behaviour observed by the group. One of the most important of these rules concerns the use of the right and the left hand.

"Before the whites brought their culture to Africa, the use of forks and spoons was unknown. The right hand was traditionally used for lifting food to the mouth and—mainly for this reason—was forbidden to touch unclean objects...

"A child caught eating before early-morning ablutions—which involved at least washing the face and mouth—would be scolded and punished by an adult member of the group...

"The 'indirect' education received by the child in the community is almost as important as that received at school."

"In certain regions of northern Nigeria," writes another specialist, "character training took many forms. Parents encouraged healthy rivalry between children of the same age—sometimes as early as the age of five—by organizing wrestling matches and by setting the children competitive tasks.

"Fair play was also encouraged; winners and losers alike were congratulated when they played well. The main thing was not winning and losing, but playing the game. With the introduction of Islam, the Koranic schools brought additional elements of character training. Children were sent to the Mallam for three or four hours every afternoon, to learn the Koran by heart, together with the principles of Islamic ethics."

Traditional education, as far as character-building was concerned, was certainly severe, to say the least. But this was because of the importance which African society attaches to this aspect of education. The habit of physical exercise, apprenticeship in a trade, a religious upbringing, a respectful attitude towards one's elders and active participation in community life are indispensable conditions for any African wishing to be considered a person of consequence. The lack of more formal education can be forgiven, but a person who does not fulfil these conditions inflicts the worst possible humiliation on both his immediate family and his more distant kinsfolk.

A. BABS FAFUNWA, Nigerian educator, is professor of education at the University of Ife, Ibadan, and was formerly professor and dean of the faculty of education at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. He is the author of several published works on African education, including *New Perspectives in African Education* (Mac-Millan, Nigeria, 1967) and *A History of Education in Nigeria* (Allen and Unwin, London, 1974).

Respect for one's elders, which is an important part of character training, includes respect for all who represent authority: village chiefs, religious leaders, soothsayers, uncles, relatives and neighbours. Styles of greeting play an essential role in the expression of respect. Salutation is a complicated affair in Africa, with different modes for addressing relatives, elders, equals, chiefs, and so on, and special greetings for morning, afternoon and evening.

There are different formulae for games, dancing or drumming, for sitting or standing, for tilling the soil or fishing, for weaving, swimming, walking or recovering from an illness. Anniversaries, funerals or weddings, yam-growing ceremonies, the rituals of ancestor-worship, the *Egungun* festivals and other special occasions—all call for special types of greeting.

If "intelligence" means the capacity to assimilate experience, and if "intellectualization" denotes abstract reasoning—as in the formation of concepts or judgments—then it may be said that traditional African education encourages intellectual development. Observation, imitation and participation are three pillars of the educational process.

African children and adolescents learn the geography and history of their community. They know their local hills and valleys like the backs of their hands; they know where the land is fertile and where it is barren. They know when to expect rain and when to expect drought. They know the right times to hunt and fish. In every family the old people are teachers of local history.

The songs of praise which often commemorate great events enrich the oral tradition, creating an experience which it is difficult to forget.

Botany and zoology are the subjects of both theoretical and practical lessons, in which special attention is paid to local plants and animals. Where animals are both a source of danger and a means of livelihood, their behaviour is another important subject of study.

Proverbs and riddles are exceptional wit-sharpeners, and are used to teach the child to reason and to take decisions. (See page 16, and also "Unesco Courier", May 1977).

Yoruba mathematics are particularly interesting. According to C.A. Taiwo, a Nigerian educator, "The Yoruba have created their own system of arithmetic and use a wide range of real-life situations to develop skills of numeracy. At a very early age, Yoruba children learn to count with the aid of objects, rhymes and games, both at home and in the fields.

"The use of cowrie shells for currency offers good practice in counting. The Yoruba have a different name for every number, whatever its size. The name itself may be long and complicated, but the meaning is precise, and no number is too large or too small to be deciphered by a Yoruba".

On the subject of cardinal and ordinal numbers, Taiwo observes: "The Yoruba understand the concepts, just as they understand the mechanisms of certain fractions, of addition, subtraction and multiplication. Eleven is *one-plus-ten*; fifteen is *twenty-minus-five*; forty-three is *three-and-twice-twenty*".

The Nupe of Nigeria have a similar system, which is elaborate, lucid, practical and unlimited in its application. According to S.F. Nadel, author of *A Black Byzantium: The Kingdom of Nupe in Nigeria*, "A number such as 3,600,000 is expressed as 'two-thousand-times-eighteen-hundred', or—in greater detail—'two-thousand-times-two-hundred-times-nine'... Four hundred is 'two-hundred-times-two', and so on...".

The same author writes: "The area of farms is measured by the number of heaps of yams they can produce. Volumes are expressed in 'liquid' or 'dry' measures, the units being calabashes, gourds and—in more recent times—tin cups and tin cans." Most Nigerian tribes use similar systems of measurement. Africans also have fun with their mathematics in games of skill, such as the "Ayo" game where players must outwit their opponents in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

Some educators have come to believe that certain aspects of traditional African education should be integrated into the modern system, and have begun to work along these lines. This is a field which should be given priority in all developing countries.

One of the aims of education, whether modern or traditional, is to perpetuate a given culture. Traditional Africa sets great store by this aspect of human development.

As they grow up, children of traditional societies absorb and assimilate their peoples' cultural heritage, without formal teaching. They observe, imitate and mimic the



During the first few years of life, an African child develops a very close relationship with its mother and, like this Togolese infant (left), is carried on her back wherever she goes. One of the earliest lessons an African child learns is respect for his elders. Among the Dogons of Mali (above right), the word of the patriarch of the family is accepted without question.

Photo Smeets © Miss-Photo, Paris



Photo © Pierre Pittet, WHO, Geneva

actions of their elders and their siblings. They attend baptisms, religious ceremonies, weddings and funerals, the coronations of kings or chiefs, and the annual yam festival. They watch the acrobatic displays of guilds and associations, often joining in with members of their own age-group or with their families.

As we have already pointed out, responsibility for the upbringing of young Africans is traditionally shared by the entire social group. Good manners, conventions, customs, moral rules and social laws are inculcated by close relatives, by more distant members of the extended family or by neighbours. The hallmarks of a successful traditional education in Africa are honesty, perseverance and sincerity.

Today, however, African society—and its children—face a dilemma.

From birth to the age of five, African children are invariably brought up in the traditional environment. But from the age of six onwards, between one-third and one-tenth of all these children (depending on the country) enter another educational

system, which is almost totally different. After spending their early years in a world which has its own methods of transmitting knowledge, they suddenly find themselves in another world, whose concepts are by no means the same. This phenomenon has not received the attention it deserves from educators and psychologists.

We tend to assume that African children make this dramatic transition without difficulty, and we expect them to react just like little English, American or German boys and girls. But the fact is that their perceptive balance is upset, and this abnormal situation (for there is a world of difference between the "non-formal" traditional system and the "formal" Western system of education) tends to retard the process of learning as it normally occurs in the Western context.

More than half of all the children who enter primary schools in Africa fail to complete the course. A number of studies on "primary school failures" in Nigeria and elsewhere attribute this wastage, which ranges between 40 per cent and 60 per cent according to country, to three factors: the

premature introduction of English as the language of instruction in primary schools; inadequate teacher training; and the shortcomings of the educational means and methods employed (due primarily to their "alien" nature).

Of all the children in the world, only those of African countries (and certain former colonial countries in Asia and Latin America) are obliged to learn in a language other than their mother tongue. In some developing countries children are educated in their mother tongue during the first two or three years of primary schooling, but after this they must adopt either English or French.

There is every reason to suppose that the early introduction of a second, "foreign" language obstructs the process of learning and is at least partly responsible, in the developing countries, for the high drop-out rates from primary and university education alike.

If one of the essential objectives of education is to transmit a culture—and by this we mean the culture specific to the child

and to his or her particular social group, then it must be said that most educators and psychologists in the developing countries have not made enough efforts to establish a link between the school and society. In most African countries today, there is a lack of continuity between the family and the school. A four-year-old Kenyan boy described his experience in these terms.

"I was not yet four years old when my sister was born... Although I was still very young, I had to become my sister's nurse for days on end. So that I should do the job properly, my mother had to teach me what to do, give me instructions and see how I carried them out.

"First I had to do things while she watched: feeding the baby, for example. That took us up to planting-time the following year; and then, because my mother had more work to do, I had to do more things with the baby.

"The day began with morning jobs for all the family—for everyone, that is, except the baby... My father took out the animals—the cows, goats and sheep... Mother went to fetch water from the river, and cleaned the house... My job was to collect fire from the neighbours, and lay or light our own fire...

"Finally, before she went off to the *shamba*, mother gave me my instructions: 'Don't leave the house unattended,' she said, 'in case of thieves. Don't let Alusa (the baby) cry for too long, it will make her ill. Feed her when she cries. Keep stray cats away from the hens, and watch out for hawks over the chickens. Be polite with visitors and with strangers who ask the way'...

"Last of all, she promised to bring me a present—a fruit or a sweet potato—when she returned. And then she went off to work, and it was late in the evening when she came home..."

The experience of this little boy in East Africa should bring home to educators, psychologists and educational planners the urgent need to provide continuity between the child's domestic and scholastic experience, so that schools and homes in Africa are truly linked.

In most African countries, the first task is to provide free primary education that is valid for all the children. There is no need for these countries to cling to the methods employed up to now, which are very costly; there is ample room for innovation in the context of development.

Another urgent task is to harmonize the

traditional and modern systems of education, each of which can make an important contribution to the upbringing of African children. Research and experimentation are called for here, and although each developing country will have to define its own objectives, and to direct its efforts accordingly, three subjects appear to deserve close attention: the impact of traditional education on "formal" schooling; the ways in which African children learn; and the relationship between bilingualism and education.

Children between the age of one and five must be given real opportunities of learning outside the "formal" system which should take over at the age of five or six. This calls for government planning at the informal level, in order to make the transition to the formal system less traumatic.

In a typical traditional African society, education is not divided into watertight compartments. Children and young adults, during the development of their vocational aptitudes, pass imperceptibly from one stage to the next. Some learn quickly; others need more time. The system which we envisage for the developing countries in the coming decade will permit children and adults alike to learn at their own rhythm, whatever their age, sex, level of education or specialized subject of study.

■ A. Babs Fafunwa



Photo Fievet © A. A. photo, Paris

Pupils of nature

The outdoor world is a natural classroom where many African children express their creative imagination through such pursuits as dancing, music, hunting and exploring. The spontaneous movements of the dance are an ideal form of exercise for growing bodies, as well as providing good entertainment for friends who prefer to sit it out (right). All youngsters are natural scientists by inclination, and like this little Cameroonian boy (left) love to examine insect life at close quarters.



What's in a game?

How the children
of Zaire play to learn

by Kimenga Masoka

In Zaire, compulsory education starts when children enter primary school at the age of six. Organized facilities for pre-school education, which begins at the age of three, are still limited despite efforts made in recent years to increase the number of nursery schools. (According to Unesco statistics, Zaire had only 211 pre-school institutions in 1972). But the shortage of schools does not mean that there is any lack of pre-school education in Zaire. On the contrary, learning through play forms part of the traditional pattern of life.

CHILDREN are children all over the world... And all over the world children play games... In different ways perhaps... But then, a game is just a game anywhere!

Or is it? A closer look seems to show that there is something special about the games Zairian children play. Children in other parts of the world, who go to kindergartens, nursery schools and the like, learn as they play. Zairian youngsters play in order to learn, showing in their games their sense of creativity.

At the age of three, and newly-weaned (like many African children, they are breast-fed until relatively late), they are ready to assert their independence. They are free to join the other children of their own age or older. They have plenty of time on their hands, and thousands of wonderful ideas about how to occupy it. So what do they do?

First of all, they make toys.

A group of children is usually led by the oldest and most authoritative member of the group: all the other children must obey him as long as the game lasts; according to African custom the young must always show respect and obedience to their elders, who represent traditional values.

To begin with, the group splits up, and each child goes off on his own. It is interesting to note the different ways in which they behave. As they scatter into the countryside they will pick a cob of maize or some mango leaves, hack off the branches of a palm-tree or try to knock some oranges

off an orange-tree. Then one by one they return to their usual playground (under the trees of a courtyard) carrying their booty. Each child settles down on his own little patch of ground and tries to make something out of his spoils.

First there is a long period of intense concentration during which scarcely a word is spoken. Then gradually, the children start to move around—here a knife is borrowed, there a bamboo cane is swapped for a strip of liana. Soon the work begins in earnest.

Generally the children try to make familiar objects that appeal to them but are hard to come by—a model train, an aeroplane, a car, a house, a telephone, a doll, a saucepan, a pipe, or certain types of games similar to draughts. Yet these objects are never exact copies of the real thing; the children always do their best to add a personal touch so that once they have finished they can say: "I made that".

I remember watching a five-and-a-half-year-old child from a modest family make a telephone from a piece of liana about 10 metres long and two boxes made of mango leaves. He put it together by attaching the ends of the liana to the two boxes. Once he had firmly tied the knots, he laid his apparatus out on the ground lengthwise and asked one of his school friends to pick up the box at the other end of the liana and hold it to his ear.

When he spoke into his own box, the other boy exclaimed: "It's amazing! I can hear everything you're saying along the liana!" When I asked the first boy if what he had made was a telephone, he denied that it was any such thing. It was his own personal invention, he retorted, and he would give it a name in his own good time.

Play is widely used in Africa as a means of teaching children the basic traditional

KIMENGA MASOKA, a staff member of the National University of Zaire, is currently preparing a doctoral thesis in applied psychology for the University of Paris. He is the author of several studies on African psychology which have appeared in Zairian publications.

The effort of concentration and co-ordination is written on the faces of these two miniature maestros as they beat out the rhythm of a Bapende dance, at Kilembé, Zaire. Their instrument, a hollowed-out tree trunk, is a drum used for transmitting long-distance messages.



Photo © Agence Hoa-Oui, Paris

elements of their culture. This is the second important function of play.

According to one African belief, children should not be told stories during the day-time, in case they stop growing. It is only in the evening that adults interrupt their children's games and teach them proverbs or tell them stories.

All kinds of instruction and knowledge are passed on via proverbs and tales. "The cola nut in grandfather's mouth" is not merely a warning against the bitterness of the cola nut, which adults like to chew. It also carries another message: don't imitate grown-ups. Slavish imitation is as silly as it is dangerous. "The palm nut falls from its cluster only when it is ripe." In other words, you should not go it alone in life until you, too, are ripe (See *Unesco Courier*, April 1977).

Zairian children, like children all over the world, tend to copy adults. But only up to a point; traditional wisdom makes a subtle distinction between aimless aping of adults' behaviour or attitudes and the kind of imitation that is a way of preparing one-

self for life and broadening one's knowledge. Here again, play has its contribution to make, with the full co-operation of adults.

Fishing and hunting—naturally among the most exciting kind of games—involve the same imitative, or rather educative process. The children only hunt grasshoppers, rats and birds, but they have to make their own bows and arrows out of bamboo, strips of palm-wood and liana. They only fish for small fry in flood water during the rainy season, but they have to fashion their own hooks and dig up their earthworm bait.

Singing and dancing form an integral part of all these activities. If pre-school education of this kind doesn't bring out a child's intelligence, sensibility, creativity and physical gifts then nothing will. What's more, Zairian children play not only to learn about the world, but also to discover themselves. Take "nzembo", for instance, one of their favourite games.

"Nzembo" consists of making music with water. Two or three children wade

out into a shallow part of a river. Another child hums a tune and tells them to play it; like a conductor, he allots various tasks to each member of his orchestra so as to get an accurate rendering of the tune. He gives his musicians a starting note, and at a signal from him they start to play.

How, you may ask, does one "play" a river? The musicians plunge their clenched fists into the water, smacking the surface of the river as hard as they can, producing very low rhythmical sounds as they hit the water which are like the sounds of the tomtom. Indeed, so catchy and rhythmical is this music that the other children on the river bank join in and dance.

...Once upon a time, in far away Zaire, there lived a three-year-old musician whose favourite instrument was a river. Standing in the water he would coax music from the water with his hands...

What a wonderful story to tell the children of Europe—at bedtime, so as not to stop them growing.

■ Kimenga Masoka

Should we re-think the pre-school system?

by Liliane Lurçat

ONE result of the generalization of education during this century has been an increase in scholastic competition; access to many jobs depends upon certificates and diplomas obtained at school, and children who have had the advantage of a few years of pre-schooling find entry into primary school less difficult than those with no pre-schooling behind them.

Pre-schooling is seen, therefore, as an important factor in scholastic success and in view of the high incidence of scholastic failure, particularly among working-class children, it is easy to understand parental anxieties and the desire, of some parents at least, to get their children involved in the educational process at an early age.

But pre-schooling has repercussions on the educational system as well as on the children: the primary school expects to receive "pupils" and not children fresh from the family circle; the child is transformed by an earlier introduction to life in society.

During the first months of life, children are subject to the influence of their family. The family environment passes on values peculiar to each family as well as national, regional and class characteristics. Religious beliefs are also imparted by the family. Children absorb this family culture, adopting a variety of habits, for example, of feeding, expressing, amusing or occupying themselves. They adopt certain attitudes when faced with change; depending on the nature of the family, they adjust with varying degrees of ease or difficulty to other environments. This does not mean that the family standardizes reactions. Differences between individuals also play their part, and each child of a family marks his tastes and proclivities by adopting what appeals to him in his environment.

The period between the ages of three and six is a personality-forming phase typified by great sensitivity to surroundings. It is also the period of pre-schooling, the

influence of which can have lasting effects which may tally with family influences or else run counter to them.

It has been pointed out that the essential function of pre-schooling is to introduce children to life in society. This "socialization" has two aspects. On the one hand, it clearly teaches them how to live collectively, with children who are of about their own age, and with adults who are not their parents and who fulfil specific functions. Children adjust to the group, and to the rhythm and activities of school. They learn to obey adults and to accept discipline.

The other less obvious aspect of this socialization is that it has the effect of producing a certain uniformity in children's reactions. The most basic and widely accepted moral notions are inculcated in young children: they learn, for instance, that they ought not take home or break toys belonging to others, that they ought not fight. And these prohibitions are not just an abstract set of rules. It is the action of the children themselves which is commended or criticized. The child gradually learns how to distinguish between what is thought to be positive and what is regarded as negative in what he or other children do.

Moreover, the children in the group participate and react collectively along the same lines as the adult, with the result that approval or disapproval becomes a universal reaction. When, for instance, a three-year-old girl refuses to put away the felt pens and the schoolmistress calls her "a naughty girl", many of the children of the same age in her class will repeat: "Yes, she's naughty, she's not nice". They adopt the adult's opinion. This standardization of reactions has been called "ideological pattern-forming".

The socialization of children at school is something that takes place throughout the day and in the course of their various activities. Thus it is not so much a particular field of teaching as a lifestyle to which the child gradually becomes accustomed.

Pre-school teaching does not usually follow a specific curriculum. As a general rule children are not given marks. But they are appraised according to their school work. In France, for instance, school records are kept on each child, starting at pre-primary ▶

A cardboard house is a fine vantage point from which to examine the world around. The pre-school years are the period in which the child is introduced to society and acquires manual skills: a time to savour the hilarity of the law of gravity and to marvel at the enchantment of the tinkling of bells and the clashing of cymbals.

Photo © Jean Suquet - INRDP, Paris

Photo © Rapho, Paris

LILIANE LURCAT, French specialist in child psychology and educational psychology, is the author of two books on pre-school education, *La Maternelle, Une Ecole Différente* (published by Editions du Cerf, Paris, 1976) and *Une Ecole Maternelle* (Stock, Paris, 1976).



Photo © Boiffin-Vivier Rush, Paris

school; and they contain assessments of conduct, character and scholastic success.

Pre-school teaching covers various categories of activity. Activities involving self-expression and creativity are aimed at bringing out the child's personality. Other forms of learning and preparation for learning, the teaching of manual skills, develop control of the body. It is accepted that one of the vital needs of young children is the opportunity to create and to express themselves. This is encouraged by the extensive use of play situations: classrooms are divided up into different areas by partitioning. There is a kitchen area, where family meals are simulated; a bathroom area where dolls are washed and dressed; and a grocery area, where children can play at buying and selling.

Other opportunities for self-expression and creation are provided by drawing, modelling, singing, dancing and making things. Objects made by children are often exhibited at end-of-term open days. Celebrations in general play an important role in pre-school teaching; the children's birthdays are celebrated, as are festivals such as Christmas, Shrove Tuesday, and Easter.

In some schools, creative and constructive activities provide an opportunity for bringing together children of different ages. But the children are usually grouped according to age. In France, for example, when nursery schools have nine classes, the children are divided up into three sections—a lower section consisting of children aged between three and four, a middle section with four- and five-year-

olds, and an upper section with five- and six-year-olds. There are often three classes per section, again divided up according to age. The three classes in each section may reflect a more detailed breakdown into age groupings of four months.

This grouping by age is justified by the speed with which children develop at this stage. It makes it possible to organize activities more closely geared to the children's ability level at any given time, particularly with regard to the teaching of manual skills, and preparation for learning. Take for instance graphic activity aimed at preparing children to write: there exist progressive exercises for the middle and upper sections, while in the lower section children are usually encouraged to play with felt pens, paint brushes and chalks. They learn in this way to use instruments without being given systematic instruction. Moreover, manual skills can be developed through a whole series of games involving the nesting of boxes, fitting objects into each other, collages, cut-outs, and the stringing of beads, among many others.

Pupils in the upper section are often given their first introduction to reading and writing, while certain mathematical games begin in the middle section. There is also instruction in spatial location (such notions as right, left, above, and below). This is thought to facilitate the learning of reading and mathematics.

Pre-school education is by no means in its infancy—in France the first nursery schools were established in 1881—yet discussion of its aims and content was for long restricted to educational circles. Nowadays an increasing number of people are taking an interest in the function of

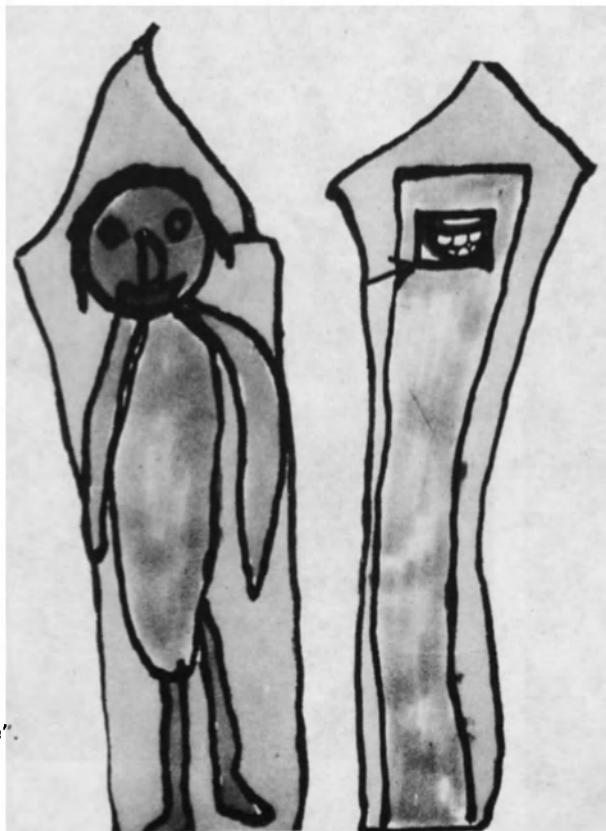
schooling and above all in the crisis now affecting it in many industrialized countries. Pre-school systems have not aroused the same degree of curiosity, and educational sociologists have devoted much less work to pre-schooling. But various factors are now encouraging its analysis.

In the first place, there is the problem of school failure, which is more widespread among children from a working-class background, and can be observed from the moment primary education begins. The theories that have been put forward to explain school failure are of two types: some find fault with the educational system itself, which fails to provide the right conditions to enable everyone to acquire the basic reading, writing and arithmetical skills. Others blame the circumstances of children from the poorest backgrounds, invoking what they call the "socio-cultural handicap" which results from being brought up in an unstimulating family environment and which prevents children from acquiring knowledge of a scholastic nature. This implies that the reasons for failure have nothing at all to do with the school. Similar explanations ascribe the failure of working-class children to a lack of intelligence, supposedly proved by their poor performance in intelligence tests.

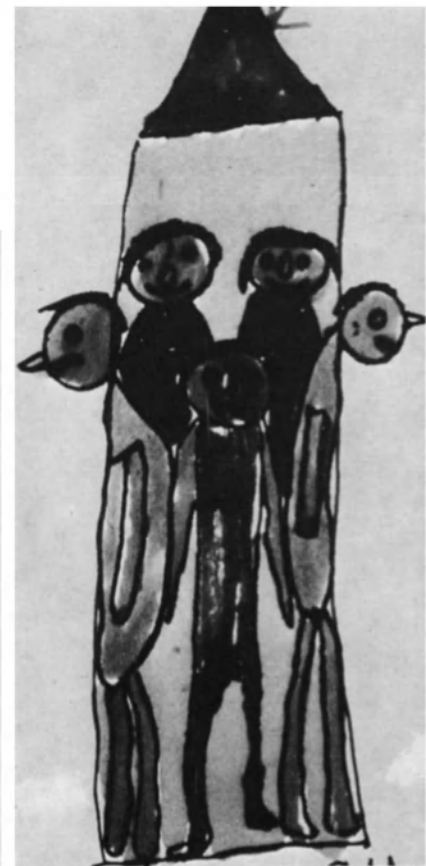
Such thinking on the causes of school failure has led to the devising of so-called compensatory teaching systems (because

Veryown village

"A house must have walls or we would all be outside" (Christophe). "A roof in case it rains" (David). "A floor or we might trip over the holes in the ground and moles might come in" (Stéphane). "A door so we can go in and out" (Sandrine). "And windows to look out of" (Mylène). "And so it won't be all dark inside" (Fabien). The children of the Gambetta nursery school, at Sèvres, near Paris, were discussing the houses they were going to build on a piece of land set apart for them by the municipality. The children built Veryown Village and, in 1978, they published a booklet describing how they set about it and from which these drawings are taken.



Drawings © Ecole Maternelle Gambetta, Sèvres, France



"If there were three or four of us inside we would be much too squashed; just think what it would be like with five!"

*"If it's too narrow, we won't be able to move".
"If the door is shut we won't even be able to eat and we shall have to make a hole in the door where our mouths will come so we can be fed through it".*

they compensate for the "handicaps" caused by the family environment). Experiments of this kind have been put into practice on a considerable scale in the United States (see page 23). Pre-primary school is considered an ideal stage at which to compensate for such handicaps. French nursery schools have even been called "schools for the equalization of opportunities". Such compensation should be particularly directed at language, since it is thought that working-class children suffer from a "linguistic handicap" which prevents them from understanding abstractions.

But these theories are by no means universally accepted. Many researchers question the whole notion of a socio-cultural handicap. It is not only wrong but highly dangerous, they claim, to blame families for any failure their children may experience at school, for it absolves the school of any responsibility in the matter. But if school is compulsory for all, it is its duty to pass on basic knowledge to all its pupils.

When, as sometimes happens, almost a third of the children experience difficulties during their primary education, some attempt should be made to establish why this is so and to discover what is wrong with the school. Research in the field has shown that the transmission of knowledge is not always egalitarian, and that in some cases it would be accurate to talk of selective transmission in favour of middle-class children. It has also been shown that school can encourage self-disparaging attitudes among working-class children, in other words that it can cause them to lose their self-confidence as pupils.

To talk of a socio-cultural handicap with reference to the poorest families is to analyze in pathological terms a phenomenon which is essentially related to social and more particularly educational conditions. To adopt such an approach is tantamount to denying the cultural identity of the working class. Now one of the great problems facing schools for all is how to respect the cultural identity of those who attend them. For if all are to enjoy the right to acquire knowledge, particular individual or social characteristics should be allowed for rather than repudiated. Teachers must also be trained; children are all too often entrusted to people who have received no proper pedagogical instruction.



"The roof must be higher, otherwise our heads will be sticking up into the room above."

It was long held that pre-primary school was a neutral, sheltered environment, and that the real problems began when children started primary school. But on-the-spot research has revealed the existence even in the pre-primary school of selective transmission and the development of proneness to failure among children from the poorest homes.

Pre-schooling, as has already been mentioned, is a vital period in the forming of a child's personality. It is only natural, then, that self-disparaging attitudes can leave a lasting mark on children who feel inferior to their fellow pupils. Such attitudes are not caused solely by the relationship with adults; they also stem from teaching methods and content. If reading and arithmetic are taught too early, there is a danger that many children may be put off such subjects. In France, there is a running controversy between advocates of their being taught early, and those who feel it is better to wait until primary school.

Various difficulties have been lumped together under the heading "handicaps", from motor and sensory difficulties, such as difficulties of walking, seeing or hearing which are quite clearly of a physiological nature, to psychological difficulties whose nature and origin are hard to analyze and whose very existence is sometimes far from easy to prove—the child may simply be reacting to school. In this case it is not a question of a disorder specific to the individual but of a particular manifestation of a lack of flexibility of the school.

Some French educationalists have stressed the need to detect all such "handicaps" before the age of four. Here again, caution is called for; while there is every advantage in detecting shortsightedness in young children it is much riskier to start examining them for signs of psychological abnormality. There is, moreover, a change in teachers' attitudes when one of their tasks is to detect such disorders. The long-term purpose of schooling could well change, and considerable harm could result for any child wrongly labelled as handicapped in some way.

One really difficult problem in pre-schooling is connected with the differences that exist between individuals. Depending



on the location of the school, there can be a varying degree of social homogeneity in the catchment area. But the teaching problem is the same everywhere; all children have to be prepared for primary school. In order to ensure that some children do not feel rejected, teachers have to understand them and try to understand themselves.

Labels, such as "unstable" or "troublesome", should be avoided at the pre-school level because they tend to stick. On the contrary, great attention should be paid to all signs of evolution or change, which teachers are in a position to detect as they are in contact with their pupils for several years. Teaching methods should be based on an understanding knowledge of the children and guided by the very positive aim of personality-forming.

Differences between children should be recognized and tolerated. It must be realized that they do exist, otherwise teachers will reject some children without being aware of their deeper reasons for doing so.

One of the first things a teacher has to face are differences in his pupils' social backgrounds. Then come differences in their rate of development; some children walk, speak and are toilet-trained before others, though this has no bearing on their subsequent development.

Another type of difference is in the way they react to school. Some children are at ease, and make full use of their ability to adjust. They are liked by their teacher, who is encouraged and reassured because he thinks he can detect the immediate effects of his teaching. Other pupils are fearful, anxious, on the defensive, reserved and shy. There are quiet children who do not try to draw attention to themselves by recounting the latest exploits of their families. In this world in miniature the teacher distinguishes between the most quick-witted and the slowest, between those who are well turned out and those whose appearance is neglected, and between those capable of keeping up with changes of activity, and those who remain aloof, participating only in short spells. But the teacher must also understand each one of them.

In the relationship that is gradually built up with the children, a vital role is played by the teacher's emotional reactions, such as sympathy, antipathy, selective irritability, favouritism, displays of affection, outbursts of anger, and so on. This emotional relationship is complemented by character judgments, and an image of each child gradually takes shape, blurred and changeable in some cases, clear-cut and lasting in others. Teachers tend to prefer and feel affection for children from their own social and cultural backgrounds.

Recognizing the children's cultural identity means recognizing that each one of them is a repository of culture and therefore also means respecting that which is different and specific to them. This is why there is an urgent need to defend the pre-primary school, to re-think it and to re-organize it in relation to the children who attend it—in a word, to respect those who have not yet learned distrust.

■ Liliane Lurçat



Love
is not
enough

by Burton L. White

IN 1965, the United States government initiated a dramatic attack on educational under-achievement by children from low-income families. Each year since then hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent on research and service programmes to help children prepare for entry into the school system. From these unprecedented efforts has come an exciting new conception of education which has focused attention on the importance of the education developments that take place during the first three years of life, long before a child enters primary school.

Recognition of the need for new approaches of this kind took some time to emerge. Free education had been available throughout the United States of America since the beginning of the century, but not until much later did it become clear that this was not enough.

Experience showed that the achievement levels of children entering the educational system at around the age of six generally gave a good indication of their likely school achievement levels in subsequent years. Children who appeared particularly well developed at six were much more likely to perform well throughout their school careers than average or below average six-year-olds. Furthermore, the gap between these two groups tended to widen with the relatively poorly developed six-year-olds falling further and further behind.

For several decades, various types of remedial education were introduced in an attempt to help the less favoured children make up the lost ground, but, in general,

BURTON L. WHITE of the USA is director of the Harvard Pre-school Project, a long-term research programme which he started 14 years ago to study ways of helping children make the best of their potential. He is the author of three textbooks on early childhood development and of a book for parents, *The First Three Years of Life*, published by Prentice-Hall Inc., New Jersey, USA, in 1975.

schools found it very difficult to make any significant improvement in the situation of those children who at six seemed unprepared for school.

The prevailing view, rooted in age-old ideas about human nature, was that this state of affairs was inevitable. If a child did not do well during his school years, it was because he or she did not have the potential for average or above-average academic achievement. The child who did well was destined to succeed because of hereditary factors.

As research on human development became more substantial from the 1940s onwards, many investigators came to question this entrenched idea.

It seemed that there was considerable reason to believe that learning opportunities during the first six years of life played a significant role in determining how much ability children had acquired by the time they entered the school system. If this were so, there was hope that children need not enter the system "predestined", as it were, to be poor performers.

More and more people came to believe that it was possible to provide better preparation for formal education. Spokesmen for low-income families became increasingly restive, and strong pressure was brought to bear on the U.S. government to provide special education programmes for pre-school children. The result was the massive attack on the problem of school readiness launched by the government in 1965.

The first major effort, known popularly as Project Head Start, was designed to help three- to-five-year-old children from low-income families prepare for the formal education system. With \$600 million in funds for the first year alone, and steadily supported since then, Project Head Start has encompassed a wide variety of programmes across the country.

It soon became clear, however, that the problem of readiness for formal education was not an easy one to solve.

One of the first findings was that not all children from low-income families were inadequately prepared for formal education. On the contrary, some of them showed outstanding academic abilities when they entered school.

Nevertheless, it was found that a higher percentage of the more slowly developing children came from low-income than from upper-income families. The vast majority of the new pre-school programmes did not seem to bring a dramatic improvement in their rate of development. Their ability

levels after two years of special education were not noticeably different from those of similar children who had not been enrolled in such programmes.

However, a handful of especially effective programmes did produce improvements. Children who otherwise would not have been ready for the first year of primary school were helped, particularly as far as their language and intellectual skills were concerned. By the time they entered school, they had reached levels of achievement that were at least as good as the national average.

This was an incredible achievement and one that received wide acclaim. Unfortunately, in from one to three years, all these improvements were usually lost. By the third year of primary school, the children who had been helped by the few outstanding pre-school programmes no longer showed any significant advantages over comparable children who had not attended experimental programmes.

This finding has been depressing for all those interested in improving the educational achievements of young children. However, many of those who have studied the development of young children over a period of several years have never been convinced that special education beginning at the age of three was the wisest way to help children prepare for school.

A number of indications, including the results of achievement tests at the age of three, pointed to the fact that the problems children reveal when they start school very often develop considerably before their third birthday.

Such evidence made it clear that programmes like Head Start, which start after the child is three years old, are not preventative but remedial. But since pre-school educational programmes such as Head Start are based on the belief that it is better to prevent than to remedy, it became obvious that the first three years of life should be more closely examined.

As a result, attention has shifted from the three-to-five-year age range to the first three years of life, including infants and toddlers.

Increased attention is also being paid to different kinds of teacher. The teachers in the Head Start programmes are professionals, and usually unrelated to the children. The teachers of children under three are usually the children's own parents, and most often their mothers.

Research during the past decade on how children acquire abilities during the first

▶ three years of life has brought to light some fascinating facts. First of all, there is a strong suggestion that during the first six or seven months of life babies are assured of acquiring certain skills, and that this holds good even though they may be brought up in a wide variety of ways.

Basically, what children have to acquire at this stage is the sense that they are deeply loved and a small number of simple skills such as learning how to see and hear clearly and how to reach for nearby objects. They must also preserve their innate interest in exploring the world. These skills seem to develop well in the vast majority of cases even when the parents have received no special training or assistance.

The picture changes dramatically, however, from the age of six or seven months until the third birthday. During this period there is nothing inevitable about children's development. There is no certainty that their language skills will develop as well as they might, that their curiosity will be deepened and broadened to the fullest, that their social development will be adequate, or that the sub-structure of intelligence will be solidly established. Given suitable learning opportunities they will acquire new skills and be able to handle increasingly complex tasks; but the progress made will depend to a surprising degree on the attitudes and child-rearing practices adopted by the parents.

One major source of difficulty is that as children enter the second half of their first year they enter a relatively dangerous time to be alive.

When babies begin to crawl, they are accident-prone. They use their mouths to explore the world and tend to swallow things that can harm them. Their movements are not well co-ordinated. Homes are not designed for such crawling children, and as a result infants tend to fall, cut and bruise themselves. Consequently, parents are inclined to restrict the exploratory activities of young children. However, this is not the most desirable way of helping the infant and toddler make the most of his developing talents.

Broadly speaking, it has become clear that the child's first teachers—his parents—are usually not well prepared for the very important task of getting their child off to a good educational start. Educational policies in the United States make no provision for preparing and assisting parents to raise very young children. Because of long-standing traditions, designed in part to protect the privacy of the home, it has been assumed that as long as parents love their children they will somehow do a good job of raising them.

However, recent research increasingly indicates that if parents were given preparation and assistance, both immediately before the birth of their children and during the pre-school years, children would get more out of their early learning experiences, parents would experience much less needless strain in raising young children, and everyone would get considerably more enjoyment out of the process.

■ Burton L. White

India's mobile crèches

An imaginative experiment in child-care

by *Meera Mahadevan*

INDIA is developing fast in every field. The country is mobilizing all its resources to accelerate its transformation from the bullock cart era to the space age; yet millions of our children still live in conditions of poverty.

The Mobile Crèche programme specializes in caring for children from the poorest sections of Indian society—construction labourers who travel from site to site, many thousands of whom are women and mothers, coal-scavengers, rag-pickers and others like them are the parents of our young charges.

The origins of the Mobile Crèche programme go back to 1969, when we opened a crèche in a tent for children under three left to fend for themselves while their mothers worked on a construction site in Delhi. In the next eight months, three more centres for children under three were opened. At that time we had neither transport facilities nor an office and the work of setting up a skeleton programme, gathering meagre supplies and scouting around for urgently needed help and finance was all carried out from the homes of volunteers or from central meeting points.

By the end of 1970, the number of crèches had grown to five and funds had been found for a small base office. In the next six months, five more centres were opened. The programme was gathering momentum and by mid-1971 we were pro-

MEERA MAHADEVAN, founder and director of the "Mobile Crèche" child care programme in India, died in July 1977. This article, an edited version of a study published in *Unesco's educational quarterly Prospects* (Vol. VII, N° 4, 1977), appears with the kind permission of *Unicef's journal Assignment Children*.



Photo © Abigail Heyman, Unicef

A mobile crèche set up on a New Delhi building site provides basic health and education services for the young children of unskilled construction workers. Forever on the move from one building site to another, and therefore the responsibility of no one local authority, these young urban nomads were left to look after themselves as best they could until the mobile crèche organization took a hand.

viding care for 1,000 children, dealing with ten building contractors and negotiating with a large number of officials who could sanction funds, water supplies or sanitation for the work-sites.

Construction workers are not the only ones compelled to leave their young ones to look after themselves. Every poor working mother has to leave the household and the babies in the charge of the older children. It is not uncommon, for example, to find a girl of six, herself in need of care, bringing up her baby brothers and sisters.

The first lesson we learned was that a child cannot be isolated either from its family or from the community. We started the programme with a crèche because that was the first priority as we saw it. But the moment we took in the babies, the older children who had been looking after them had nothing to do and they came along to our centres as well. Their nomadic way of life and the fact that they had been obliged to look after their siblings meant that most of them had never been to school.

So today we are involved not only in crèche and nursery services but also in elementary education. Our centres have three sections: a crèche, nursery classes, and elementary classes for children between the ages of six and twelve.

Furthermore, as we gained experience, we felt a great need for contact with parents and this led us to launch an adult

education programme. We realized that it was impossible to cater only for this or that age group, and took the whole community as our target.

Our equipment is simple and familiar to the mothers. For example we use improvised cradles of a type that is found throughout rural India and costs next to nothing. Other basic equipment for a crèche includes mats, a table for changing babies' clothes, and a cupboard for medicines, plates and other utensils. A stock of toys for a section of some 50 children costs no more than 10 rupees.

The accommodation allotted to us is usually drab. It may be in a basement or on the 18th floor of an unfinished skyscraper. To mellow the harsh surroundings, the staff decorate the crèche with the children's colourful drawings. The babies' cots and cradles have lovely mobiles hanging on them.

The babies, who come to us from the age of 3 or 4 weeks are generally malnourished. They receive a preliminary medical examination and are prescribed a diet by the visiting doctor. Most of them are given vitamin drops, milk, and other high-protein food according to need. Although the doctor visits a centre only once a week, the supervisors and nutritionists keep a close watch on the children's progress. Many babies are given half an egg as a special diet. Once they show signs of progress,

their mothers come forward to share the cost of an egg.

We try to make our crèches a home from home. Every effort is made to develop the child physically as well as emotionally, intellectually and socially. The crèches resound with the traditional songs familiar to children.

In our nursery sections there is nothing unfamiliar or alien to either the children or their teachers and the educational methods we use are carefully adapted to Indian experience.

Nursery schools are often considered a luxury in poor countries, mainly because they are thought to need elaborate and expensive facilities.

We have shown the fallacy of this belief by making imaginative use of cheap, locally available materials to provide equipment for children aged between three and six. In the nursery section the materials used are cardboard, chart paper, glazed paper, kite paper, wooden beads, scissors, blackboard, stones, leaves, flowers, potters' clay (to replace plasticine), rag dolls, old saris, wooden blocks and other inexpensive items.

Our most important achievement is to have produced model nursery equipment suitable for a country like India that has to think of children in millions. With few variations, the same equipment can be used throughout the country.

▶ Having found an answer to the problem of children under six, we realized that it was impossible not to cater for deprived children aged between six and twelve.

In Delhi, primary education is free and poor children are entitled to get free books and uniform. Unfortunately, many of the poorest members of our society, who are completely illiterate, are not even aware of these opportunities. In spite of the best intentions, the government does not always succeed in reaching the poorest people in the country. This is where the role of an agency like Mobile Crèches becomes vital. When we take care of the babies and the nursery-age children, we prepare the older children in our elementary sections to join the local elementary school.

We had to educate our own staff. We need teachers who will attend to a child's sores and bathe him before settling down to teach. We also need teachers who will convince the parents that they should send their children to the school. Thus a worker in a Mobile Crèche must be a social worker, a teacher and a mother.

The training has to be very basic and simple. A standard routine of bathing, feeding and giving medicine to babies had to be worked out and suitable equipment provided. The role of the dustbin had to be dramatized. Working in unhygienic surroundings without sanitation, we have an enormous task to maintain standards of cleanliness in our centres. We have to improvise little places which babies can use as toilets and then find methods of disposing of the waste in a hygienic way.

Higher secondary school girls form the bulk of our staff, but over the past three or

four years we have also started recruiting boys. They bring a different atmosphere with them and children love to have a male teacher around.

From the beginning, the Mobile Crèche programme had wholehearted support from the children on construction sites and in the slums. Seeing their children so happy with our staff, parents also accepted us, although they were a little suspicious at the beginning.

Each child is charged a nominal fee. They all have to buy slates, notebooks, pencils, erasers and other materials at subsidized rates.

When the idea of charging fees was introduced, many mothers refused to pay for nursery children on the grounds that this age group did nothing but play and sing. It was quite understandable, and we decided to organize a mothers' meeting to explain all our nursery school activities. This meeting was a great success and we now always hold this type of meeting when a new centre is opened.

Mothers' meetings are a very common feature of our activities today. In 1969 and 1970, when we were new in the field, we tried to bring the mothers together but they were always busy with their household chores. Then we tried cooking demonstra-

tions and these attracted a group of mothers who began to meet regularly. We provided them with education in nutrition and taught other topics related to child care, hygiene, weaning foods, and the diet of pregnant and nursing mothers.

Today our main point of contact with the parents is our Adult Education Programme, which has helped us considerably in improving our services to children. Before carrying out immunization or vaccination programmes we hold parents' meetings at which we explain, with the aid of films, flash cards, etc., what we want to do and why. In this way we retain the parents' goodwill and they do not get the impression that the programme is being high-handedly imposed on them.

In its Fifth Plan, the Government of India has given priority to crèche programmes and the Mobile Crèche programme now receives a substantial grant from the Welfare Department. This has enabled us to work at certain sites even when the building contractors have refused to contribute financially. Our aim is to educate the community by our work. We want the contractors and the authorities concerned to be convinced that there is no ulterior motive and that our sole concern is the welfare of the children.

■ Meera Mahadevan



Photo © J. L. Nou, Unicef

Crèche and nursery school programmes have been given high priority by the Indian Government over recent years. At this nursery school in Madras carefully selected toys help stimulate the imagination and develop manual dexterity.

Steering with a smile. Shepherdess Irina Lapasova, who lives in the Gorno-Altai Autonomous Region of the USSR, is determined that her 10 children will take the right road in life. (The three youngest were at the crèche when photo was taken).

Photo © Photokhronika Tass, Moscow



Family and State – a shared responsibility

by Aleksandr V. Zaporozhets

IN the Soviet Union today 15 million children are enrolled in a vast network of state nursery schools. On average, about 50 per cent of children under seven attend pre-school institutions, but in Moscow, Leningrad, Ashkhabad, Magnitogorsk and a number of other industrial centres, the figure is substantially higher (about 80 per cent). In these centres, all children whose parents wish them to attend nursery schools are admitted without restriction.

There are 213 training colleges for nursery school teachers; and highly qualified staff (such as heads of nursery schools, specialists in teaching methods, and

ALEKSANDR V. ZAPOROZHETS, Soviet psychologist, is a member of the USSR Academy of Pedagogical Sciences and director of the Academy's Institute of Pre-school Education. He is the author of more than a hundred scientific studies on child psychology and pre-school teaching.



Photo © APN, Moscow

"It's very hard to make up later for what hasn't been done in the first three years", wrote the Soviet educationalist Anton S. Makarenko (1888-1939). A fundamental tenet of Makarenko's theories on education is that children's will-power is developed not through indulging their every whim but through teaching them self-control and balanced and positive behaviour. Above, a budding ballerina at practice.

training college lecturers) are trained in 34 specialized faculties in pedagogical institutes. There are some 800,000 pre-school teachers in the USSR today.

The family plays a highly important role in the education of children in the USSR. Soviet pre-school educational methods are based on the principle of the unity of state and family education.

Throughout the country, educational ideas are publicized on a large scale by "parents' universities", lectures, courses and counselling, and also by the press, radio and television. Many editions of popular books on family education are published.

The Soviet system of pre-school education is based on the idea that the development of the child does not occur spontaneously, as a result of the emergence of innate aptitudes, but that the determining factors are the social environment and education.

Education is particularly important in the first years of life, when there is an intensive development of various intellectual, artistic and practical abilities, when the moral qualities of the personality are formed, and the character begins to take shape.

As the Soviet educationalist A.S. Makarenko pointed out, the way in which children are educated during the pre-school period has a decisive influence on their success or failure at school and to some extent determines their subsequent achievements in various fields of productive, scientific and artistic activity, their position in society and their happiness in personal life.

Although certain characteristics of a new-born child's organic structure (and especially of his nervous system) are inherited, these are merely the starting-point for his later psychological development and do not predetermine either his character or his future level of development. All normal children have enormous psychological and physiological potential; the problem lies in creating the most favourable conditions for realizing it.

Having recognized the importance of inherited characteristics, we must, at the same time, emphasize that they are merely the conditions and not the determinants of the child's psychological development. None of the distinctive characteristics of the human mind, such as logical thought, creative imagination and volition as a regulator of action, can emerge simply as the result of the maturing of organic characteristics. They can only develop in the right social and educational conditions.

Psychologists have accumulated vast amounts of data which support this thesis. Studies on very young children hospitalized in isolation from adults, show that psychological development is impossible if the child is cut off from social life and education in the broadest sense.

However, merely to indicate the decisive importance of social and educational factors is not enough; it is essential to acquire a clearer idea of the role of these factors in psychological development.

Many West European and American psychologists consider that the development of children and young animals follows a similar process of adaptation,

except that children adapt to the conditions of social life while animals adapt to biological conditions.

Such a concept is false because it takes no account of the specific way in which the human organism develops. It is true that children, like young animals, go through a process of adaptation and adjustment to environmental conditions, but their psychological development follows different lines and is not analogous to that of animals.

It has been demonstrated that throughout childhood, the individual absorbs the social experience accumulated by the previous generation, acquires specific knowledge and skills, and grasps certain aesthetic and moral standards. If no such social

It's never too early to learn

by **Boris Nikitin**

BORIS NIKITIN is a Soviet engineer who has also written widely on questions relating to the education of young children. He and his wife Yelena are co-authors of a study based on their experiences in bringing up their own family. This article brings up to date his account of life with the Nikitin family, published in the February 1971 issue of the Unesco Courier.

experience is acquired, the child's psychological development cannot take place.

It should be stressed that the acquisition of social experience implies not only the accumulation of individual concepts and skills, but also the development of certain personality traits. This is not a passive process and should not be regarded as a one-way influence exercised on the child's consciousness by adults while the child remains inactive.

The child's activity is of decisive importance; without such activity nothing can be achieved. Its nature changes as the child develops. Certain forms of activity become dominant at certain stages of development, later becoming subsidiary and being replaced by other, more complex forms of behaviour.

Children of pre-school age mainly learn through play and through such creative pursuits as drawing, modelling and building. Later on, school activities and socially useful work become more important.

Research has shed light on the process whereby new forms of mental activity develop while the child is actively acquiring social experience. Initially such activities take an outward, physical form of expression and later, through the command of language, are "generalized" and, as Piaget puts it, "interiorized" as part of a process of conceptualization, imagination and thought.

The work of such Soviet specialists as Leontyev, Galperin and Elkonin shows that while this process always occurs, it takes

place more slowly and less effectively when the child is left to its own devices. It happens much earlier, and is more complete, if the education provided is specially structured and purposive.

These are some of the psychological data which form the basis of Soviet pre-school educational theory. They provide scientific justification for opposing the concepts of spontaneous development and undirected education and for insisting on the importance of the teacher's role, on the need for the systematic teaching of pre-school children according to a definite syllabus, and on the need for measures specifically designed to form certain aspects of the child's personality.

■ Aleksandr V. Zaporozhets



1

The seven children of librarian Yelena Nikitin and her engineer husband Boris are all two or three years ahead of other children of their own age. Alyosha, the eldest, is already, at the age of 17, working as a senior technician in a research institute. Anton, the second, has just graduated—at thirteen and a half—from a secondary school specializing in mathematics. The other children are still at school, and are all two or three years younger than their classmates. How is it that they have developed so early? Boris Nikitin explains:

WHEN our first child, Alyosha, was born 17 years ago, our primary concern—like that of parents everywhere—was that he should grow up into a capable, good-hearted and healthy adult. But how could we make sure that he would turn out like this?

We read the biographies of talented individuals of the past—poets and writers like Pushkin and Lermontov, musicians like Mozart, inventors like Edison—and were struck by the early age at which their creativity became apparent...

We began to collect facts, and to study the history of education. One of the first things we discovered was that in the 18th century, children learned to read and write at the age of 14 or 15; since then these skills have been taught at an

2



3

1 — Soviet engineer Boris Nikitin and his family are firm believers in the precept that a sound mind should go together with a sound body. Physical exercise and outdoor recreation are the order of the day for the Nikitin children, come rain, wind... or even snow...

2 — ...with dad gamely joining in.

3 — A family get-together on a sunny day. Informal discussion is an essential part of the upbringing that has helped all the Nikitin children to develop earlier than their contemporaries.

4 — The two eldest Nikitins put their theoretical knowledge to the test in the family workshop.

Photos 1 and 2 © APN, Moscow

Photos 3 and 4 N. Samoylov
© "Soviet Woman", Moscow

increasingly early age. Two centuries later, we ourselves started school at the age of eight, whereas our children would do so at seven. We discovered that in 58 countries schooling began at the age of six, and at five in a number of others, and that educational specialists in some parts of the world were asking whether it should not begin at the age of four. How, we asked ourselves, could this trend be explained? What is the best age to start school?

While we were busy puzzling over this question, Alyosha was growing. One day, when he was one and a half years old, someone gave him a set of cubes with letters of the alphabet printed on them. "The letters won't mean anything to him yet," we said to ourselves, but we let him play with the cubes all the same.

Three months or so later, we were more than a little surprised to discover that Alyosha could already recognize a dozen letters. By the time he was two and a half, he knew all 29 letters of the Russian alphabet. Two months later, without any prompting, he read out his first word. This was an eye-opener for us. If our child could read at such an early age, how soon could he acquire other skills?

At first, we relied entirely on intuition in determining Alyosha's capacities and limitations. We were very careful, when we played with him, not to apply pressure or impose lessons. If he did something successfully, we were pleased; if he failed, we simply waited until he tried again.

At one-and-a-half or two-year intervals, other little brothers or sisters arrived and we ourselves gained experience and became bolder in our approach. The family's stock of educational toys and equipment for physical exercise steadily increased, and we even invented materials and games ourselves.

In addition to the lettered cubes, we had a board on the wall with letters made of bent wire or cut out of linoleum, a blackboard, chalks, pencils and paper, reading books and copy-books. When one of the little ones found a ring

one day he ran up to us, shouting delightedly, "Look, Mummy, an 'O'!"

We played trains with the letters, joining them up to form "M - A - M - A", "P - A - P - A", "M - O - L - K - O" (milk) and other simple words. Our second son, Anton, began to read at three years and three months; the girls all began between the ages of three and four.

Our general approach was based on the fact that, to teach a child to speak, adults talk to it as soon as it is born; in other words the child is placed in conditions of oral communication long before it begins to speak itself. Why not provide the same conditions for the development of other faculties? And this, as far as we were able, was what we did: we tried to place our children in an environment that would stimulate the development of the greatest possible variety of activities.

We didn't hesitate to introduce into the children's immediate surroundings a large number of things from the world of grown-ups. As well as the usual toys, dolls and children's books, we provided a wide range of educational objects and materials, such as maps and globes, mathematical tables and textbooks, and a whole series of educational games invented by the family.

Games begin with very simple tasks, like copying patterns, pictures or shapes, and lead to more creative activities involving the invention of new patterns, models and constructions. These activities are quite informal. They are not "lessons" in the sense that the adult teaches and the child assimilates, but playful contests in which the grown-ups are participants as well as referees, and which often involve problems like "how can we share 25 walnuts between nine people?", or "how can we divide three apples into 10 equal parts?"

We encourage the children to work the answers out for themselves, and never hurry them, however long they take. We believe that it is better to wait patiently and to study their own

processes of reasoning; we don't even intervene when they're on the wrong track; we leave them to find that out for themselves too. What we are looking for is originality, and the ability to argue a case and defend a point of view.

We allow our children plenty of freedom in choosing their occupations and working out their own time-table, since we believe that this gives them the opportunity to discover and express their different interests.

We know that children are often more interested in playing a game if adults, and especially their parents, also join in enthusiastically. Grown-ups should not remain on the side-lines, as impartial observers or dutiful instructors, but should participate wholeheartedly. And this is what we do; we are just as excited as they are when someone is successful, and just as disappointed when someone makes a mess of things.

Our children each have very different characters and interests but they share the same curiosity, attentiveness and ability to memorize. They easily recall what they have read, think originally, seek their own solutions and enjoy tasks that sharpen their wits. Academician Nikolai Amosov considers that they are not so much "eggheads" as "problem-solvers". They like to invent and act out situations, writing and performing playlets in which they are "in the Revolution", "in prehistoric times", "at the zoo" or "at the theatre"...

If the development of the child starts earlier, at a more favourable period of his life, he will not be overburdened with work later on at school and consequently will not drop behind. All our children get good marks at school, but the most important thing is the excellent way in which each one has developed his creative capacities.

Our main conclusion, after 15 years of practical and theoretical enquiry in our own family, is that all children can develop in this way—and can do even better—if the necessary conditions are provided at the right time.

■ Boris Nikitin



Photo © Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU The children's champion

THIS year marks the 200th anniversary of the death of the philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who was born in Geneva in 1712. Rousseau was not only the author of the first eloquent and persuasive piece of writing to glorify childhood but also a thinker whose ideas about education, with their insistence on respect for the liberty and dignity of the child, are now widely accepted in the modern world. He is also remembered for his celebrated warning, still so often echoed today, that "We know nothing about childhood" and that "with the false ideas we entertain about childhood, the further we go, the further we go astray." It is customary to attribute the generalization of breast-feeding to his advocacy of it in *Emile*, although it must be admitted that the climate of opinion had already changed and many mothers were nursing their children (instead of farming them out to wet-nurses) before Rousseau's famous treatise on education appeared in 1762. On other issues too, Rousseau's eloquent arguments, including his plea that babies should be liberated from "the tyranny of swaddling clothes", caused the welfare of infants to be viewed in a fresh light and gave rise to an entirely new approach to older children.

There was, then, what we might call a "Rousseau effect"; but whether or not it was based, like his other great work, *The Social Contract*, on the

notion that man is born good, is perhaps of minor importance. His major achievement lay in attacking long-accepted practices, drawing up new guidelines and implanting the idea that the true purpose of education is to teach children the business of living, that living is not just a matter of breathing, but of acting, sloughing off a deadweight of useless restrictions, and of learning how to exercise freedom. And so, says Rousseau, "Let us allow childhood to ripen in the child"; let us be on our guard against entrenched ideas enshrined in tradition, training and society, let us put these ideas under the microscope of rigorous and unrelenting criticism. For if might is the enemy of right, habit is the enemy of freedom. Let us encourage the growth of liberty from the moment of birth; education begins when the child first draws breath.

For the aim of education is to prepare for life, and not to turn out pedants and the kind of "profound thinkers" who understand everything except the world they live in. This is implied in Rousseau's insistence that children should have the right to find things out for themselves, to acquire experience at first hand. The exercise of this right fosters the development of freedom and curbs the will to dominate. Children also learn from experience how to tailor their desires to their capabilities.

However, if the originality of Rousseau's ideas can still be appreciated 200 years after his death, we know today that a hunger for truth is not necessarily the prerogative of the child or "the noble savage". The theory that civilization is nothing but a source of failure, ruin and decay is no longer tenable. The concepts of "experience" and "mastery", as we understand them today, are much more complex and subtle than they appeared to Rousseau. He was doubtless aware of the difficulty of the problems he was dealing with, and when he wondered whether it could ever be possible to "direct fully the speech and actions of all those who come into contact with a child" he showed that he had some idea of the importance of the social and cultural environment. But an awareness that those who deal with a child play a major role in his development is not enough, even if it is combined with a realization that children are the focus of plans and expectations even before they are born. The all-important question remains to be solved: how do these expectations actually affect the child and in what sense, if any, do they "predetermine" his development?

Mohammed A. Sinaceur
Division of Philosophy, Unesco

Who teaches the teachers?

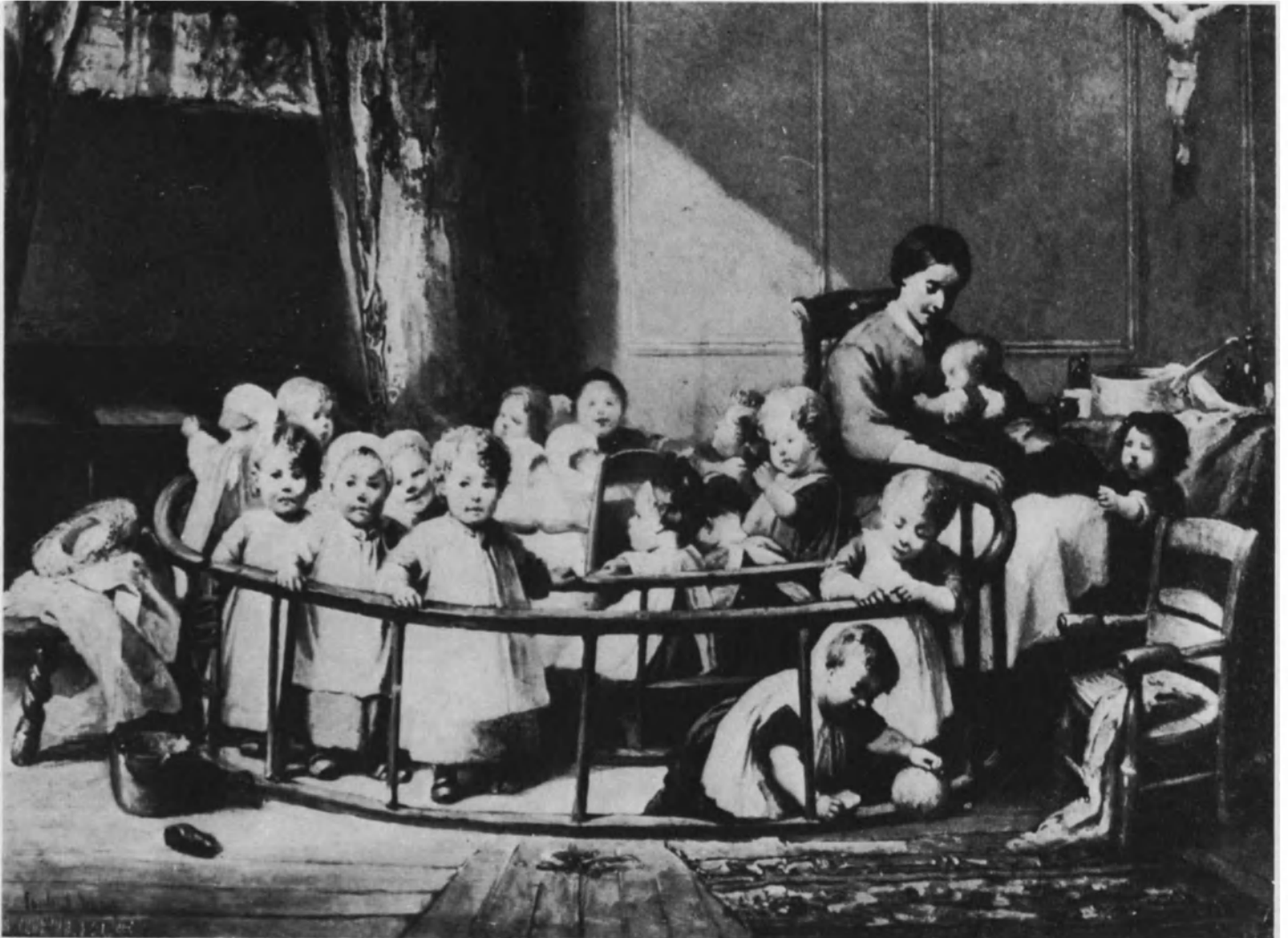


Photo © Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

Looking after a group of young children demands an inexhaustible supply of energy and a wide variety of skills, for the pre-school teacher is called upon to be by turns mother, psychologist and nurse, as well as an educator. Above, a precursor of the modern play-pen as visualized by the 19th-century French artist François-Louis Lanfant de Metz.

by Dorothy Fleming

STAFFING policies for pre-schools vary considerably around the world. In many countries, staff working with younger children are less well trained than those working with older children. Policy-makers rationalize by saying that there is less need for trained teachers in pre-

DOROTHY FLEMING, British specialist in pre-school education, is senior lecturer in education at Sheffield City Polytechnic (U.K.) and was head teacher of a nursery school from 1960 to 1968.

schools than in compulsory schools. In this connexion one must remember that in some countries pre-school education was and still is voluntary whereas primary school is compulsory.

The trend now is both towards making the pre-school experience available to more children and towards providing better trained and educated pre-school teachers. Sufficient funds are not always made available, however, to pursue both goals at once.

In China, candidates for kindergarten teaching complete upper primary school at age 12, and then attend a junior normal school for three to four years to qualify for the work. On-the-job training is very much encouraged.

In Japan, on the other hand, a very high level of academic achievement is required of entrants to teacher-training for young children. The U.K. comes about half-way between the two: a candidate must have attended secondary school till age 18 before entering teacher-training courses for young children.

A distinction is made in the U.K. as in some other countries, between Nursery Nurses, who work only in pre-schooling and day-care (usually under supervision) and Nursery and Infant Teachers, who are qualified (after 3 or 4 years of higher education) to work in pre-school or primary schools, with children up to seven or eight, often supervising less qualified helpers.

The ways in which pre-school education is organized around the world are also extremely varied. One finds state- or private-run classes, full- or part-time caring

arrangements; nursery groups may be set up by parents or by employers. There are, nevertheless, some interesting similarities. Though in some countries there is disagreement about the priority that should be given to state-run pre-schooling, there is now fairly wide agreement that specially trained people should be providing it. For example, the pre-school playgroups in the U.K. which were initiated and financed by parents would on the whole prefer to be using trained teachers.

At first sight, the social and educational aims of pre-schooling may seem to differ widely in various societies, for example, in the USSR and in the U.S.A. However, on closer examination, one finds that their basic aims are much closer than might have been thought.

In every kind of society, teachers of young children have a variety of roles to play and must resolve the conflicts arising from these different roles. They have to be instructors, managers, helpers, disciplinarians, welfare workers and decision-makers. They have to have insight and understanding of a wide range of personal, familial, social, economic and political processes as well as of their own place within them, and so they need a remarkably wide range of knowledge and skills.

If these teachers miss opportunities, fail to make correct assessments and deductions or take wrong action, the consequences can harm or disadvantage a child in his later years. On the other hand, if a child's early experience of teachers and of school is a positive one, this can lead to a life-long love of learning and to the development of an individual who is stable, independent

and well-functioning within his own society.

It is more vital than ever to give the highest possible level of training to those professionals who will be working with young children. They should have a minimum of three or four years initial training with periodic refresher courses. Not only are they being given much of the responsibility for passing on the culture and values of societies to their youngest members but they are also responsible for developing the potential of individuals to the highest level.

It may well be the case that the training a society provides for its pre-school educators is a sign of its maturity and the confidence it feels in its own future.

■ Dorothy Fleming

According to Unesco's *Statistical Yearbook (1976)* there were 1,681,000 pre-school teachers throughout the world in 1974, although these figures do not include the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Over a million and a half were in the industrially developed countries, as opposed to only 163,000 in the developing world (including 4,000 in Africa, 8,000 in Oceania, 10,000 in the Arab countries and 86,000 in Latin America).



Photo © Valérie Winckler, Ville d'Avray, France

Letters to the editor

JULES VERNE: FORESIGHT OR HINDSIGHT?

Sir,

I was very disappointed by Alain Bombard's article "Jules Verne, Seer of the Space Age" (March 1978).

The caption on page 30 proclaims that "Jules Verne's universal appeal is due not only to his outstanding gifts as a story-teller, but also to his *prophetic* qualities". However, anyone who takes the trouble to look into the scientific literature of the period will find that Jules Verne *invented nothing*.

Alain Bombard writes that "the only occasion when Jules Verne's extremely logical mind led him astray" was in *A Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, and that in his other novels he foresaw with astonishing accuracy a host of modern inventions, among them being the submarine. But the submarine is not a 20th-century invention.

The first submersible dates back some two and a half centuries before the publication of *20,000 Leagues under the Sea*, to 1624. In that year the Dutch inventor Cornelis Van Drebbel, a protégé of King James I of England, built a "diving boat" according to principles drawn up by the English philosopher and mathematician William Bourne in 1578. Van Drebbel's wooden vessel, propelled by oars and made watertight by a leather cover, travelled along the Thames from Westminster to Greenwich. Its most illustrious passenger was King James himself.

The world's first pocket submarine, David Bushnell's *Turtle*, was built in 1777 during the American War of Independence.

Jules Verne did not even invent the name *Nautilus*, which was that of the submarine designed by the American Robert Fulton in 1798 and built in 1800. (*20,000 Leagues under the Sea* was written in the late 1860s.)

This is only one instance of Jules Verne's so-called visionary gifts.

The fact is that Verne's ignorance was monumental and all-embracing, one particularly striking example being his description of the divers of the *Nautilus* swimming in water at a temperature of between 6 and 7 degrees below zero. They must have had a hard time trying to move around in a solid block of ice!

Jules Verne was a great novelist whose works have given me considerable pleasure, but it is a mistake to present him as a great visionary of the 19th century. All he did was to lift from his wide reading material which he barely understood.

Henri Broch
Doctor in physics
Researcher at the Faculty of Science,
Nice, France

CARING ABOUT SEALS

Sir,

In his letter published in your January 1978 issue, Mr. A.M. Dalil of Teheran, whilst admiring the humanitarian motives of a group of French students who wrote protesting against the slaughter of baby seals, wonders how they can worry about seals when so many people die of hunger each day or are killed more unmercifully than seals just because they want their freedom.

How does your correspondent know that these French students are not also concerned about the people he mentions? Young people should be encouraged to think about both human beings and animals; there can be no question of priority when life, which is indivisible, is at stake.

Does Mr. Dalil think that activities as different as, for example, teaching illiterates to read and write, or organizing football matches should be postponed until everyone on earth is free and well fed?

S. Montezinos
World Federation for the Protection
of Animals,
Rijswijk, The Netherlands

Sir,

I fully understand the reaction of Mr Dalil (*Unesco Courier*, January 1978) who finds it astonishing that people should be so concerned about the fate of animals when so many humans are being massacred or are dying of hunger throughout the world.

But what is he himself doing to alleviate human misery? Has he not yet learned that no one can ever stop men killing each other? The fact is they like killing each other! There have always been wars and unfortunately there always will be. Yet this is no reason to allow animals to be massacred. Men can defend themselves, animals cannot.

Mr Dalil should ponder these words of Mahatma Gandhi: "When men understand that they should not cause animals to suffer, they will suffer less themselves".

In conclusion, may I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your extremely interesting magazine.

Madame P.L.
Courbevoie, France

SAVE THE WHALE

Sir,

I am writing this letter because I think something should be done to save the whales. People have been killing them for over a century. But now they are becoming extinct and I think we should do something about it. I think we should set up whale sanctuaries all over the world. We should do something and do it now, or by the time I have children there won't be any whales left.

Patrick Marley
Eloy Junior High School,
Eloy, Arizona, U.S.A.

This is one of forty letters pleading for action to save the whale from extinction written by seventh grade pupils of Eloy Junior High School, Arizona, U.S.A. — Editor.

THROUGH THE WINDOW

Sir,

As a subscriber to the *Unesco Courier* I would like to thank you for this "window open on the world" of international friendship and understanding, a world without frontiers. Reading your magazine renews one's faith in humanity and gives one the

urge to climb through the window, to renounce the role of mere spectator and to assume that of a responsible, adult participant working with you to achieve the goal of peace.

Madame H. Berthault
Aumale, France

SEVENTEEN PLUS

Sir,

I greatly enjoy the *Unesco Courier*, and your issue on Arab culture was fascinating. As a teacher I should like to congratulate you on your article "Calligraphy and Architecture". I am glad to take the opportunity to say how much I appreciate the quality and the variety of the articles you publish.

I was happy to read that the publication of the Catalan edition brings the total number of language editions of the *Unesco Courier* to seventeen.

Gelencsér Gábor
Zalaegerszeg, Hungary

Since Mr Gábor wrote this letter a Malaysian edition of the Unesco Courier has been launched, bringing the total number of language editions up to eighteen — Editor.

DANGER, WEEDS!

Sir,

I am writing to point out an important detail to those responsible for the restoration of the Acropolis. If, as has been suggested (*Unesco Courier*, October 1977), soil is spread over the "holy rock", it will certainly contain seeds and spores of weeds. Under the effect of rain and wind these seeds and spores are liable to lodge and grow in the crevices of the stones of the monument thus causing further damage.

Catherine Stéphan
Versailles, France

THE BIRTH OF JAZZ

Sir,

First of all I should like to congratulate you on the new Catalan edition of the *Unesco Courier*.

At the same time, may I make a few comments on Alejo Carpentier's article "The Blacks in Latin America" (August-September 1977)? I take issue with his statement that "Alexander's Ragtime Band" was the work of Irving Berlin. In my view, Berlin simply made a musical transcription of a tune which was already being played by "musically illiterate" black musicians in New Orleans. This unscrupulous habit of plagiarizing black musicians' work was fairly widespread among white musicians—but this is too vast a subject to go into here.

Jazz is not creole music (in the sense in which Carpentier uses the word *creole*) but black music. With certain honourable exceptions, behind every well-known piece of jazz by a white composer there is always a black whose work has been imitated, plagiarized and unrecognized.

Carpentier quotes an author who declares that the history of jazz began in 1619, when the first black slaves arrived in Virginia. One might just as well say that its starting point can be traced back to the emergence of the first cultures in Africa. However, the truth of the matter is that jazz was born when the New Orleans blacks became free and formed bands, using instruments which were more sophisticated than those of Africa.

Ramón Ferrer Valero
Sabadell, Spain

Bookshelf

RECENT UNESCO BOOKS AND PERIODICALS

□ **Solving Educational Problems:** the theory and reality of innovation in developing countries, by R.G. Havelock and A.M. Huberman. A study prepared for the International Bureau of Education. Co-published with OISE, Toronto, and Praeger Publishers, New York, who have exclusive sales rights in Canada and the USA respectively. 1978, 308 pp. (45 F)

□ **Systems and Policy: The function of Information in Improving Education Systems.** National case studies of Argentina, Denmark, German Dem. Rep., Iraq and New Zealand. Prepared for the International Bureau of Education. 1977, 82 pp. (12 F)

□ **Lifelong Education and University Resources.** Case studies of experiments in Canada, France, Ghana, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, Venezuela and Zambia. 1978, 193 pp. (42 F)

□ **Terminology: Special Education,** by Lise Brunet, M.R. Marín Ibáñez, V.I. Lubovskij and N. Sondergard. A four-language glossary (English, Spanish, French, Russian) to facilitate communication between specialists in different countries. 1977, 368 pp. (42 F)

□ **Terminology: Unesco: IBE Education Thesaurus.** A faceted list of terms for indexing and retrieving documents and data in the field of education with French and Spanish equivalents. 1977, 348 pp. (42 F)

□ **The Politics of Territoriality** is the theme of Unesco's quarterly *International Social Science Journal* (Vol. XXX, No. 1, 1978). Each issue 23 F; subscriptions 70 F for one year or 116 F for two years.

OTHER BOOKS

□ **African Traditional Architecture,** by Susan Denyer. Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., London. 1978, 210 pp. (Hardbound £8.50; softbound £3.80)

□ **Things to Make with Everyday Objects,** by Kevin Goldstein-Jackson. Souvenir Press, London. 1978, 149 pp. (£3.95) Sixty simple experiments for children.

□ **Papua New Guinea: Its Economic Situation and Prospects for Development.** A World Bank Country Economic Report. 1978, 223 pp. (\$6.50)

□ **World Armaments and Disarmament: SIPRI Yearbook 1978.** Published by Taylor and Francis Ltd., London, on behalf of Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, and distributed by Almqvist and Wiksell International, Stockholm (for Scandinavia), Crane, Rusak and Co. Inc., New York (for USA), and Taylor and Francis (for rest of the world). 1978, 518 pp. (£18.00)

Toys and games from round the world

An international exhibition of traditional games and local toys will be held at Unesco HQ in Paris during the forthcoming session of the Organization's General Conference in November 1978. The exhibition will bring together games and toys from every continent, made from locally available materials by children and craftsmen using non-industrial methods.

A museum for Gay-Lussac

Louis-Joseph Gay-Lussac, the famous French physicist and chemist noted for his discovery of the gas cyanogen and of laws governing the combination of gases which served as the basis of the atomic theory, was born on 6 December 1778 at Saint-Laurent-de-Noblat in central France. To mark this bicentenary, Saint-Laurent-de-Noblat has created a museum, to be opened this summer, devoted to Gay-Lussac's life and work. Among the exhibits in the museum, which is housed in an 18th century convent, are manuscripts and laboratory instruments belonging to the great scientist.

Down with high blood pressure

In a message for World Health Day (7 April), Dr. Halfdan Mahler, Director-General of the World Health Organization, drew attention to the problem of hypertension, or high blood pressure, "whose complications are among the most important causes of death and incapacity in many parts of the world". A recent survey of European and North American adults had shown that between 10 and 15 % were hypertensive, Dr. Mahler pointed out, but "only half of these cases were known to the health profession and of those only 30 % at most were under treatment... Prevalence of hypertension in developing countries seems to be about as high and the number of cases treated far less."

Women and rural development

A world conference on agrarian reform and rural development will be held in Rome in July 1979 under the auspices of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). It is strongly hoped that representatives of specialized women's organizations will take part.

"Rural populations have not benefitted from the general progress made in recent years," declared Mr. Edouard Saouma, Director-General of FAO. "We hope that the conference will help these populations to emerge from their poverty."

The integration of women into rural development should be one of the major problems discussed at the conference, which will deal with social and economic factors rather than technical problems.

Guide to World Food Programme

The World Food Programme (WFP) has published a brochure on "what it is, what it does, and how it works". Set up in 1962 by the UN and the Food and Agriculture Organization, the WFP provides food aid to developing countries and aims to stimulate economic and social deve-

lopment. The brochure can be obtained from WFP, Via delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100, Rome, Italy.

World Telecommunication Day

"Radiocommunications" is the theme of the 10th World Telecommunication Day (17 May). The possibilities of radio captured the imagination of the world as long ago as 1909, when two ships collided off Nantucket, Mass., USA. Thanks to a distress appeal by a radio operator, 1,500 persons were saved. Today some 80,000 vessels are equipped with radio. World Telecommunication Day coincides with the anniversary of the foundation of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), created (as the International Telegraph Union) in Paris on 17 May 1865. The ITU, whose headquarters are in Geneva, is the oldest intergovernmental organization of the United Nations system, and has 154 Member States.

New home for Papua New Guinea Museum

The National Museum and Art Gallery of Papua New Guinea, housed in temporary accommodation at Port Moresby since 1960, has moved into a new specially constructed complex including pavilions and buildings in traditional village style. Unesco's quarterly review *Museum* (No. 4, 1977) contains a study on the museum and its collections, which illustrate a highly original and often misunderstood cultural heritage.

Subscription: 60 French Francs (1 year); 120 F (2 years)

Unesco medal to honour Aristotle

Unesco has issued a commemorative medal to mark the 2,300th anniversary of the death of the Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 B.C.). Engraved by Leognany (Paris) the medal shows on one side a profile of Aristotle after a sculpture in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, on the other an owl, symbolizing the sciences, and a map of Greece. The Aristotle medal is one of a Unesco series commemorating the anniversaries of great men such as Michelangelo (1975) and Rubens (1977). Each medal is available in gold, silver and bronze and may also be purchased with a chain ring for wear as jewellery. For further information, please write to Unesco's Philatelic and Numismatic Programme, 7, Place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris.



Just published

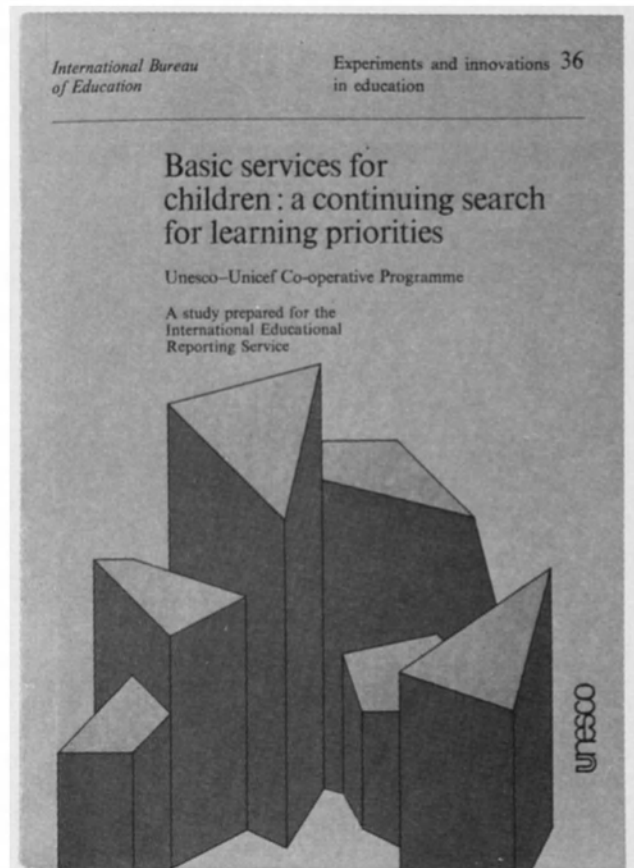
A dossier of imaginative and innovative actions in favour of underprivileged children of the developing world.

BASIC SERVICES FOR CHILDREN : A CONTINUING SEARCH FOR LEARNING PRIORITIES

- Discusses the special learning needs of underprivileged children of the developing world.
- Examines various experimental methods of providing learning opportunities for the deprived young.
- Presents studies from fourteen countries on a variety of alternative learning programmes and activities.

1978

240 pages



Where to renew your subscription and place your order for other Unesco publications

Order from any bookseller or write direct to the National Distributor in your country. (See list below; names of distributors in countries not listed, along with subscription rates in local currency, will be supplied on request.)

AUSTRALIA. Publications: Educational Supplies Pty. Ltd. P.O. Box 33, Brookvale, 2100, NSW. Periodicals: Dominie Pty. Subscriptions Dept., P.O. Box 33, Brookvale 2100, NSW. Sub-agent: United Nations Association of Australia, Victorian Division, Campbell House, 100 Flinders St., Melbourne (Victoria), 3000.
— **AUSTRIA.** Dr. Franz Hain, Verlags- und Kommissionsbuchhandlung, Industriehof Stadlau, Dr. Otto Neurath-Gasse 5, 1220 Wien.
— **BANGLADESH.** Bangladesh Books International Ltd, Ittefaq Building, 1, R.K. Mission Rd., Hatkhola, Dacca 3.
— **BELGIUM.** "Unesco Courrier" Dutch edition only: N.V. Handelsmaatschappij Keesing, Keesinglaan 2-18, 2100 Deurne-Antwerpen. French edition and general Unesco publications agent: Jean de Lannoy, 202, avenue du Roi, 1060 Brussels, CCP 000-0070823-13.
— **BURMA.** Trade Corporation No. 9, 550-552 Merchant Street, Rangoon.
— **CANADA.** Renouf Publishing Co. Ltd., 2182 St. Catherine Street West, Montreal, Que. H3H 1M7.
— **CYPRUS.** "MAM", Archbishop Makarios 3rd Avenue, P.O. Box 1722, Nicosia.
— **CZECHOSLOVAKIA.** — S.N.T.L., Spalena 1, Prague 1 (Permanent display); Zahraniční literatura, 11 Soukenicka, Prague 1. For Slovakia only: Alfa Verlag — Publishers, Hurbanovo nám. 6, 893 31 Bratislava — **CSSR.** — 1165, Copenhagen K.
— **EGYPT (ARAB REPUBLIC OF).** National Centre for Unesco Publications, No. 1 Talaat Harb Street, Tahrir Square, Cairo.
— **ETHIOPIA.** National Agency for Unesco, P.O. Box 2996, Addis Ababa.
— **FINLAND.** Akateeminen Kirjakauppa, Keskuskatu 1, SF-00100 Helsinki 10.
— **FRANCE.** Librairie de l'Unesco, 7, place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris, C.C.P. 12598-48.
— **GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REP.** Buchhaus Leipzig, Postfach 140, 710 Leipzig or from international Buchhandlungen in the G.D.R. — **FED. REP. OF GERMANY.** For the Unesco Kurier (German ed. only): 53 Bonn 1, Colmantstrasse 22. For scientific maps only: GEO CENTER D7 Stuttgart 80, Postfach 800830. Other publications: S. Karger GmbH Karger Buchhandlung, Angerhofstrasse 9, Postfach 2, 8034 Germering/Munich.
— **GHANA.** Presbyterian Bookshop Depot Ltd., P.O. Box 195, Accra; Ghana Book Suppliers Ltd., P.O. Box 7869, Accra; The University Bookshop of Ghana, Accra; The University Bookshop of Cape Coast; The University Bookshop of Legon, P.O. Box 1, Legon.
— **GREAT BRITAIN.** See United Kingdom.
— **HONG KONG.** Federal Publications (HK) Ltd., 5A Evergreen Industrial Mansion, 12 Yip Fat Street, Aberdeen. Swindon Book Co., 13-15, Lock Road, Kowloon.

HUNGARY. Akadémiai Könyvesbolt, Váci u. 22, Budapest V; A.K.V. Konyvtárosok Boltja, Népköztársaság utja 16, Budapest VI.
— **ICELAND.** Snaebjörn Jonsson & Co., H.F., Hafnarstraeti 9, Reykjavik.
— **INDIA.** Orient Longman Ltd., Kamani Marg, Ballard Estate, Bombay 400038; 17 Chittaranjan Avenue, Calcutta 13; 36a, Anna Salai, Mount Road, Madras 2. B-3/7 Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi 1; 80/1 Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bangalore-560001; 3-5-820 Hyderguda, Hyderabad-500001. Sub-Depots: Oxford Book & Stationery Co. 17 Park Street, Calcutta 70016; Scindia House, New Delhi; Publications Section, Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, 511 C-Wing, Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi 110001.
— **INDONESIA.** Bhratara Publishers and Booksellers, 29 Jl. Oto Iskandardinata III, Jakarta; Gramedia Bookshop, Jl. Gadjah Mada 109, Jakarta; Indira P.T., Jl. Dr Sam Ratulangi 47, Jakarta Pusat.
— **IRAN.** Kharazmie Publishing and Distribution Co., 28, Vessal Shirazi Street, Shahreza Avenue, P.O. Box 314/1486, Teheran; Iranian Nat. Comm. for Unesco, Ave. Iranchahr Chomali No. 300, B P. 1533, Teheran.
— **IRAQ.** McKenzie's Bookshop, Al-Rashid Street, Baghdad.
— **IRELAND.** The Educational Centre of Ireland Ltd., Ballymount Road, Walkinstown, Dublin 12.
— **ISRAEL.** Emanuel Brown, formerly Blumstein's Book-stores, 35 Allenby Road and 48 Nachlat Benjamin Street, Tel Aviv; 9, Shlomzion Hamalka Street, Jerusalem.
— **JAMAICA.** Sangster's Book Stores Ltd., P.O. Box 366, 101 Water Lane, Kingston.
— **JAPAN.** Eastern Book Service Inc., C.P.O. Box 1728, Tokyo 100-92.
— **KENYA.** East African Publishing House, P.O. Box 30571, Nairobi.
— **KOREA.** Korean National Commission for Unesco, P.O. Box Central 64, Seoul — **KUWAIT.** The Kuwait Bookshop Co., Ltd. 2942, Kuwait — **LESOTHO.** Mazenod Book Centre, P.O. Mazenod, Lesotho, Southern Africa.
— **LIBERIA.** Cole and Yancy Bookshops Ltd., P.O. Box 286, Monrovia.
— **LIBYA.** Agency for Development of Publication & Distribution, P.O. Box 34-35, Tripoli.
— **LUXEMBOURG.** Librairie Paul Bruck, 22, Grande-Rue, Luxembourg.
— **MALAYSIA.** Federal Publications, Lot 8323, Jl 222, Petaling Jaya, Selangor.
— **MALTA.** Sapientias, 26 Republic Street, Valletta.
— **MAURITIUS.** Nalanda Company Ltd., 30, Bourbon Street, Port-Louis.
— **MONACO.** British Library, 30 bd. des Moulins, Monte-Carlo.
— **NETHERLANDS.** For the "Unesco Koerier" Dutch edition only: Systemen Keesing, Ruysdaelstraat 71-75, Amsterdam-1007. Agent for all Unesco publications: N.V. Martinus Nijhoff, Lange Voorhout, 9, The Hague.
— **NETHERLANDS ANTILLES.** G.C.T. Van Dorp & Co. (Ned Ant.), N.V., Willemstad, Curaçao, N.A.
— **NEW ZEALAND.** Government Printing Office, Government Bookshops at: Rutland Street, P.O. Box 5344, Auckland; 130, Oxford Terrace, P.O. Box 1721, Christchurch; Alma Street, P.O. Box 857 Hamilton; Princes Street, P.O. Box 1104, Dunedin; Mulgrave Street, Private Bag, Wellington.
— **NIGERIA.** The University

Bookshop of Ife; The University Bookshop of Ibadan, P.O. 286; The University Bookshop of Nsukka; The University Bookshop of Lagos; The Ahmadu Bello University Bookshop of Zaria.
— **NORWAY.** All publications: Johan Grundt Tanum (Booksellers), Karl Johansgate 41/43, Oslo 1. For Unesco Courier only: A.S. Narvesens Literaturjeneste, Box 6125, Oslo 6.
— **PAKISTAN.** Mirza Book Agency, 65 Sarah Quaid-e-azam, P.O. Box No. 729, Lahore 3.
— **PHILIPPINES.** The Modern Book Co., 926 Rizal Avenue, P.O. Box 632, Manila D-404 — **POLAND.** Orpan-Import, Palac Kultury i Nauki, Warsaw; Ars Polona-Ruch, Krakowskie Przedmiescie No. 7, 00-901 WARSAW. — **PORTUGAL.** Dias & Andrade Ltda, Livraria Portugal, rua do Carmo 70, Lisbon.
— **SEYCHELLES.** New Service Ltd., Kingsgate House, P.O. Box 131, Mah*.
— **SIERRA LEONE.** Fourah Bay, Njala University and Sierra Leone Diocesan Bookshops, Freetown — **SINGAPORE.** Federal Publications (S) Pte Ltd., No. 1 New Industrial Road, off Upper Paya Lebar Road, Singapore 19. — **SOMALI DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC.** Modern Book Shop and General, P.O. Box 951, Mogadiscio. — **SOUTH AFRICA.** All publications: Van Schaik's Book-store (Pty.) Ltd., Libri Building, Church Street, P.O. Box 924, Pretoria. For the Unesco Courier (single copies) only: Central News agency, P.O. Box 1033, Johannesburg.
— **SOUTHERN RHODESIA.** Textbook Sales (PVT) Ltd., 67 Union Avenue, Salisbury.
— **SRI LANKA.** Lake House Bookshop, 100 Sir Chittampalam Gardiner Mawata P.O.B. 244 Colombo 2. — **SUDAN.** Al Bashir Bookshop, P.O. Box 1118, Khartoum.
— **SWEDEN.** All publications A/B C.E. Fritzes Kungl. Hovbokhandel, Fredsgatan 2, Box 16356, 10327 Stockholm 16. For the Unesco Courier: Svenska FN-Forbundet, Skolgränd 2, Box 150 50 S-104 65, Stockholm. — **SWITZERLAND.** All publications: Europa Verlag, 5 Rämistrasse, Zurich. Librairie Payot, rue Grenus 6, 1211, Geneva 11, C.C.P. 12-236.
— **TANZANIA.** Dar-es Salaam Bookshop, P.O.B. 9030 Dar-es-Salaam. — **THAILAND.** Nibondh and Co. Ltd., 40-42 Charoen Krung Road, Siyaeg Phaya Sn, P.O. Box 402, Bangkok; Suksapan Panit, Mansion 9, Rajdamnern Avenue, Bangkok; Suksit Siam Company, 1715 Rama IV Road, Bangkok.
— **TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO.** National Commission for Unesco, 18 Alexandra Street, St. Clair, Trinidad, W.I. — **TURKEY.** Librairie Hachette, 469 Istiklal Caddesi, Beyoglu, Istanbul. — **UGANDA.** Uganda Bookshop, P.O. Box 145, Kampala.
— **UNITED KINGDOM.** H.M. Stationery Office, P.O. Box 569, London, S.E.1., and Government Bookshops in London, Edinburgh, Cardiff, Belfast, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol. — **UNITED STATES.** Unipub, Box 433 Murray Hill Station, New York, N.Y. 10016. — **U.S.S.R.** Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga, Moscow, G-200. — **YUGOSLAVIA.** Jugoslovenska Knjiga, Trg Republike 5/8, Belgrade; Drzavna Založba Slovenije, Titova C 25, P.O. B. 50-1, Ljubljana.

news from unesco

A bulletin published by
the Office
of Public Information
Unesco
7, Place de Fontenoy
75700 Paris, France

International Anti-Apartheid Year launched

Some wordless evidence—a film made of still photographs taken by eye-witnesses at Soweto; then the quiet voice of a white newspaper editor telling how his opposition to apartheid finally drove him into exile; then a measured account of some of Unesco's latest steps against racism; a pledge by the Director-General that the Organization would employ all its forces in the struggle; finally Myriam Makeba singing songs from her South African homeland. This was how International Anti-Apartheid Year was launched at a ceremony at Unesco's Paris headquarters on March 21,

It was on that day in 1960, Unesco's Director-General, Mr Amadou Mahtar M'Bow reminded about 1,500 people crowded into the Organization's main conference hall, that 68 Africans had been killed at Sharpeville. He paid tribute to those who had fallen "and are falling at this very moment" so that human rights should not be a mere dream.

He went on to define the crime of apartheid—"the vilest form of modern slavery"—in the terms of the 1973 International Convention on the Elimination of Apartheid: "inhuman acts aimed at... the domination of one racial group...;" "deliberately imposing... living conditions... to bring about the physical destruction... of one or several racial groups;" creation of ghettos, forbidding marriages between persons of different groups, expropriation and exploitation.

Apartheid, he said, was turning South Africa into a huge concentration camp

despite the appeals and condemnations of the United Nations over 30 years. The international community had the duty to meet the challenge: it had the means, now it must have the real will to draw the consequences of its resolutions and, if need be, ensure respect for them by applying the coercive measures provided for in the United Nations Charter.

Unesco had been contributing to the struggle for years. It was its

denunciation of racism which explained why South Africa had left the Organization in 1955. Unesco sought to make the nature of the evil known, and its wide programme of actions included the convening of the international conference which has just prepared a draft declaration on race and racial prejudice. But much remained to be done and a peaceful mobilization of public opinion was needed to ensure the end of this "shame to the whole of humanity".



Photo Michel Claude, Unesco

Myriam Makeba at Unesco

Donald Woods, the editor of the anti-apartheid newspaper who was placed under a banning order and then escaped to fight the system on the international level, explained why this had happened. His newspaper had been tolerated as a showpiece example of South Africa's free press until he had begun to insist on an inquest into the death in prison of his friend, the Black Consciousness leader Steve Biko. Then he had been silenced and his usefulness inside South Africa was at an end.

Black leaders in the country had learned that attempts at negotiation were not heeded but he believed that peaceful international measures could succeed. Pressure on South Africa should end only when negotiations with black leaders had begun. The tide against apartheid had at last begun to rise. "Let it come to the full and sweep from the earth the evil of racial discrimination," he concluded.

After a message had been read from Ambassador Leslie Harriman, chairman of the U.N. Committee Against Apartheid, H.E. Y. Bamful Turkson, Ghana's Ambassador to France, who had chaired the conference to draft the Declaration on race, gave an account of

the meeting and the round table on apartheid which had begun the day.

Participants at the round table opened by the Director-General listed a series of practical measures to bring pressure to bear on the Vorster regime: public information campaigns (especially 24-hour-a-day broadcasts beamed at South Africa), breaking off all economic relations, universal right of asylum for refugees and practical assistance to the thousands who have fled since the Soweto riots.

Mr Bokwe Mafuna, exiled South African journalist, said that Black South Africans were prepared to bear the consequences of an economic boycott, while Dr Samuel Coockey, former education director of the Commonwealth Secretariat, after outlining the separate education systems in South Africa, declared that "The cornerstone of apartheid is racial prejudice." "There is no country that doesn't practise some form of racial discrimination," he added. The International Year might be the occasion to fight racial discrimination everywhere.

For Mr Naidoo, representative of the African National Congress, apartheid

might be "racist in form, but its substance is economic exploitation." Sharpeville had shut the doors to peaceful solutions, he said, and "the institutionalized violence of the Vorster regime can only be destroyed by superior force."

Other speakers at the round table included Mr René Lefort, journalist of "Le Monde"; Mr José Ingles, Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines; Mr Fernando Volio, former Minister of Education of Costa Rica; Mr Ahmed Derradji, deputy permanent delegate of Algeria to Unesco and Dr Walter Poeggel, professor of international law at Karl Marx University, Leipzig.

Draft declaration on race prepared for General Conference

By consensus, representatives of 99 of Unesco's Member States, who had met in Paris from 13 to 20 March, agreed on a text for a draft Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice which will be submitted to the Unesco General Conference this autumn.

The conference, which was chaired by H.E. Y. Bamful Turkson, Ghana's Ambassador to France, agreed without a vote to a text consisting of a Preamble and ten Articles. The first Article proclaims that...

"All human beings belong to a single species and are descended from a common stock" and are "equal in

dignity and rights". The Article also asserts the "right to be different" while insisting that differences in life styles cannot justify discriminatory practices. Differences between the achievements of peoples are "entirely attributable to geographical, historical, political, economic, social and cultural factors".

Article II of the draft text lays down that any theory claiming superiority or inferiority for any group "has no scientific foundation and is contrary to the moral and ethical principles of humanity", and Article IV specifically condemns apartheid. This "extreme form of racism" is branded, along with genocide, as a "crime against humanity" which "gravely disturbs international peace and security."

Other articles assert that distinctions based on "race, colour, ethnic or national origin or religious intolerance motivated by racist considerations" are incompatible with a just international order respecting human rights. They also stress the role of culture and education in human development and assert the states' responsibility to

provide education including scientific and ethical considerations concerning human unity and diversity.

The mass media are urged to promote understanding and contribute to the eradication of racism while taking account of the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, particularly the principle of freedom of expression. States are called upon to supplement laws against discrimination by administrative machinery to investigate it and also to take special measures on behalf of disadvantaged individuals or groups, while ensuring that these measures themselves do not appear to be racially discriminatory.

Migrant workers are singled out for mention. These should benefit from measures to assure them security and respect for their dignity and cultural values, says the text.

In its last Article, the draft text calls upon international organizations to assist in the legitimate struggle against racism "so that all the peoples of the world may be forever delivered from these scourges".

Journalists say more news sources needed to balance information flow

Are more news sources needed to improve the balance of the world's information flow?

Indeed they are, representatives of leading news agencies, newspapers and radio and television organizations agreed in a recent international seminar.

Among other measures they suggested the creation of additional news agencies at the national and regional levels, although some warned that this should not result in monopoly situations as far as news collection or dissemination is concerned.

Held in Stockholm, the seminar was sponsored jointly by the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems and the Swedish Government. Created by the Director-General of Unesco last year, the 16-member commission is headed by Nobel and Lenin Peace Prize-winner Sean MacBride, former U.N. High Commissioner for Namibia.

Addressing the opening session of the seminar, Mr MacBride noted that two-thirds of the world's daily output of news at present comes directly or indirectly from New York and that two-thirds of the major news agencies' correspondents are based either in North America or in Europe.

The same theme was echoed by Mr Jan-Eric Wikström, Swedish Minister of Education and Cultural affairs. Sweden, he said, had a long tradition of press freedom — "probably the oldest in the world" — but "when freedom tends to mean freedom only for the powerful, the very foundations of liberal press tradition are threatened and a need for balance is created."

Among the news agencies represented at the seminar were Agence France Presse, Associated Press, Reuters, TASS and United Press International, as well as ANSA (Italy), JANA (Libya), ANTARA (Indonesia), BERNAMA (Malaysia), DPA (Federal Republic of Germany), ADN (German Democratic Republic), PANA (Iran), IPS (Italy), Vietnam News Agency, Latin Agency, Prensa Latina, the agencies of

Ghana, Zaire, Iraq and the Philippines and the pool of news agencies of the non-aligned countries. Several regional federations of news agencies as well as international professional organizations also sent delegates and observers.

Several participants urged increased assistance to national news agencies from development aid organizations as well as from the large international news agencies. They considered that much greater efforts should be exerted to train agency and broadcast journalists and technicians from developing countries, and that more money should be invested in new infrastructures. Lower tariff rates should be obtained for news transmission, they added, and in order to achieve this it was proposed that Unesco and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) convene a special joint conference.

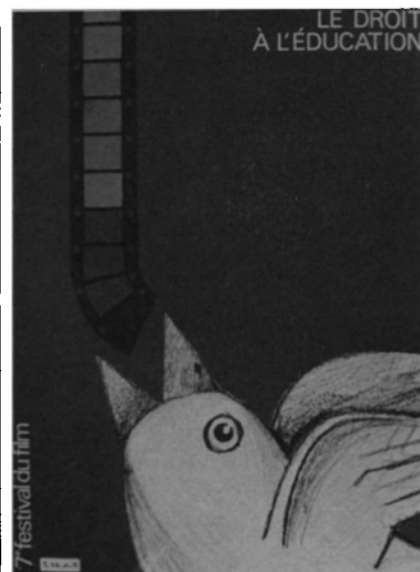
While foreign and visiting correspondents should have better access to information sources, they should also respect the existing laws of the host countries, it was emphasized. The problem of the protection of journalists in the performance of their professional duties was also examined and it was suggested that the International Commission should further study this matter in consultation with appropriate professional and legal bodies.

Following the close of the seminar the Commission met for two days in Stockholm and hammered out an outline plan for the drafting of its interim report which is to be presented to the Unesco General Conference this autumn. It also agreed to devote some time during its next meeting, to be held in Paris from 10 to 14 July, to a discussion of a New International Information Order.

Winners of Unesco prizes for posters on right to education announced

The winners of Unesco awards for posters on the right to education were announced on April 17 when the Organization's Director-General, together with Mr Edgar Faure, President of the International Institute of Human Rights, inaugurated an exhibition of designs submitted in an international competition.

The competition, organized by the Institute in collaboration with the International Association of Art, attracted 395 entries from 32 countries. An international jury selected a design by Mr Robert Bigras of Canada for the first prize of 5,000 French francs. The 3,000-franc second prize went to Mr Juan Pablo Villar of Cuba and the third, of 2,000 francs, to Mr Gricha Gospodinov of Bulgaria. The jury awarded two honourable mentions, worth 500 francs each, to Mr Ognion Dimitrov of Bulgaria and Miss Aysha Aziz of Pakistan.



Prize-winning poster by Robert Bigras of Canada

The posters illustrate the theme of the Festival of Films on Human Rights being organized by the International Institute of Human Rights at Strasbourg in November. This year the festival will be devoted to the right to education, the right which, the Director-General stressed at the opening ceremony, was fundamental to the understanding and promotion of other human rights.

Unesco Clubs decide to form World Federation

Representatives of Unesco Clubs in more than sixty countries have decided to establish a world federation of such organizations. Meeting at Unesco Headquarters, Paris, in April, they set up a 12-member preparatory committee to study how the new coordinating body could be established.

One of the themes of this first World Congress of Unesco Clubs was a new international order in communication. Among other proposals, the delegates stressed the need for non-professionals to be initiated into communication problems. Several participants urged that Clubs should be associated with the work of the International Commission for the Study of Communication

Problems, sending to it the results of their own researches.

The second subject for discussion was human rights and the delegates declared that they favoured a wide diffusion of basic texts, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other agreements. They called for the promotion of human rights teaching at all levels of education and forward-looking study of new rights such as the rights to development, to peace, to a healthy and balanced environment and the safeguard of mankind's common heritage.

Inaugurating the Congress, the Director-General of Unesco, Mr Amadou Mahtar M'Bow, emphasized that Unesco needed

the constant support of the peoples of the world to fulfil its mission. He declared that the 2,500 Unesco Clubs in 75 countries had been "born spontaneously from the will of men and women who had faith in Unesco's ideals and aimed to serve them. They make known in their village or their town Unesco's purpose and the ideal which it embodies, thus helping to create an awareness of the need for solidarity which will henceforth link all the people of the world."

The Congress elected Mr Noboru Ito of Japan as chairman, and Mr Louis François of France and Mr Auguste Gbeule Tapé of the Ivory Coast as vice-chairmen.

New \$1 million contribution from U.S. to Philae campaign

A new United States contribution of the equivalent of \$1 million in Egyptian pounds to the project to save the temples of the Nile island of Philae was

welcomed by the Executive Committee of the International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia which met in Paris from March 1 to 3.

Philae's monuments, which were due to be submerged by the waters of the Aswan High Dam, are being transferred to the higher-lying isle of Agilkia as the last phase of the Nubian campaign. The Executive Committee was informed that around half the work of re-erection on Agilkia had already been

accomplished and that a joint team of divers from the Egyptian Navy and the British Royal Navy would have completed the salvage of the completely submerged Diocletian Gate and Augustus Temple in a few weeks.

Addressing the Committee Unesco Director-General Mr Amadou Mahtar M'Bow, welcomed the news that the operation would be finished by the target date in 1979 and said that the campaign would really be complete when a museum had been established in Aswan which told the story of the achievements of the international effort. For the Egyptian Government, Dr Shehata Adam said that the Nubian campaign exemplified human co-operation as never before and that it was proposed to document this in a museum to be set up in the dome over the re-erected Temple of Abu Simbel, already rescued in the first part of the campaign.

Noting that international contributions up to the end of last year totalled nearly \$12.9 million, the Committee urged Unesco Member States who had pledged contributions to forward them as soon as possible.



Photo Alexis Vorontzoff, Unesco

Agilkia Island where the Philae temples are being reconstructed

India's mobile crèches

In 1969, the late Meera Mahadevan opened a crèche in a tent on a building site in Delhi and began to lavish love and care on children under three left to fend for themselves while their mothers worked as labourers. Today, the mobile crèche movement has evolved to cover not only crèche and nursery services but also elementary classes for children aged between six and twelve. In the centre shown below, a far cry from the original tent, love is still lavished on the children and simplicity and economy remain the keynote of the routines adopted and the equipment and premises used. (See article page 24).

