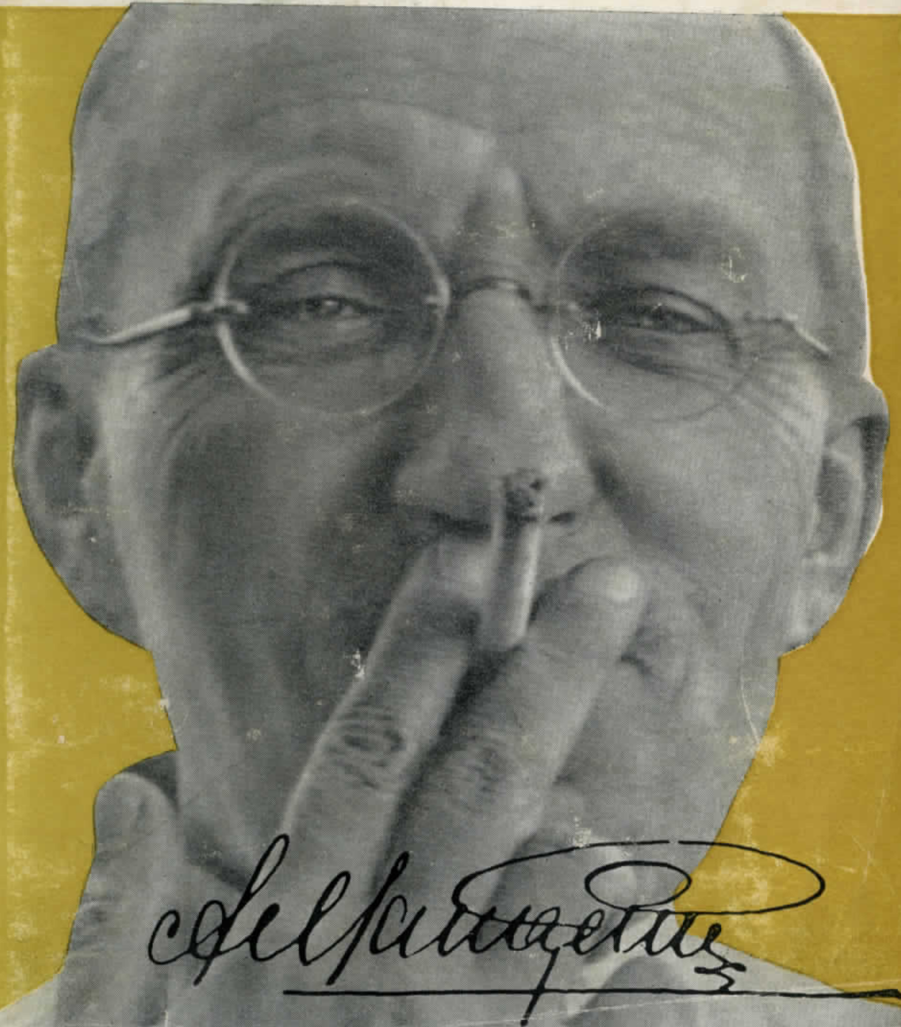
*"Our world today seems to me to have been built of a special kind of beautiful material, plentiful and tender.... Before me there have passed rich and beautiful patterns of life, the sad wistful eyes of women, the silver souls of our communards, serene and pure, healthy with the health of a tender child, and the chaste forms of our community, now more sublimated and prouder than ever....*

*"It was given to me to perceive the innermost and secret fascination of things, the splendour of shifting crystal light and colour, and the tremendous values contained in each barely perceptible human impulse...."*

A. S. MAKARENKO

MAKARENKO, HIS LIFE AND WORK

# MAKARENKO, HIS LIFE AND WORK



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*Anton Makarenko's book "The Road to Life" has been read by millions of people in fifty-four languages. In the Soviet Union alone it has run into eighty-five editions totalling two and a half million copies.*

*The name of this distinguished educator, who broke new ground in pedagogics, is familiar to the English reader. Translations of his books "The Road to Life" (in three volumes), "Learning to Live", and "A Book for Parents" have been published in English by the Foreign Languages Publishing House in Moscow.*

*The object of the present book is to acquaint the reader more fully with the life and remarkable work of this Knight of Education.*

*The volume is in two sections. The first opens with a short biographical sketch of Makarenko by Academician Medinsky, a leading personality in Soviet education. This is followed by stories and reminiscences by people who knew Makarenko closely—his wife and great friend Galina Stakhiyevna, the colonists' patron Maxim Gorky, and numerous ex-pupils of the Colony, themselves the chief characters in the books "The Road to Life" and "Learning to Live".*

*In the second section Makarenko speaks to the readers himself. He discusses his pedagogical experience and practice, gives his views on education, quotes numerous interesting examples from his own practice, gives advice to parents, and answers questions from listeners and readers.*

*This collection, based on the numerous publications dealing with Makarenko issued in the Russian language, has been prepared for the press with the co-operation of the late Galina Stakhiyevna Makarenko.*

MAKARENKO, HIS LIFE AND WORK

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*"The skill of a teacher is not an art that re ires special talent. It is the result of a specialised training, like that of a doctor or a musician."*

*Anton Makarenko*

# MAKARENKO, HIS LIFE AND WORK

ARTICLES, TALKS AND REMINISCENCES

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE
Moscow

АНТОН МАКАРЕНКО —
ЖИЗНЬ И ПЕДАГОГИЧЕСКАЯ
ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ

*На английском языке*

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN
BY BERNARD ISAACS

DESIGNED BY E. ZHUKOV

## TO THE READER

*The Foreign Languages Publishing House would be glad to have your opinion of this book, its translation and its design and any suggestions you may have for future publications.*

*Please send them to 21, Zubovsky Boulevard, Moscow, U.S.S.R.*

*Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*

## CONTENTS

Anton Makarenko, His Life and Work by Academician Y. N. Medinsky 7
The Gorky Labour Colony . . . . . 13
The Dzerzhinsky Commune . . . . . 31
Makarenko the Writer. The Last Years of His Life . . . . . 38

**Reminiscences of Makarenko**
**The Life Stories of His Pupils**

From the Book *Across the Soviet Union* by Maxim Gorky . . . . . 47
Reminiscences by Galina Makarenko . . . . . 58
Reminiscences by Semyon Kalabalin . . . . . 69
I. How A. S. Makarenko Educated Us . . . . . 69
II. Discipline . . . . . 79
The Multiplication Table by Yefim Roitenberg . . . . . 87
My Teacher by Nikolai Ferre . . . . . 94
Gorky Visits the Gorkyites . . . . . 108
Who Is Alyosha Ziryansky by Alexei Zemlyansky . . . . . 121
"Here Is Your Marianna!" by Klavdia Beriskina . . . . . 129
Meetings with Makarenko by Kornei Chukovsky . . . . . 134
The Happiness of Unrest by Victor Fink . . . . . 141
The Life Patterns of Makarenko's Pupils by Faina Vigdorova . . . 145

**Makarenko on Education (Talks, Articles, Letters)**

Lectures on the Education of Children (Abridged) . . . . . 157
The General Conditions of Upbringing in the Family . . . . 157
Parental Authority . . . . . 164
Discipline . . . . . 173

Play . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 184
Education by Work . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 189
Sex Education . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 196
Extract from the article "The Family and Children's Upbringing" . 205
Questions Answered . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 219
Extract from the Article "Education in the Family and at School" . 226
My Experience . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 240
From My Own Practice . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 267
*A SHORT BIBLIOGRAPHY* . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 279

# ANTON MAKARENKO, HIS LIFE AND WORK*

*by Academician Y. N. MEDINSKY*

Anton Makarenko was born on March 13, 1888, in the town of Belopolye (Ukraine). His father, Semyon Makarenko, was foreman of a painting shop at the railway works.

"A tall, spare, austere man, who had known nothing but toil all his life," was how Anton Makarenko described his father in the novel *Honour*.

Semyon was a loving but strict father, and did not spoil his son. He died in 1916 at the age of sixty-six, shortly before his son graduated from the Teachers' Institute.

Anton's mother, Tatyana Makarenko, a woman who set high standards for herself and for others, was a good and loving wife and parent and an excellent housewife.

The Makarenkos were united by ties of deep, if undemon-

* This article is given in abridged form.

strative affection, and each member of the family acknowledged definite responsibilities. Honesty, self-respect and a sense of duty were the qualities inculcated in Anton Makarenko from childhood.

Presumably, when subsequently defending his "principle of demanding respect towards children", Anton Makarenko was to a certain extent mindful of his own childhood impressions.

The boy learned to read when he was five. When he was twelve the railway works where his father was employed was transferred to Kryukov, Poltava Gubernia. Anton was sent to the municipal school, which had a six-year course of instruction and was attended by children of petty employees and tradesmen. His father told him when he started at this school:

"These schools were not made for the likes of us, but you just show them! Nothing but high marks, mind!"

The boy faithfully fulfilled his father's instructions. Throughout his school years and later in the Teachers' Institute Anton always stood at the top of his class.

After the municipal school, A. Makarenko graduated one-year teachers' classes and in 1905, a qualified public school teacher, he was appointed teacher at the railway school attached to the works where his father was employed.

Shortly afterwards he became teacher at a large two-class railway school.

P. P. Kaminsky, a former master at the Kremenchug Municipal School and Pedagogical Classes attached to it, wrote: "I remember Anton Makarenko very well, both as a pupil

A. Makarenko. Poltava. 1920.

and a student. He was indeed an excellent scholar, and possessed exceptional abilities and a self-discipline that was remarkable in one so young. His trial lessons always passed off splendidly."

The primary railway schools, especially the higher type of two-class school, were better organised than others in those days. They were fairly well financed by the Railway Department and had good premises and equipment. Many of them, in addition to general education subjects, taught manual labour (the trades of joiner, fitter and turner). The teachers were better paid, and as a rule more highly qualified than in the other primary schools.

The first years of Makarenko's pedagogical activities were coincident with the first Russian revolution.

It was during those years that Makarenko's outlook began to take shape. In his memoirs he wrote: "The understanding of history came to us through the medium of Bolshevik education and revolutionary events.... The atmosphere in the railway school where I taught was infinitely purer than in other places. The labour community, a real proletarian community, kept the school firmly in their hands...."

An important role in Makarenko's intellectual development at that period was played by Maxim Gorky. Makarenko himself describes this role of Gorky's at the beginning of his pedagogical activities in the following words: "Gorky taught us to feel history, he inspired us with wrath and passion, still greater optimism, and the great joy underlying his own words: 'Let the storm break in all its fury!' "

On Makarenko's initiative and under his guidance the school conducted manifold activities, for which it enlisted the co-operation of the community. School fêtes were held and a pupils' camp was organised. This work drew the young teacher still closer to the pupils' working-class parents. Makarenko also organised a Parents' Committee consisting of advanced workers.

The workers met at the school not only to discuss Committee affairs, but for revolutionary activities as well.

The headmaster of the school, Mikhail Kompantsev, and some of the teachers, including, of course, Makarenko, took an active part in these activities. The Kryukov Railway School became a local centre of revolutionary work.

In 1914 Makarenko entered the Poltava Teachers' Institute, which trained teachers for primary schools of a higher grade.

Makarenko was one of the Institute's best students. A. K. Volnin, the Head of the Poltava Teachers' Institute, writes:

"At the teachers' conferences held at the Institute A. S. Makarenko was one of the most active participants. His speeches were distinguished not only for their sound arguments and logic—they were exceptionally good in point of form as well. Makarenko possessed a rare fluency of speech, and what was most surprising in a Ukrainian, a gift for the subtle and balanced phrase in the purely Russian literary language—a thing I never met with among any of our other Ukrainian students. It was a unique gift. He could make a two to three hours' speech in perfect literary Russian, interlarded with humorous Ukrainian expressions, which held the unflagging attention of his listeners."

The passing examinations were attended by School District Warden A. N. Derevitsky, Professor of History. He became so interested in Makarenko's answers that he fell into conversation with him on various historical subjects. He was struck by Makarenko's erudition, and recorded the fact in the Institute's Honoured Visitors' Book.

Makarenko acknowledged the great influence which some of the teachers at the Poltava Institute had had upon him. He wrote that thanks to these teachers "many Bolsheviks came out of this Institute, and many of them laid down their lives at the civil war front. These teachers were real men who cultivated in us the best human ideals. In my own pedagogical development they created the fundamental tenets of the pedagogical faith—to demand as much as possible of a person and have the greatest possible respect for him."



Makarenko graduated from the Poltava Teachers' Institute with a gold medal. The character issued to him by the Institute said:

"Anton Makarenko is an outstanding student in point of abilities, knowledge, development, and diligence. He displayed a special interest in pedagogics and the humanities, on which he has read a great deal and submitted excellent compositions. He will make a very good teacher on all subjects, especially history and the Russian language."

After the finals Makarenko returned to Kryukov where his old mother, recently widowed, lived. Here, from September 1, 1917, he worked as Inspector (headmaster) of the Higher Primary School. It was at this work that the October Revolution found him, a revolution which he welcomed with delight and with great hopes.

"After the Revolution great prospects opened before me. We teachers were dazzled by their scope," Makarenko subsequently wrote.

One of Makarenko's colleagues, the headmaster of a higher primary school, mentions in his reminiscences that Makarenko already at that time was energetically seeking new forms and methods of education, new paths in pedagogics.

## THE GORKY LABOUR COLONY

*"You are doing splendid work, which should yield magnificent fruit. . . . What a remarkable man you are—just the kind of man Russia so badly needs."*
*"What a wonderful man you are, what a fine human force!"*

*(From Gorky's letters to Makarenko, 1926-1928.)*

In the autumn of 1920 the Poltava Educational Department gave Makarenko the job of organising a colony for juvenile delinquents.

A hundred-acre plot of land with a few dilapidated buildings on it was made available for the Colony some six kilometres from Poltava. Before the Revolution the place had been used as a Colony for young criminals.

All the equipment of this former Colony had been stolen. The place was ransacked—window-panes had been removed, doors taken off their hinges, and stoves carried away brick by brick. Even the fruit-trees had been dug up and removed.

After two months of hard work one of the dormitories was made more or less habitable, some of the equipment was recovered and a stock of a hundred and fifty poods of flour was put in.

The first group of delinquents, boys of fifteen to eighteen, arrived in December. These boys loafed about, stayed out at nights, and openly defied the teachers. Acts of robbery were committed in the evenings on the high road leading to Kharkov. Food and money were stolen even from the Colony. At times knife fights broke out.

With great difficulty some semblance of discipline was enforced among this first small group of colonists, but by February their numbers had increased to half a hundred.

Makarenko understood that he could not make far-reaching demands on these people right away. This had to be done gradually but firmly. The colonists were greatly impressed by this firmness and even fearlessness on the part of Makarenko, by his immense self-control, his unremitting and devoted care for their interests. He started to build up a community out of the colonists by organising a hard core of activists. He formed a guard of colonists to make the high road safe against robbers and protect the forest against illegal fellings. "The guarding of the state forest raised us considerably in our own estimation, provided us with extremely entertaining work, and, ultimately, brought us in no small profit," Makarenko wrote.

In the vicinity of the Colony there was a half-ruined estate that had belonged to a former landowner. Makarenko decided to set about restoring agriculture on this estate. "If we tackle the job properly," he told his charges, "the Colony in a year or two will have plenty of bread, vegetables, berries, and apples. We could even start dairy farming and pig breeding. This hungry life would end."

He was faced with a difficult task. There were no implements, no seeds. The house had no windows or doors. But Makarenko was able to rouse the boys' enthusiasm. They heartily supported his proposal.

A week later he stood among the colonists with a possession voucher on the estate. "I stood in the middle of the dormitory hardly able to believe it was not all a dream, and around me an excited crowd of boys, a whirlwind of enthusiasm, a forest of uplifted arms–'Do let us see it!'" Makarenko wrote.



Within a year the estate was unrecognisable. So were the colonists.

Thus, by setting bold tasks, by personal example and tact, by a skilful method of approach to each colonist, by organising groups of teachers devoted to their work, a collective body–the foundation of education–was gradually built up.

This collective, created with such difficulty, was often exposed to the danger of disintegration before it had found its feet. This happened when new delinquents joined the Colony. At such times, said Makarenko, "there remained a wide field for all sorts of eccentricity, for the manifestation of personalities sunk in semi-barbarity, demoralised by spiritual loneliness. Although in the general outlines the picture was melancholy enough, the sprouts of the collective spirit which had begun to show themselves during that first winter burgeoned mysteriously in our community, and these sprouts had to be cherished at all costs–no alien growths must be allowed to smother their tender verdure. I consider my chief merit to lie in the fact that I remarked this important development at the time, and estimated it at its proper value.... The saving factor was that–incorrigible optimist as I am!–I always believed myself to be within an inch of victory. Every day of my life during this period was a medley of faith, rejoicings, and despair."

It was no easy job to cure these recent delinquents of habits formed through years of vagrancy. This was all the more difficult that new waifs and delinquents kept arriving in the Colony every week.

Events followed fast upon each other. Now it was several boys who secretly tormented and even beat up the Jewish colonists, now it was a group of colonists who made a raid on the peasants' cellars, demolishing pork fat, sour cream and other eatables. There were days when Makarenko thought despairingly, "But what can I do? What can I do?"

Several of the inmates had to be removed from the Colony. This measure caused Makarenko great distress. He took it as a sign of failure, the futility of his pedagogical methods. Worn out by work which had put a tremendous strain upon them, the teachers began to talk about the hopelessness of their efforts. "Are we going about it the right way? Maybe we are making some terrible mistake, talking about a collective when there is none. Maybe we are simply self-hypnotised by our own dream of a collective."

But Makarenko was not the man to give way to such despondent moods and "meagre"–as he called it–thoughts. Fighting the doubts that assailed him from time to time, he displayed supreme self-control and encouraged the weary teachers. On the difficult days that followed some big "event", he went about his work as if nothing had happened. On such days the demands he made on the colonists and teachers were more clear-cut than ever, his work assignments more rigorous. Outwardly he became more austere as though he had put on a mask to disguise his misgivings from those around him. And all the others, too, would pull themselves together, show Makarenko silent signs of courtesy, work at greater pressure, and strictly carry out the established rules of the Colony.

After a while, things at the Colony would brighten up again. "As before, we were surrounded by laughter and jokes, as before, all were bursting with humour and energy; the only difference was that all this was no longer marred by the slightest breaches of discipline, or by haphazard, slovenly movements."

Two years after its foundation the Colony had a hundred and twenty-four inmates. The farm, too, had grown, now having sixteen cows, about fifty pigs, eight horses, a large kitchen-garden, and a considerable area (up to seventy hectares) under grain crops. An agronomist was employed to run the farm, and he organised proper crop rotation and field work.

For work purposes the colonists were organised into detachments, each detachment consisting of a different number



of colonists, boys and girls, according to the nature of the work. At the head of each detachment was a commander. At first he was appointed by Makarenko, and subsequently by the Commanders' Council.

In addition to these permanent detachments, mixed detachments of a temporary nature were formed. The commander of the mixed detachment was usually one of the rank-and-file of the permanent detachments. This enabled many of the colonists to act not only as subordinates, but as organisers.

This work arrangement, as Makarenko pointed out, enabled the colonists "to be fused into a real, firm, and single collective, with both working and organisational differentiation, the democracy of the general assembly, the order and the subordination of comrade to comrade".

The detachment commanders formed the Council of Commanders. This was a splendid body of colonists who took an active part in the life of the whole Colony. The Commanders' Council discussed and decided all important questions relating to living arrangements and farm organisation, discussed the Colony's estimates, the organisation of cultural life, the admission of new members, etc. The Council jealously guarded the honour of the Colony. It examined cases of misdemeanour and imposed penalties.

One of Makarenko's hard and fast rules of pedagogical tactics was to completely bury the colonists' past, especially their crimes. What interested him was not their past, but their future. As he pointed out, the rigid application of this principle was beset with difficulties. Both colonists and teachers showed at the outset a keen interest in what the newcomer had been sent to the Colony for.

Makarenko admits that at the beginning he had had to suppress this interest even in himself. "There was always a sneaking desire to find out what a boy had been sent to the Colony for, what he had really done. The usual pedagogical logic at that time aped medicine, adopting the wise maxim: 'In order to cure the disease, it must first be known.' This logic sometimes misled even me, not to mention my

colleagues and the Department of Public Education. The Commission for Juvenile Delinquency used to send us the case papers of our charges, in which were minutely described the various interrogations, confrontations, and all that rot, which were supposed to help in studying the disease."

At first sight it would have seemed pedagogically judicious to make oneself familiar with these case records, to learn what kind of person had been sent to the Colony, what measures had to be taken to eradicate past "sins" and know what to look out for. But Makarenko, with consummate pedagogical tact, realised that if he displayed the slightest curiosity towards this past it would entail a similar curiosity on the part of other teachers and an unhealthy interest towards the newcomer on the part of the colonists. The latters' questions, for one thing, would awaken in them memories of their own past, and secondly, would pander to that habit of swaggering bravado and savouring of past adventures, often exaggerated and embellished, which was characteristic of these homeless adolescents. All this would have introduced an inevitable element of disintegration.

"Our communards do not spend on their past a single minute of their life. And I am proud of it," said Makarenko.

But the principal reason why Makarenko refused to rummage in the scarred past of his charges was that he respected the human personality of the colonist.

He never treated his charges as former criminals. In each of them he saw, above all, the human being. He tried to pick out their good traits, believed in the potential powers and possibilities of each colonist, and was able to arouse in each of them, with solitary exceptions, these potential powers and a sense of self-respect. Makarenko and his charges always felt insulted when anybody regarded the colonists as former criminals or delinquents.

Every attempt on the part of a newcomer to boast of his recent past was nipped in the bud by the older colonists, and it wasn't long before he came to realise that these stories



were out of place here and even felt ashamed to talk about bygone "exploits".

Towards the end of its first year's existence the Colony adopted the name of "Gorky Labour Colony" in honour of Maxim Gorky.

In his youth Makarenko was an avid reader of Gorky, from whom he learned to value the human being. In his article "Gorky in My Life", Makarenko wrote:

"The old experience of the colonies for juvenile criminals was no use to me. There was no new experience to go on, and no books either. My position was very difficult, almost hopeless. I could find no 'scientific' way out. I was compelled to draw on my own general conceptions of the human being, and for me that meant turning to Gorky."

In Gorky the new method of approach to the human being struck a proud note. Gorky saw in every person "a vast range of possibilities".

It was only natural that Makarenko should try to interest his charges in the writings of Gorky. In the long winter evenings he arranged reading sessions from the works of the great Russian writers. His stories about the life of Gorky awakened in the colonists a love for that great proletarian writer and humanist.

"At first they didn't believe me when I told them the story of Maxim Gorky's own life," wrote Makarenko. "They were astounded, and it suddenly struck them: 'So Gorky was like us! I say, that's fine!' This idea moved them profoundly and joyfully. Maxim Gorky's life seemed to become part of our life. Various episodes in it provided us with examples for comparison."

It was natural for the Colony to adopt the name of Gorky. This helped it to get rid of that depressing name–Colony for Juvenile Delinquents–and admirably defined the pedagogical aims of the teachers and the aspirations of their charges.

New letter heads and a rubber stamp for official correspondence were acquired. Gradually all the institutions and

organisations the Colony had dealings with became accustomed to this name. For the colonists themselves there was a great educative significance in it.

The Colony population wanted to get in touch directly with Gorky but they did not know his address. It was not until the summer of 1925 that they sent a letter to him in Italy and received the first letter from him on July 19. Then, in answer to their letter, the colonists received another letter from Gorky in which he gave his opinion of the Colony and of Makarenko's attitude towards the colonists. "This is really a system of re-education, and that is what it always can and should be, especially in our day. Away with yesterday and all its dirt and spiritual squalor."

From then on Makarenko and the colonists conducted a regular correspondence with Gorky. When the writer came to the Soviet Union in 1928 he visited the Colony, which by then numbered nearly four hundred pupils.

In the autumn of 1923 the entire personnel and the colonists left the dismal building in which the former Colony for juvenile criminals had been housed, and moved into the newly repaired and decorated premises of the estate which the Colony had received.

Owing to the proper organisation of farming and excellent team work by the colonists the Gorky Colony became quite prosperous. The fields yielded an ample crop of grain and vegetables, the farm possessed pedigree cows and pigs, a large orchard, and a flour mill that served the needs of the neighbouring villages as well as those of the Colony.

This prosperity and outward well-being notwithstanding, Makarenko understood that the Colony's internal growth was in danger of being arrested, that the old enthusiasm and aspirations were lacking. Such a pattern of life shorn of these aspirations was likely to become a drab philistine affair: the number of cows and pigs would double or treble, another building would appear on the Colony's territory, and life would become a comfortable jogtrot without struggle, without quest, without ideals. "Yes, for almost two years we



had been at a standstill—the same fields, the same flower-beds, the same carpentry shop and the same yearly round," Makarenko thought.

He realised that "it had all come about because we were at a standstill. A standstill can never be allowed in the life of a collective."

A person should always see a new perspective. Material well-being could not be an end in itself, it was simply one of the conditions necessary for the development of the human being, who strains towards the wide, light-filled spaces.

An opportunity for doing bigger things was not long in presenting itself. Near Kharkov there was a children's Colony with two hundred and eighty inmates housed in the buildings of the former Kuryazh Monastery. The teachers at Kuryazh had failed to organise any kind of educative work among their charges. All they did was to take their turn of duty in their own rooms. They were afraid even to mix with their charges. The Colony's property had been stolen. The children went about in rags, and fended for themselves by thieving at Kharkov markets and in the neighbouring villages. There was no school in the Colony. The children only came there to sleep and have their dinner.

Makarenko and his collective were faced with the task of "conquering Kuryazh". They decided to move out there in a body, save the perishing children, and bring them under the influence and regime of the Gorky colonists.

The task the Gorky colonists set themselves was a formidable one. Their Colony at the time had a hundred and twenty inmates, forty of whom were recent arrivers, who had not yet had time to become converted into real Gorkyites. It meant abandoning their cultivated fields, their orchards and kitchen-gardens, the living quarters and splendid farm buildings which they had repaired with such difficulty. True, Kuryazh had a hundred and twenty hectares of land, but three-quarters of it was neglected and untilled, and the buildings were in a dilapidated state. With these facilities a farm

had to be set up capable of feeding about five hundred people.

Material well-being, however, was a minor point compared with the fear that the two hundred and eighty degraded Kuryazhites, reinforced perhaps by the Gorky Colony's forty newcomers, might overwhelm the small collective of old Gorkyites.

But Makarenko, in making up his mind to "conquer Kuryazh", was confident of victory, although he was well aware of the great risk he was running.

"How could I have risked not merely my own success, but the life of a whole collective? So long as the number 280 was nothing but three figures on a sheet of paper, my strength had seemed unconquerable, but today, when these two hundred and eighty were disposed in a filthy encampment around my infinitesimal boys' detachment,* I began to feel a sinking sensation in the pit of my stomach, and actually noted a disagreeable and alarming weakness in my knees."

The People's Commissariat for Education of the Ukraine not only did not support Makarenko, but disapproved of his educational system and often interfered in his work. It was not without qualms that it had agreed to the amalgamation of the two colonies, proposing a plan for the "conquest of Kuryazh" which, in Makarenko's opinion, was totally unacceptable, namely, "gradual infiltration" into Kuryazh on the assumption that "the good boys"–the Gorkyites–would have a beneficial influence on the "bad boys" of Kuryazh.

The Kuryazhites were egged on against the Gorkyites by the teachers of the Kuryazh Colony and its Director, whose immediate dismissal Makarenko demanded.

Contrary to the plan of gradual infiltration imposed upon him by the Ukrainian Commissariat for Education Makarenko, together with his collective, applied other tactics.

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* This refers to the Advance Detachment of Gorkyites with which Makarenko made his first entry into Kuryazh.–*Ed.*



"In my preparations for the struggle with Kuryazh I kept before me the idea of a single lightning stroke–the Kuryazhites must be taken by storm. The slightest delay, any hopes of evolution, of 'gradual infiltration', would jeopardise the outcome of our operations. I was well aware that the traditions of Kuryazh anarchy were just as likely to be 'gradually infiltrated' as our own forms, traditions, and tone. The wise men of Kharkov, with their insistence on 'gradual infiltration', confidently advanced the time-honoured notion that the good boys would have a beneficial influence on the bad boys. But I knew very well that the best of boys can easily become wild beasts in a collective based on a flabby organisational structure."

After the preparatory work performed by the Advance Detachment the Gorky Colony in the middle of May 1926 moved over to the squalid slum-like premises of Kuryazh. A hundred and twenty Gorky colonists, in marching formation, with banner and music, made their entry into Kuryazh.

Immediately upon the arrival of the Gorkyites a general meeting was held at which a declaration, carefully drafted by the Gorky Colony's Komsomol group and containing a clear programme of work arrangements for the next few days, was read out and unanimously adopted (the Kuryazhites voting too). After the meeting the Kuryazhites had their hair cut by four barbers, who had been brought down specially from Kharkov. The Kuryazhites bathed with soap (perhaps for the first time in months), turned their rags and bedclothes in to be disinfected (a special car-plant had arrived from Kharkov for the purpose) and put on the Gorky costume. All the colonists, old and new, were split up into twenty detachments and detachment commanders were appointed. In conclusion a grand dinner was given.

We have dwelt at length on "the conquest of Kuryazh" because this victory of Makarenko's strikingly illustrates his style of work, namely, an ability to make bold decisions, to take pedagogical risks, a pedagogical flair, authority and tact, an ability to take into account the psychology of his

charges and control them under the most difficult conditions, and confidence in the great educative power of the collective.

The "conquest of Kuryazh" could only be effected by a lightning stroke, and in this operation Makarenko showed himself to be no mean pedagogical strategist.

At the same time he realised only too well that the victory had to be made good. Taken by surprise, fascinated by the picturesque entry into Kuryazh of the Gorkyite columns with their attractive symbolics and healthy gaiety, the Kuryazhites were swept off their feet. Many of them even found themselves believing in the possibility of a better life. But even this consciousness, not to mention a short-lived emotional impulse, was entirely inadequate to cope with deeply ingrained habits of idleness, and laxity, and failure to appreciate the need for that strict discipline and those unwritten laws of the collective which every Gorky colonist had thoroughly learned.

Makarenko did not believe in pedagogical miracles. He knew, none better, from long experience, the tremendous efforts required on the part of the teacher to fan the sparks of duty, honour, discipline, and diligence into vitalising flames. It was easy enough to produce these sparks, but, bright as they were, they were apt to die out very quickly. It was difficult to awaken consciousness, but still more difficult to develop and canalise strength of character, particularly when the pupil's entire previous life had taught him laxity.

Indeed, the next day "the spirit of the Kuryazhites had been excellent from the early morning, and yet by dinnertime it was found that they had done very poor work. After dinner many of them did not even go out to work, but hid themselves, here and there, while some, from habit, were drawn to the town."

What was to be done under the circumstances?

"It would have been dangerous to employ external disciplinary measures, such as act so harmoniously and effectively in a mature collective." There were too many offend-



ers, and to deal with them effectively would have taken a long time. Besides, there was the danger that non-submission to disciplinary penalties on the part of even a few Kuryazhites would upset the whole system of discipline and deal a blow to the authority of the teachers.

Makarenko made a plan of action, worked out to the smallest detail. By a system of varied pedagogical measures nicely calculated psychologically and linked together logically, these difficulties, with the help of the collective of old Gorkyites, were overcome in a comparatively short space of time.

"And again followed, in inexorable but joyous succession, days filled with anxieties, with little triumphs and little disasters." Life at Kuryazh, under the skilful guidance of Makarenko, fell into an orderly pattern, as it had in the Gorky Colony. The community, though, was much bigger and more difficult to handle, and the scope of work had become much wider. In addition to farming, which had to be tackled quickly in face of the coming winter of 1926/27 when 450 people instead of 150 had to be fed now, work had to be organised in the joiner's shop, which made furniture and various other articles for the Colony and outside customers, as well as in the tailor's, bootmaker's, and other workshops which served the colonists.

The school, which was compulsory for all the colonists, now had six classes. The club was doing good work. A cinema had been opened, which was eagerly attended by the local villagers as well as the colonists.

In 1927 the Ukrainian Security Department raised a fund among its staff to create a monument to Felix Dzerzhinsky in the shape of a commune for destitute children bearing his name. A large handsome house with subsidiary buildings and workshops was being built outside Kharkov. Makarenko and the Gorky Colony were asked to prepare the opening of the Dzerzhinsky Commune.

The Commune was designed originally for a hundred pupils. At the request of its sponsors and with the aim of

creating a strong collective, the Gorky Colony gave the Commune sixty of its own members to form the initial core, the rest being made up of waifs taken from the street. The Commune was opened in December 1927, and up to the autumn of 1928 Makarenko managed both the Gorky Colony and the Dzerzhinsky Commune.

The organisers of the Commune, from the very outset, fully approved of Makarenko's pedagogical system and were prepared to support his plans.

Quite a different attitude towards his methods was displayed by some of the top people in the Commissariat for Education of the Ukraine and by armchair theoreticians of pedagogics and the pseudo-science of pedology, who distorted pedagogics as a science. This "pedagogical Olympus" was opposed to Makarenko's efforts to establish a definite system of discipline and cultivate in his charges a sense of duty and honour.

Makarenko read a proletarian meaning into these conceptions, but even these terms were emphatically rejected by the "pedagogical Olympus", who maintained that they were purely bourgeois notions. "Soviet pedagogics," they declared, "aims at cultivating the free manifestation of creative forces, inclinations, and initiative, but by no means the bourgeois idea of duty."

Already in the twenties Makarenko was cultivating in the colonists a sense of honour in regard to the Colony, the detachment, and the collective. Soviet pedagogics, as we know, attached great importance to this aspect of education.

What shocked some of the "professors" of pedology most of all was the elements of military organisation and its trappings introduced by Makarenko, such as the Colony banner, military formation, the detachments, reporting, the Commanders' Council, military signals and salutes, and strict subordination of the colonist to the detachment commander. All these elements which contributed towards the establishment of a definite system of discipline and were an adornment to life in the Colony, were contemptuously called "regimental pedagogics" by the spokesmen of the "pedagogical Olympus".



They strongly objected, on the one hand, to the authority of the teacher which Makarenko had established, and on the other, to the real extensive rights of the Commanders' Council, which Makarenko ably combined with the authority of the teacher. They interpreted discipline merely as "self-discipline", without orders, compulsions, and prohibitions on the part of the teacher. In the same way they conceived organisation only as "self-organisation" among the children.

Champions of the theory of "free education", which caused no little harm to the Soviet school, their attitude towards children was all sugar and honey, covered by the mottoes: "Children are the flowers of life", "Childhood should be treated with veneration", and Makarenko's exactingness and at times even reasonable severity shocked them.

These and a host of other attacks on the part of representatives of the People's Commissariat for Education of the Ukraine were a great hindrance to Makarenko in his work. He referred to them in his book *The Road to Life*, where he wrote: "Such conflicts had, of course, no melancholy result for the matter in hand, but they created around me an intolerable sense of isolation, to which, however, one can accustom oneself. I gradually learned to meet each fresh case with morose readiness to bear it, to get over it somehow or other."

Makarenko loved the Gorky Colony, which he had created, so deeply, and had got so used to his charges that these drawbacks could not mar his general sense of happiness: "Hard as things were for me, and vague as was the future, my life at that time was a happy one. There is indescribable happiness for an adult in a juvenile society which has grown up under his eyes and advances with him in implicit confidence. In such society even failure cannot grieve, even vexation and pain seem to have their own lofty values. The Gorky collective was closer to me than that of the communards. The ties of friendship were stronger and deeper there, the human

beings in it had cost more to shape.... And the Gorkyites needed me more, too ... the Gorkyites, with the exception of myself and our small group of teachers, had no one who was near to them. And so it never entered my head that the day would come when I should leave the Gorkyites. I was altogether incapable of imagining such a contingency, it could only have presented itself as the greatest misfortune of my life."

Yet that event took place fairly soon. In the summer of 1928 Makarenko was summoned to the Commissariat for Education to give an account of his work. He made a lengthy report to the Scientific Board in which he expounded the principles of his educational experience and its results. After an unfriendly discussion of the report the Council passed a resolution to the effect that "the proposed system of educational process is a non-Soviet system".

The hostile attitude of the educational authorities did not deter Makarenko. He knew that he was going the right way, the Soviet way. He enjoyed the support of many Soviet institutions, who were able to appreciate the work he was doing.

Makarenko found further support in the considerate attitude of Gorky towards him. In the spring of 1928, when his relations with the Commissariat for Education of the Ukraine became very strained, Makarenko wrote to Maxim Gorky about it. The latter wrote back on May 9, 1928, saying: "I received your sad letter.... I can understand your state of mind, your anxiety.... But I cannot believe that the splendid work you are doing will be ruined. I simply cannot believe it! And allow me to reproach you in a friendly way for not wanting to tell me how I can be of help to you and the Colony. I understand your pride as a champion of your cause only too well. But this cause, in a way, is associated with me, and I feel ashamed and awkward to have to remain passive at a time when it requires succour."

But Makarenko did not want to have Gorky mixed up in this business or to have him pull wires for him. He knew



that he was right. Gorky arrived in the U.S.S.R. shortly after his letter was received. In July he visited the Colony that bore his name. He visited it at a time when Makarenko, following the criticism of his educational system on the part of the educational authorities, had made up his mind to leave the Colony.

Not by as much as a single word or hint did Makarenko mar the joy of this meeting with Gorky, which he and his colonists had so long been looking forward to. Not a single word did he tell the colonists, the while he took steps, in good time, to find jobs in Kharkov for the grown-up colonists who had graduated the Colony school or to arrange for them to continue their education at the *Rabfak.**

The train carrying Gorky away had left, and the suburban train was taking the colonists back to Kuryazh. Makarenko saw them off, having placed the Colony in the charge of one of his colleagues on the pretext that he was going on his holiday. This done, he left for the Dzerzhinsky Commune with the column of communards. He never went to Kuryazh again.

This leave-taking with the Gorky Colony, which was so dear to him, revealed the moral beauty and noble personality of the man, his infinite pedagogical tact. He bore the whole burden of his forced resignation alone, leaving it to time to gradually deaden in his former charges the pain and bitterness caused by the loss of such an educator as he was.

Events, however, fully bore out the correctness of Makarenko's pedagogical views and as fully revealed the untenable position of his pedologist opponents.

Pedologist practice, completely out of touch as it was with the work of the educationists, was confined to pseudo-scien-

* *Rabfak*—Russian abbreviation for Workers' Faculty. During the early years of its existence, the Soviet Government, in order to lay the foundation for a new intelligentsia of the working masses, set up Workers' Faculties while at the same time extending the network of ordinary schools. The *Rabfaks* were affiliated to institutions of higher education and prepared workers and peasants specially for these institutions.—*Ed.*

tific experiments and numerous investigations among pupils and parents in the shape of senseless and harmful questionnaires, intelligence tests, etc. A child of six or seven was bamboozled with casuistic questions, after which his so-called "pedological" age and mental capacity were determined. These investigations were directed chiefly against backward children or children who could not adjust themselves to the school schedule, and their purpose was to prove the allegedly hereditary and social conditioning of such a pupil or defects in his behaviour, and discover the greatest possible number of bad influences or pathological perversions in the life of the child, his family, relatives, ancestors and social environment. The sole object of this was to find an excuse for removing the child from the normal educative community.

These distortions in the activities of the educational authorities were fully exposed and condemned in the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Party of June 4, 1936, "Concerning pedological distortions in the system of People's Commissariats for Education".

In opposing the pedologists, Makarenko, together with other progressive Soviet educationists, fought for the implementation of the principles of communist education, and defended his own life's work.

## THE DZERZHINSKY COMMUNE

*"For twelve years you have laboured, and the results of those labours are priceless. Your revolutionary and astonishingly successful pedagogical experiment is, in my opinion, of world-wide significance."*

*(From Maxim Gorky's letter to A. S. Makarenko dated January 30, 1933.)*

The Dzerzhinsky Commune outside Kharkov was opened on December 29, 1927.

At first there were a hundred and sixty pupils in the Commune (fifty of them girls) aged thirteen to seventeen. Sixty of them had come from the Gorky Colony to serve as the organising core.

The choice of location could not have been a happier one. On one side was the edge of a forest, on the other open country, an orchard, flower-beds. A tennis court and a croquet lawn. A large two-storey house of simple architecture. Spacious airy rooms beautifully decorated, parquet floors, simple elegant furniture.

The Cheka people, who were the organisers and patrons of the Commune, set up a Management Board from among themselves. They did not shrug their shoulders contemptu-

ously at Makarenko's educative methods and practices, but on the contrary, knowing that these methods invariably led to success, they gave him every possible support.

Makarenko worked in the Dzerzhinsky Commune eight years, from 1928 to 1935, he describes life there in his book *The Road to Life*, an epic of education, which has been translated and published in many countries. Thousands of people visited the Dzerzhinsky Commune–numerous delegations and individuals from all walks of life. Their entries in the Visitors' Book* testify to the tremendous impression which the Commune created upon everyone who saw it. Visitors were especially impressed by the collective's good organisation, the admirable system of manual training, the discipline among the communards and their well-regulated life. No less deep an impression was created by the communards' highly developed sense of comradeship, the love they bore their teachers, their cheerful disposition, their sense of self-respect, their manners, which were at once polite and dignified.

Among the entries made by foreign delegations and individual visitors, we would mention the Latin American delegation consisting of representatives of Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, and Peru, who visited the Commune on August 20, 1929. They wrote:

"The delegation of Latin America is amazed at the achievements to be found in the first proletarian country. One of the best of these achievements is the Dzerzhinsky Commune, where the new man is being created and where a new psychology of the children is being moulded. . . ."

Scores of similar testimonials could be quoted, made by people who came from France, America, Britain, Canada, Egypt, and other countries. Gorky was not overstating the case when he said that Makarenko's pedagogical activities at the Gorky Colony and the Dzerzhinsky Commune were of world-wide significance.

* This book is kept in the Makarenko Archive.–*Ed.*



The Visitors' Book contains about three hundred and sixty entries in different languages. Many of them deal with the manual training of the communards.

Various workshops were organised at the Dzerzhinsky Commune–a joiner's, turner's, locksmith, and tailor shops. In addition to supplying the needs of the Commune the first three of these workshops started at the very outset to handle large orders from outside.

In the course of time two factories were built with Commune funds, one for the manufacture of electric drills and the other for the production of Leica-type cameras. Both these industries were the first of their kind to be organised in the U.S.S.R. The work was done by communards, whose number eventually increased to six hundred. Only the staff of engineers and technicians and the accounts department were made up of adults.

Production was so well organised that by January 1, 1934, the Commune made a net profit of 3,600,000 rubles. The communards became well skilled in all manufacturing processes which (especially in camera production) required great precision (some components were machined with a precision of up to 0.001 millimetre). The communards worked only four hours a day, the rest of their time being devoted to studies in the ten-year school. Education there was compulsory. Lessons were held daily and the pupils successfully mastered a course of secondary school education. The high standard of education was shown by the results of the communards' entrance examinations to the universities and institutes.

Makarenko always encouraged his charges' aspirations towards a higher education and spared no effort in organising a *Rabfak* at the institutions which he managed. He selected the teachers for the school personally.

The organisational structure of the Commune was the same as at the Colony.

Educational activities outside the school were organised on a wide scale. These included technical, general educa-

tional and art circles, a club, a theatre, a cinema, and a library.

The communards staged plays at their own theatre and sometimes artists from Kharkov gave performances there. The communards' brass band, sixty strong, was considered the best amateur band in Kharkov.

The communards were fond of sport—skiing, skating, tennis, etc. When, during holidays, they marched through the city, people could not help admiring them. Preceded by their band, these clean-limbed healthy boys and girls dressed in simple but attractive clothes created a fine impression.

After ten months' work the communards enjoyed a two months' well-earned holiday in the summer, when the entire Commune and the teaching personnel, with Makarenko at their head, went hiking, choosing a new route every year.

Makarenko's eight years' work in the Gorky Colony was a period of creation and growth of the collective body, which was the main organisational form of education, a creative process of building up new and more effective methods of education. In the struggle for the new man a successful war was waged against old surviving habits and patterns of conduct. It was in the search for new forms and methods of education that Makarenko found himself as an educator.

The Dzerzhinsky Commune was an educational community in action, built by Makarenko in the heyday of his power and potentialities; a community with established principles, methods, and even traditions; it was the confident application by a talented educationist of all that he had experienced, thought out, verified, and established in a lifetime of devoted work.

That is why the achievements of the Dzerzhinsky Commune during the brief eight years of its existence are so remarkable.

People who failed to understand Makarenko's pedagogical genius thought that these achievements, described in the book *Learning to Live*, were exaggerated and embroidered.



How could teen-agers, mere children, working only four hours a day, be the first in the U.S.S.R. to organise such a difficult production as electric drills and first-rate FED cameras? Many people could not believe that in the course of eight years, on a state loan granted on the same terms as those given to any other industrial enterprise, the Commune was able to build and equip two factories, pay for the full upkeep of several hundred children and the teaching staff, erect a number of buildings, and develop cultural activities on a broad scale.

How could children, engaged in such complex productions, be able at the same time to receive a full secondary education in the usual term?

How, in so short a space of time, could former street arabs be transformed into new people, splendid workers, real citizens of socialist society?

Indeed, this is no fairy-tale, as the photographs of the factory buildings and shops taken with a FED camera made by the communards in these very shops can well testify.

Or take the copy of the Commune's balance sheet as per January 1, 1934, six years after its foundation, showing a net profit of 3,600,000 rubles.

Lying open before me is the Visitors' Book of the Dzerzhinsky Labour Commune, filled with enthusiastic testimonials by thousands of people from all over the world who saw these things with their own eyes.

And last, but not least, the greatest asset of the Commune, the product of Makarenko's pedagogical system in action—its former pupils, citizens of the U.S.S.R., army officers, engineers, doctors, teachers, skilled workers, brave fighters against the nazi invaders.

And these people, as Makarenko says in his book *Learning to Live*, had come to the Commune "spoilt by capitalist 'culture', slightly slanted towards criminality". The author in the following words describes the progress that was made:

"What was amazing and extraordinary about those early days was the October Revolution itself and the new world

horizons it opened. That is why Zakharov* and his companions saw their task clearly defined as the shaping of a new type of man. It did not take long for them to realise that this was going to be a very difficult and protracted business. Thousands of days and nights passed, a period when they knew neither respite nor calm, nor joy, yet they were still very far away from this new type of man. Fortunately, Zakharov was endowed with a gift that is to be found quite widespread on the eastern plains of Europe—the gift of optimism, of a tremendous zeal for the future.... And Zakharov was one of those who took this difficult path, the path of the optimist. The new was coming to life in the dense extract of the old: the old misfortunes, hunger, envy, anger—human narrowness and petty-mindedness and, still more dangerous, old desires, old habits, old conceptions of happiness. The past revealed itself in many ways, it had no intention of fading quietly away, it puffed itself up and barred the path, disguised itself with new clothes and new forms of speech, clung to one's feet and hands, delivered speeches and created laws of education. The past was even capable of writing articles that came out in defence of 'Soviet pedagogical science'.

"There was a time when these representatives of the past used the most up-to-date approach to ridicule and sneer at Zakharov's work, demanding miracles and superhuman feats from him. They set him fantastically stupid puzzles, formulated in brand-new scientific terms, and when he was by no means fantastically exhausted by them, pointed at him and shrieked: 'He's a failure!'

"But during the course of all these misunderstandings, the years went by and the new made its appearance in many ways that were well worth thinking about. The Colony gained ideas, requirements, standards of measurement from all sides, from everything that happened in the land, every line printed, from the marvellous growth of the Soviet Union as a whole, and from each living Soviet man.

"Yes, everything had to be given a different name and redefined. Tens and hundreds of boys and girls ceased to be wild little brutes or mere biological specimens. Zakharov now knew their strength and was able to confront them fearlessly with the great political demand summoned up in the words: 'Be real people!'

"They responded to this demand with their generous young talents, well aware that it manifested more respect and confidence in them than any 'pedagogical approach'. The new science of pedagogy was not born in the painful throes of abstract thought, but in the vital actions of people within a real collective, with its traditions and reactions, in new forms of friendship and discipline. This science was coming into existence throughout the Soviet Union, though not everywhere was there sufficient patience and perseverance for its fruits to be gathered.

"The old ways clung on tenaciously to their foothold, and Zakharov himself had from time to time to get rid of outworn prejudices. It was only quite recently that he had freed himself of his own principal 'pedagogical vice', the postulate that children are no more than objects for education. No, children are living their lives, splendid lives, that's why you have to treat them as comrades and citizens, have to respect and keep in view their right to enjoy life and their duty to bear responsibility.

"After that Zakharov made one further demand on them: no let-downs, not a day of demoralisation, not a moment of despair. They met his stern look with smiles: demoralisation was not in their programme either.

"Then came the years when Zakharov had no longer any reason for apprehension, for waking up in the mornings with a sense of alarm. There was an atmosphere of tense effort about the Colony life, but through its veins pulsed the new blood of socialism, which has the power of killing noxious germs of the past as soon as they are born."

* In the person of Zakharov, Makarenko describes himself in this book.—*Ed.*

## MAKARENKO THE WRITER. THE LAST YEARS OF HIS LIFE

*"On every page one feels your love for the children, your unremitting care for them and a subtle understanding of the child's soul."*
*"In my opinion your 'Epic' is a great success."*

*(From Gorky's letters to Makarenko, 1932-1933.)*

A. S. Makarenko left behind a considerable literary legacy.

His admirable book *The Road to Life* (*An Epic of Education*) was begun in 1925. The first part was completed in 1928, but he could not make up his mind at the time to show it to Gorky.

Five years passed, in the course of which he continued to work on his book. The first part was published in *Almanakh* in 1933 and the two succeeding parts in magazines in the course of 1933-1935. *The Road to Life* was recognised as a classic work of socialist realism.

Prior to *The Road to Life* Makarenko had written a small book *1930 Marches On* in which he described the Dzerzhinsky Commune. The manuscript was held by the publishers for two odd years, and, to the author's own surprise, appeared in print in 1932.



"I did not see it in any bookshop," wrote Makarenko, "I did not read a line about it in any magazine or newspaper, and I did not see it in the hands of any reader. Altogether this book seemed to have passed out of existence. I was therefore unspeakably and agreeably surprised to receive a letter from Sorrento (from Gorky) in December 1932 beginning thus: 'Yesterday I read your book *1930 Marches On*, read it with agitation and joy. . . .' After this Gorky refused to let me go. I resisted for nearly a year more, afraid to show him *The Road to Life*—a book about my own life, my mistakes, and my little struggle. But he was insistent. 'Go to some warm place and write a book,' he demanded. I did not go to any warm places—I was too busy—but Gorky's support and insistence overcame my cowardice. In the autumn of 1930 I took my book to him—the first part of it."

Gorky admired this book greatly, calling it one of the best examples of Soviet literature. It was read with enthusiasm by old and young. There were long waiting lists for it in the libraries. It brought a flood of letters to the author from all over the U.S.S.R., from teachers and especially parents. They sought his advice, confided in him their misgivings and failures, and asked for instructions how to act in concrete difficult cases of educative practice.

Makarenko very often addressed meetings of teachers and parents in Moscow and Leningrad, where he read lectures on various questions of education and upbringing, and gave advice to parents, who consulted him directly.

Upbringing in the home, the role of the family in the education of the children, were, in those days, the least elaborated questions of pedagogics. This was borne out by countless letters to Makarenko from parents, and by the multitude of notes he received after every lecture or report.

Makarenko considered it his civic duty to explore the most important fields of education which had not been sufficiently dealt with in pedagogics.

Thus his second important literary work, *A Book for Parents,* came into being. It was published in the magazine *Krasnaya Nov* in 1937 and then in book form the same year.

*A Book for Parents* was to have been a work in four volumes. The first volume, which was the only one the author managed to write and publish before his death, is necessarily restricted to only a few of the questions of family upbringing which the author intended to deal with. In this first volume, Makarenko said, "I merely wanted to touch on the question of the family's structure and the reasons why that structure, to one or another extent, is disturbed, sometimes disastrously, as in the case of one of the parents deserting to a new family, and sometimes for trivial reasons."

In volumes two, three, and four Makarenko intended to examine the questions of character building, the cultivation of will-power, of a sense of "stable morals", "a sense of beauty" (meaning by this not only the beautiful in nature and art, but "the beauty of behaviour"). His untimely death prevented the fulfilment of these plans.

*A Book for Parents* gives a subtle psychological and pedagogical analysis of different methods of family upbringing, types of parents and children. Some of the cases dealt with reveal errors in family upbringing. The relations between parents and children, the appearance of bad traits in children and their development as a result of incorrect upbringing are described in Makarenko's characteristically vivid style, full of imagery and subtle psychological analysis. Descriptive passages alternate with the author's theoretical comments.

In 1937 the magazine *Oktyabr* began to publish Makarenko's novel *Honour.* This novel describes Makarenko's parents and the workers' housing estate in which he spent his childhood.

A year later, in 1938, Makarenko's book *Learning to Live,* a fictionalised account of life and work in the Dzerzhinsky Commune, was published as a serial in the magazine *Krasnaya Nov.*



Whereas *The Road to Life* shows an educational community in the making and the quest for methods of education, *Learning to Live* comes as a sort of sequel describing the life and achievements of a community that is solidly established. This book raises and deals with many complex questions of the theory of education.

Written with the same artistry and talent as *The Road to Life,* the book *Learning to Live* gives profound psychological portrait-studies of the Dzerzhinsky communards and describes Makarenko's methods of educational work. In Zakharov, the Superintendent of the Commune, we have a self-portrait of the author. The autobiographical material in this book, which is given in far greater detail than in *The Road to Life,* is very helpful for the study of Makarenko's personality as an educator who opens up new ground. In 1937 Makarenko wrote a number of articles and worked on a book dealing with methods of communist education, a book that he dreamed of in the closing words of *The Road to Life*: "And perhaps, very soon, people will stop writing 'epics of education', and write a simple businesslike book called: *Methods of Communist Education.*"

In this book he devoted his attention largely to the collective body as an educative factor.

Makarenko also appeared in print as a writer for children. His stories *Collective-Farm Children, Successors, The Friendly Kids,* and *The Young Collective Farmer* were published in various magazines.

He contributed actively to the central Soviet newspapers *Pravda, Izvestia* and especially *Literaturnaya Gazeta,* for which he wrote articles on political and pedagogical topics and literary criticism.

During this period (1936-1938) Makarenko wrote a number of important theoretical works and often delivered lectures on pedagogical subjects. Some of the articles and shorthand reports appeared in the *Uchitelskaya Gazeta* (*Teachers' Gazette*) after the author's death (in 1940 and subsequent years). The book *Lectures on Upbringing,* in-

tended for parents and expounding the theoretical principles of family upbringing, was not published until 1940.

Makarenko's fertile literary activities are notable not only for their versatility of subject matter, for their quick and warm response to all the events and aspects of life in our socialist homeland; it is not only his literary energy which is so amazing, but also the wide range of literary genres that he covers as novelist, writer for children, literary critic, publicist, and—last but not least—as specialist in the theory of education.

In all this intensive activity both as a writer and educator, as well as in his work at the Dzerzhinsky Commune Makarenko was assisted by his friend and wife Galina Makarenko. She was co-author of *A Book for Parents*, and after her husband's death directed the work of the Laboratory of the Institute of Theory and History under the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the R.S.F.S.R. devoted to the study and propaganda of Makarenko's legacy.

In recognition of his great services in the field of literature the Soviet Government on February 1, 1939, awarded A. S. Makarenko the Order of the Red Banner of Labour.

In his absorption in literary work and educational research Makarenko did not spare himself, and his constitution was undermined by years of strenuous toil. Makarenko's generous, indefatigable career came to an abrupt end on April 1, 1939. He died suddenly in the train on his way back to town from a writers' rest home outside Moscow.

Thousands of people came from all over the country to attend the funeral, first and foremost among them his former pupils, now Soviet Army commanders, engineers, doctors, research students, teachers, journalists, and military school students. They took their places in the guard of honour around his coffin like members of a big, affectionate, now mourning family. As before they summoned the Commanders' Council and took upon themselves all the arrangements for the funeral.



Of the many speeches made at his graveside that day, that of his former pupil A. M. Tubin was one of the most moving. He said:

"I have lost a father today. You will understand how hard it is for me to speak when you realise how hard it is to lose a father so young. He was only fifty-one. My own father deserted my mother when I was four years old. I don't remember him, and have come to hate him. My real father was Anton Makarenko. He never praised me, but always took me down. Even in his book *The Road to Life* he didn't have a good word to say for me. You can understand how painful it is for me to speak about this. But it was because of this attitude of his that I have now become an engineer. Even after I had left the Commune, when I reread pages of *The Road to Life*, his words continued to correct my behaviour, to guide my life. You can imagine what I would be if he hadn't treated me like that.... He demanded absolute compliance with his orders, but he profoundly believed in every one of us. He was able to discover and bring out the best in a man. He was a great humanist. He defended his ideas, and never yielded an inch when he considered himself to be in the right.... Makarenko reared thousands of fine citizens of the Soviet Union. His pupils are working at Soviet construction sites and scientific institutes, they fought the Japanese Samurais at Khasan. Some of them have been decorated, they are the country's best people. You know how honoured is the name of Korobov, who has reared heroes of labour. What should we say of Anton Makarenko, who has given our country thousands of worthy citizens and dozens of heroes. You can imagine, comrades, what I am feeling today, what it means to have lost such a father...."*

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* A. M. Tubin, from whose speech we are quoting, died the death of the brave during the Great Patriotic War.—*Ed.*

# REMINISCENCES OF MAKARENKO
# THE LIFE STORIES OF HIS PUPILS

## FROM THE BOOK *ACROSS THE SOVIET UNION**

by ***Maxim Gorky***

I visited the Kuryazh Monastery in the summer of '91 and had a talk with the then famous John of Kronstadt. But I did not recollect once having visited this monastery until the third day of my stay there, among its four hundred hosts, former street arabs and "socially dangerous elements", who are my correspondence friends. The monastery lived in my memory under the names of Ryzhov and Pesochinsk. In '91 it was rich and famous. The "wonder-working" icon of the Mother of God attracted a multitude of pilgrims. The monastery stood in a wood, part of which had been made into a park; behind a stout wall rose two churches and various buildings, and under the hillside, over a spring behind the summer church, stood a chapel containing the icon—the magnet of the monastery. During the civil war the peasants had cut down the park and the wood, the spring had dried up, the chapel was rifled, the walls of the monastery had been pulled down and all that remained of them was the heavy, clumsy bell-tower with the gates under it; the cupolas had been removed from the summer church, transforming it into a two-storey building housing the club, assembly hall, a din-

* This article was written in 1928.—*Ed.*

ing-room for two hundred persons and a dormitory for the girl colonists. The old winter church was still used for services on holidays, when a score or two of old men and women from the nearby villages and hamlets came there to worship. This church is in the colonists' way, and they look at it sighing: "Ah, if only we could get it, we'd use it as a dining hall. As it is we have to take our breakfast, dinner, and supper in turns, two hundred people at a time. We waste so much time."

They tried to take possession of it. One night, on the eve of a religious holiday, they removed all the small bells from the belfry and laid them out on the pulpit, and tried many other miracles, but the authorities in town strictly forbade it.

I have been corresponding with the children of this Colony for four years, watching the steady changes in grammar and spelling, the growth of a social consciousness, an awareness of the world around them, watching these little anarchists, vagrants, thieves, and young prostitutes growing up to be decent working people.

The Colony has been in existence for seven years, four of which in the Poltava Gubernia. In the course of seven years it has given several scores of people to the workers' faculties, the agricultural and military schools, and to other colonies—this time in the capacity of teachers. The drain is made good immediately with boys sent down by the Criminal Investigation Department and picked up off the street by the militia, while quite a number of small vagabonds come down of their own free will; the total number of colonists never drops below the four-hundred figure. Last October one of the

M. Gorky and A. Makarenko among a group of colonists.

colonists, N. Denisenko, wrote me on behalf of all the "commanders":

"If only you knew how things have changed here since you left. Many of our old colonists have started on their own in factories, the workers' faculties, and industrial schools. There are very few of the old colonists left, most of them are newcomers. It is more difficult, of course, to organise life with the newcomers than it was with those who were already used to life in a working community. With the older colonists going away, discipline in the Colony has begun to weaken. But we, the remaining older ones, should not allow this to happen, and we shall not. The school in our Colony has now been completely reorganised. We have set up a new seven-year school, and a manual training school for those who had missed their chance. The thirst for knowledge is none too strong, but not one of the four hundred passes by the school doors."

At present the Colony has sixty-two Komsomol members, some of whom are studying in Kharkov, and one is already a second-year medical student. But all of them live in the Colony, which is eight versts from the town. And all of them take an active part in the everyday work of their comrades.

The four hundred colonists are organised into twenty-four detachments—joiners, fitters, field and kitchen-garden workers, cowherds, pig tenders, tractor drivers, watchmen, shoemakers, etc. The farm, if I am not mistaken, has 43 hectares of arable and kitchen-garden land and 27 of forestland; it has cows, horses and 70 pedigree pigs, which find eager customers among the peasants. They have agricultural machines, two tractors, and their own lighting station. The joiners are handling an order for twelve thousand packing cases for a gunpowder factory.

All the Colony's business and life routine is virtually run by the twenty-four elected chiefs of the workers' detachments. They have the keys to all the stores, they draw up all the work plans, manage the work and take part in it themselves on an equal footing with the rest of the detachment. The

Commanders' Council decides questions such as the admission or rejection of voluntary newcomers, and sits in judgement on fellow-colonists guilty of slipshod work or of a breach of discipline and "traditions". The decision of the Commanders' Council—a reprimand or fatigue duty—is announced to the culprit by the Superintendent of the Colony, A. S. Makarenko, in the presence of the assembled colonists. Graver or repeated offences, such as laziness, persistent shirking of hard work, insulting a comrade or any kind of act detrimental to the community, are punishable by expulsion from the Colony. Such cases, however, are extremely rare; every member of the Commanders' Council remembers what his own life was like "outside", and so does the offender, who is threatened with life in a children's home, an institution which is heartily disliked by "waifdom".

One of the Colony's traditions is "not to have love affairs with any of their own girls". This tradition is strictly observed and was only violated once in the Colony's history, when it ended in tragedy—with the murder of the baby. The young mother hid the new-born child under the bed and it suffocated there; she was sentenced to "four years' isolation" by the court, but was remanded in the care and supervision of the Colony, and afterwards, I believe, she married the father of the child. Another tradition was this: when a boy or girl was brought down by the C.I.D. it was strictly forbidden to ask him or her any questions as to who they were, how they had been living and what they had fallen into the hands of the C.I.D. for. If a "tenderfoot" started talking about himself, he was not listened to, and if he boasted about his exploits he was not believed and was ridiculed. This always had a good effect, the boy being told, "You see, this is not a prison, the masters here are we, just the same as you are. Live, learn, and work with us. If you don't like it, you can go."

He quickly realises that all this is true and easily adjusts himself to the community. During the seven years the Colony has been in existence there have been no more than ten "departures" from it, if I am not mistaken.



D., one of the "chiefs", came to the Colony when he was thirteen. He is now seventeen. From the age of fifteen he has been commanding a detachment of fifty colonists, most of them his seniors. I have been told that he is a good comrade, and a very strict and fair commander. He writes in his official autobiography: "Ex-Komsomol member, went in for anarchism, and was expelled for it." "I love life, most of all music and books. I'm terribly fond of music."

On his initiative the colonists made me a splendid present: two hundred and eighty-four members of the Colony wrote out and presented to me their autobiographies. D. is a poet who writes lyrical poetry in Ukrainian. There are several other poets in the Colony. *Promin*, an illustrated magazine, is published, edited by three colonists and illustrated by C., another "commander", who is a definitely talented and serious person; he is sceptical about his talent, which he treats with caution.

He is a refugee from Poland and started life as a street waif at the age of eight. He was in a children's Colony in Yaroslavl, but ran away from there and became a tramcar pickpocket. Afterwards he lived with a dental mechanic, from whom he acquired "a passion for reading and drawing". But the "call of the street" made him run away from the dentist, taking with him "several tsarist gold coins". He spent the money on books, paper, and paint. He sailed the White Sea as stoker's mate, but "owing to poor eye-sight was obliged to sign off". He worked as "collector of taxes paid in kind" on the Pechora, among the Zirians, learned the Zirian language and lived with the Samoyeds; he crossed the Ural mountains to Obdorsk by dog-team and made his way to Archangel; he lived there by stealing and slept in a doss-house; then he began to paint signboards and scenery. He worked in an arts and crafts workshop while at the same time preparing for the seven-year school; he forged documents and entered the Vyatka Art and Crafts School. "I was among the first to pass my exams, and in painting and drawing was recognised as talented, but I did not believe it." He

was elected to the Students' Committee and carried on cultural work. In the winter, during the holidays, he was arrested—"my papers got me into trouble, and I was in a reformatory up till the spring." There, too, he did a lot of reading and carried on cultural work. Afterwards he was a reporter on *Severnaya Pravda*.

All this is told without boasting, and, of course, without the slightest desire to evoke sympathy. It is a simple straightforward account: I went through a marsh, then a wood, lost my way, came out onto a dirt track, the going was heavy.

The whole of C.'s biography would take too long to tell. So far it has ended with his coming to the Colony at Kuryazh of his own free will, living there, working hard, studying, and teaching the little ones. "I still feel I want to make good, I love books and the pencil," he says. He is a good-looking slender youth in spectacles, with a proud face, brief and restrained in speech. He shows extraordinary consideration towards the little ones, and is extraordinarily gentle with comrades of his own age. This may be due to the following incident that took place in his life. In Archangel he "made the acquaintance of a boy—he, too, was an artist, and adored literature besides. Vasya, his name was. But I didn't live with him long—he hanged himself, after pinning a paper to his chest, saying: 'I owe the landlady eight kopeks. Pay it to her when you get the chance.' "

C. is undoubtedly a very gifted young man, and he won't go to the bad now, I believe. His life story is not an exclusive one. Most of those I have read or heard are similar to his.

Where do these street arabs come from? They are the children of refugees from the western provinces, whom the whirlwind of war has scattered throughout the land, the orphans of people who perished during the years of civil strife, epidemics, and famine. The children cursed with inherited taint who succumbed to the temptations of the street have



evidently gone under, and only those fully capable of taking care of themselves in the struggle for existence have survived. They willingly take on any jobs and easily submit to work discipline if it is tactful and does not debase their self-respect; they want to learn and they study well. They appreciate the importance of collective work and understand how advantageous it is. I should say that life, an excellent though stern teacher, has made collectivists "in spirit" out of these children. At the same time each of them is an individuality, more or less sharply defined, each of them is a personality with a "face of his own". The members of the Kuryazh Labour Colony create a peculiar impression of "gentle breeding". This is particularly to be observed in the way they treat the "small chaps" and the "tenderfoots" who have just arrived or have been brought in. The little ones suddenly find themselves in an unbelievable atmosphere of solicitude on the part of teen-agers, who were so terrifying to them in the streets, the very teen-agers who used to beat and bully them, who taught them to steal, to drink vodka, and many other things besides. One of the "small chaps", a cowherd, plays the flute excellently in the Colony's band—he learned to play in five months. It is very amusing to see him beating time with a bare foot the colour of dark tan. He said to me, "When I came here I caught such a fright. Lumme, I thought, look how many of them there are! If they start beating you, there's no breaking free! But none of them so much as touched me with a finger."

I felt wonderfully at ease among them, and I am a man who cannot speak with children. I'm always afraid of saying something I should not have said, and this fear keeps me tongue-tied. The children of the Kuryazh Colony, however, did not arouse this fear in me. Nor was there any need for me to speak with them. They are good speakers themselves and every one of them has something to talk about.

The feeling of comradeship which is so well developed among them, applies, of course, to the girls as well, of whom there are over fifty in the Colony. One of them, a red-haired

jolly girl of sixteen with intelligent eyes, was telling me about the books she had read, when suddenly she said gravely, "Here am I talking to you, and only two years ago I was a prostitute."

The girl uttered these shocking words with the air of one haunted by a bad dream. Indeed, for the moment, I thought these words of hers were only a parenthetic remark suddenly inserted into the fabric of her story.

The girls, like the boys, are healthy, and well-behaved, and throw themselves into their work with an enthusiasm that makes even hard work seem merry play. They, too—the Colony's "hostesses"—are divided into detachments and have their own "commanders". They wash, sew, mend, and work in the field and kitchen-garden. The canteen and dormitories are cleanly kept, and though not "luxurious", are cosy. Girls' hands have decorated the corners and the walls with green twigs, bunches of wild flowers, and dried fragrant herbs. Everywhere are evidences of a labour of love, a desire to beautify the lives of the four hundred little people.

Who could have wrought such a miraculous change by re-educating hundreds of children, whom life had treated so harshly and shabbily? The organiser and superintendent of the Colony is A. S. Makarenko. He is without doubt a talented educator. The colonists really love him and speak of him in a tone of pride as if they had created him themselves. He is a stern-looking, taciturn man of over forty, with a big nose and shrewd keen eyes, who resembles a military man or a rural teacher of the "high-principled" kind. He speaks in a hoarse voice, as if he has a sore throat, moves slowly, but makes the most of his time, sees everything and knows every one of the colonists, whom he can describe in five words as if taking a snapshot of his character. It is apparently a need with him to be kind, in an unobtrusive, offhand sort of way, to the little ones, for each of whom he has a kind word, a smile, a pat on the head.

At the meetings of the commanders, who engage in businesslike discussions of the work of the Colony, of questions



of food supply, or point out to each other shortcomings in the work of the detachments, various instances of neglect and mistakes, Anton Makarenko sits aloof and only occasionally puts in a word or two. They are practically always words of reproach, but he utters them like an older comrade. The colonists listen to him attentively and are not ashamed to argue with him, as they would with a twenty-fifth comrade whom the twenty-four acknowledge to be cleverer and more experienced than they are.

He has introduced into the life of the Colony something of the military school routine, and this is the cause of his differences with the Ukrainian educational authorities. At six in the morning the bugle sounds the reveille in the Colony yard. At seven, after breakfast, there is another signal, at which the colonists form square in the middle of the yard with the Colony's colours in the centre of the square and two colour-bearers, colonist comrades with rifles, on each side. Makarenko addresses the ranks with a brief outline of the day's tasks, and—if anyone has been guilty of some offence—announces the reprimands decided upon at the Commanders' Council. Then the commanders detail the detachments to their respective jobs. This "ceremonial" appeals to the children.

But still more ceremonial—I should even say solemn—was the Colony's act of delivery of five carloads of packing cases to its factory customer. The Colony's band blared away while speeches were made about the great significance of labour, which created culture, about free collective labour being the only thing that would bring people to a life of justice, and that only the abolition of private property would make people friends and brothers, would do away with life's ills and tragedies. It was impossible, without profound emotion, to look at those rows of grave, lovable little faces, at the four hundred pairs of many-coloured eyes looking proudly and smilingly at the carts loaded up with the woodwork of the colonists' own workshop. Hearty and splendid was the cheer that went up from four hundred throats. A. S. Makarenko

is able to speak to children about work with that calm hidden force which is more understandable and eloquent than any amount of fine words. Nothing, I believe, better describes the man himself than the following passage from the brief preface he has written to the biographies of the colonists whom he has reared:

"As I was typing the hundredth biography, it dawned on me that I was reading the most astounding book I had ever seen. It was a story of concentrated children's woes told in such simple, such pitiless words. In every word I feel that these stories are not designed to excite compassion in anyone, are not calculated for effect. It is the simple, sincere story of a lonely, destitute little person, unaccustomed to count on anyone's sympathy, and accustomed only to a hostile world, accustomed to accept this position undismayed. This, of course, constitutes the tragedy of our day, but that tragedy is noticeable only to us, it is no tragedy to the Gorkyites, for whom it is an habitual relationship between them and the world.

"For me, perhaps, there was more suffering in this tragedy than for anyone else. In the course of eight years I had been obliged to look upon not only the unsightly woes of children who had been thrown out into the ditch, but the ugly moral deformities of those children. I had no right to confine myself only to sympathy and pity towards them. I had long since realised that to save them I was obliged to be relentlessly exacting, stern, and firm. I had to be as much a philosopher in regard to their sorrows as they were towards themselves.

"This was my tragedy, and I felt it all the more keenly as I read these notes. It should be the tragedy of all of us, and we have no right to evade it. Those who go to the trouble of experiencing only the emotion of sweet compassion and the sugary desire to please these children are simply covering up their hypocrisy with these copious, and for them, therefore, cheap children's woes."



Besides the Colony at Kuryazh I also saw the Dzerzhinsky Colony near Kharkov. It contained only a hundred or a hundred and twenty children, and was founded evidently to show what an ideal Children's Labour Colony for "delinquents" and the "socially dangerous" should be like. It is housed on two floors of a specially built house with nineteen windows on its façade. Its three workshops—joiner's, shoemaking and mechanical—are equipped with the most up-to-date machines and furnished with a rich selection of tools. Excellent ventilation, large windows, and lots of light. The children wear comfortable overalls, the dormitories are spacious with good bed linen, baths, showers, clean airy rooms for studies, an assembly hall, a well-stocked library, plenty of school supplies, and everything spick and span—a model institution "for show", even the children selected "as if for show"—all healthy-looking youngsters. The organisers of such institutions could learn a lot here. The Colony has a richly equipped state farm, and in the summer the children work in the fields.

Then there is the Baku Colony for 500 children—two large buildings outside the town on grey parched land amid the sun-scorched hills. It has been founded recently and is in the process of organisation, but the children are already dreaming of a zoo which they intend to organise. These little people, browned by the sun, are as busy as ants, and work there is going with a merry swing. The Colony is managed by a man who is as passionately in love with his work as A. S. Makarenko is.

On the whole, I have seen about 2,500 street arabs, and this will remain one of the deepest impressions for the rest of my life. These children should make remarkably steadfast, interesting men and women, cheerful, healthy, enthusiastic workers engaged in serious pursuits.

## REMINISCENCES*

**by *Galina Makarenko***

I caught a glimpse of Anton Makarenko in 1922 at the Ukrainian People's Commissariat for Education. In those days the Gorky Colony near Poltava was a much-discussed theme in educational circles.

I first visited the Gorky Colony together with an inspector of this Commissariat after it had moved to Kuryazh, outside Kharkov. This was in the spring of 1927.

We drove into the Colony grounds on a cloudy windy day. Big trees grew at the sides of the yard, and among them, in orderly array, stood white little houses with trim wooden porches and front gardens with flower-beds laid out in them. In the middle of the yard towered the great bulk of the main monastery church. The yard and the church were so big that the three motor-cars parked nearby looked like toys. Our car parked alongside and we stepped out on to the hard gravelled walk.

I was curious to see the organisers, guardians, and commanders of this well-regulated life. I must say that I went

* Galina Makarenko, the writer's wife, was herself an educationist and co-author of *A Book for Parents*. She was the editor of the 7-volume edition of Makarenko's complete works. For many years she directed the Laboratory of the Institute of Theory and History under the R.S.F.S.R. Academy of Pedagogical Sciences devoted to the study of Makarenko's legacy.—*Ed.*



to the Gorky Colony with a feeling of cold scepticism and it was with anything but pleasure that I looked forward to the few hours of official boredom that one often experiences on a short visit to a children's institution.

By that time I had seen the inside of some two hundred children's homes, had managed one for 150 children myself for several years, and knew the workings of this business, the incredible difficulty of it. I also knew the comparatively modest standards—maximum and minimum—that had been achieved at that time in most institutions through our pedagogical efforts.

Today it is already quite obvious that pedagogical successes and possibilities are determined by quality, namely, by the idea-content of the entire system of education and elaborated methods and techniques. Pedagogical thought, both practical and scientific, has been hard at work in this field during the last few years and has opened up new great vistas.

In those days, however, it was difficult to find an answer to the question why, in some children's homes, even good ones, the staff, after more or less prolonged success, seemed to come up against a Rubicon which was almost impassable. The questions that remained unsolved seemed to be minor ones, but unsolved they remained. They were largely questions of organisation, such as safeguarding the varied property that had been acquired, and keeping the buildings and all the territory of the children's institution clean and orderly.

Finally, there were such matters as a precise routine schedule, authorised persons, responsibility for one's job, and proper verification of its fulfilment. All these imperative demands of life, great and small, multiplied and split up by the number of educators, pupils, and staff of attendants, that is to say, complicated 200 to 500 times, are bound up into a single inseparable complex, and it is difficult to define where and how they interact, what is the most important thing and what is of secondary importance.

It so happened that the organisational period was excessively prolonged and little time was left for educational work proper.

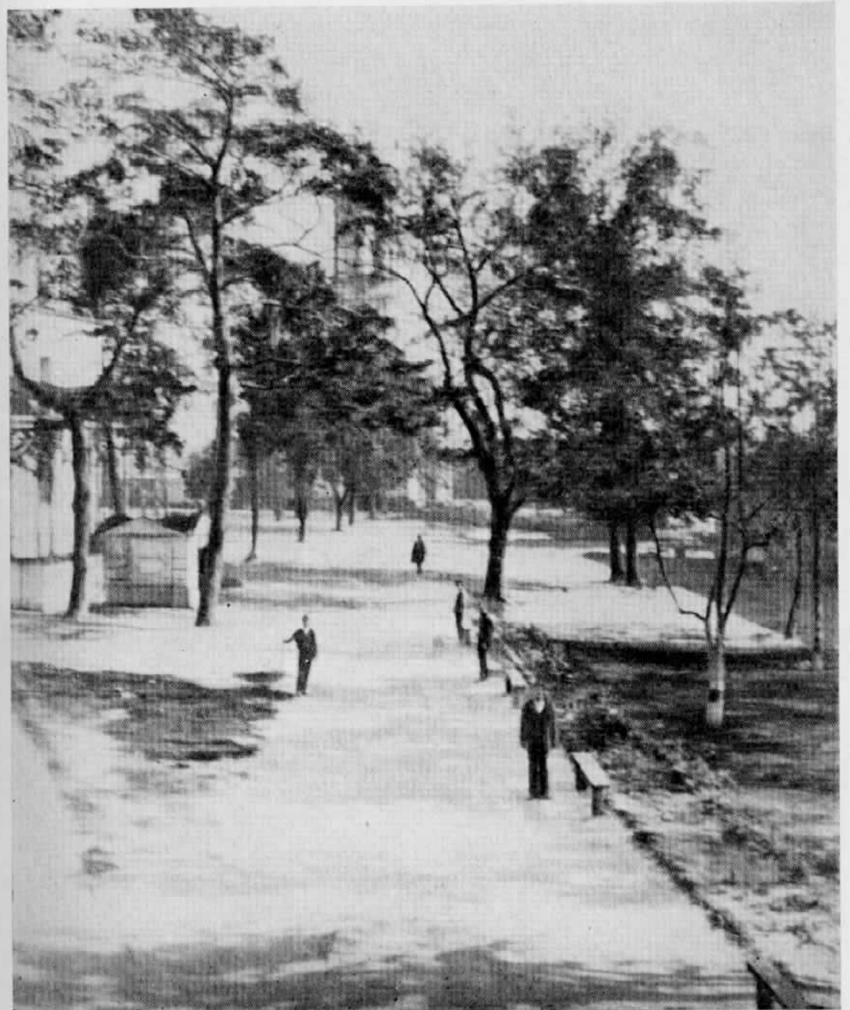
For some reason the simple idea that both good and bad organisation were educative never entered anyone's mind. The lack of organisation is itself a peculiar form of anarchic education. And that being so, it was necessary, from the very first day of the institution's existence, to introduce an active and politically purposive communist education of the children—the only means by which it is possible to live an organised life and steadily improve organisation.

In the children's institutions that I had seen at the time I found no answers to these perplexing questions. And so I thought it made little difference if I saw one home more or one home less.

At any rate, the way I felt about it at the time guaranteed an unbiassed attitude on my part towards what I was going to see. The good order that was kept on the extensive territory of the Gorky Colony was impressive. At that time the Colony had a population of 500 pupils and a staff of no less than 30 people, including members of their families. I knew only too well from personal experience that you could not make a show in a children's institution, not even for a few hours, unless you had a real solid foundation of work to back it up.

We approached the main building. The door yielded easily to our pressure and swung smoothly shut behind us.

In the small plain entrance-hall we were met by a youth wearing a red arm-band. He greeted us with smiling polite-



The Gorky Colony. Kuryazh.

ness, saying that the Gorkyites were glad to welcome visitors, that we were a bit late and dinner had already started, but that the Twelfth Detachment, to whose table we were invited, was waiting for us. In the cloakroom I was told that this youth was a Komsomol member and detachment commander, and his name was Krupov.* He was duty-man at the Colony that day and was responsible for keeping order. He came up to us again and handed us over to a member of the Guest Committee, a girl of about fourteen. No grownups were to be seen in the entrance-hall. Here these youngsters acted as hosts.

The girl greeted us very politely and conducted us to the dining-hall, enquiring on the way what the state of the road was through the meadow and reassuring us that our chauffeur would be invited to the table too, we need not worry. She opened the door and we entered a vast hall with windows on both sides and long tables set out all down its length. On the tables, which were covered with white tablecloths, there were lots of flowers, Lucullan quantities of browned Ukrainian pies, and other viands, bottles of wine and lemonade. This was an annual red-letter day, March 28th, when the colonists and the staff celebrated the birthday of their beloved patron and guiding spirit Maxim Gorky. On that day only friends of the Colony were invited to the party. (It was only by sheer accident that I found myself among the friends.)

A. S. Makarenko, apparently, had been forewarned, because he was there to meet us. When we approached the table of the Twelfth Detachment, he said, "Colonists, these are our guests." They all greeted us. The Superintendent dined at the same table. We were entertained with a cordiality and friendliness that were characteristic of the style in which things were done at the Colony, and later at the Dzerzhinsky Commune. Our hosts, the Twelfth Detachment,

* Krupov graduated from the Mining Institute in 1939 and became chief engineer of a mine.—*Ed.*

were boys and girls of various ages. The Superintendent of the Colony was a young man with good, I should even say, refined manners, though somewhat withdrawn and cold.

The conversation was general, and the older children, too, took part in it. Although they treated the Superintendent with deferential respect–that was obvious at first glance–there was not the slightest constraint either in their manner or their speech. You felt that these people all had common interests, worked for a common cause for which they shared equal responsibility.

The merry feast lasted a long time, and all the complicated arrangements for that grand reception were the responsibility of the colonists. They coped with the task admirably and efficiently. The grownups sat at their tables and were served by the youngsters with special courtesy.

After dinner Makarenko invited the guests to inspect the Colony. There were a lot of guests, and we all started out in a small crowd. We visited the greenhouse, where the humid air was saturated with the heady scent of the wallflower; the dry kiln, smelling strongly of pine and oak wood; the cattle-yard and the stables. In the new large building where the dormitories were housed, fires crackled merrily in the numerous tiled stoves lining the long corridor. We inspected the educational block and the office of the Komsomol Bureau–the well-furnished youth headquarters; the Pioneers' Red Corner containing a multitude of home-made models and games, and the fine arts circle–here things were run by Victor Tersky, the club work organiser. We also visited the library with its 5,000 volumes, and the various study rooms. Outside, the forcing beds–a whole city of them–were being covered with straw mats on account of the early frosts. This was the only place where we met an adult–the agronomist Nikolai Ferre.

Everywhere children were running the show, brisk, busy, trim-looking boys and girls, who saluted us gaily in response to our greetings and immediately resumed their work. There were no discontented sulky faces, and all worked with a hearty good-will.

"Officers of the day" appeared noiselessly and unexpectedly at the entrances to the various buildings–all of them colonists–and room and locker doors opened and shut with a pleasant ring, making me feel like Alice in Wonderland, to whom the Superintendent of this Colony seemed a magician possessing some marvellous secret.

I was especially impressed by the dry kiln. It was set well back from the living quarters and it took us quite a time to reach it by a narrow path. It was dusk, the greenish twilight of spring. We entered a long windowless building. Stacks of boards loomed in the semi-darkness. It was hot inside from the invisible heating system. A pendulum clock ticked loudly on the wall. Two sturdy-looking young fellows sat on the boards. At their feet lay a big pale-coloured dog. It displayed an aggressive temper, but quietened down on recognising the master. The boys sprang down lightly and saluted. I came to know them well afterwards–they were Dmitry Chevily and Victor Gorkovsky.*

In that curious tone of his, at once friendly and official, which I then heard for the first time, Makarenko spoke to the boys in what sounded like half-question, half-order, "Missing the fun today?" One of the boys answered, "We're on duty till ten o'clock. We'll be on time for the second part of the programme and the dancing." Makarenko, very warmly and encouragingly, though tersely, said, "Fine." And with that we left the place.

We went back to the Colony in the dark. Makarenko offered no explanations, said nothing to convince or persuade us as other superintendents did. He did not seem to regard this happy state of affairs as an achievement. Obviously, this good order was the customary routine of life as far as

* D. Chevily subsequently graduated the Nautical School in Odessa as navigation officer and sailed in the Arctic. V. Gorkovsky worked at the Kharkov Tractor Plant.–*Ed.*

he was concerned. He spoke about the children who would soon be leaving school and the Colony. Some of them would continue their education in the higher schools, others were going to work in factories. The Colony had already got in touch with all these organisations. One felt that there was a strong tradition at the Colony in regard to leaving pupils. These young people, who had no families of their own, kept in close touch with their old community, from whom they received material and moral support.

As we approached the main building the bugle's staccato notes rang out merrily in the crisp spring air. It was the signal for the commanders to report.

The great hall was transformed. The tables had been carried out into the permanent dining-hall, and simple club furniture had taken their place. The lights were burning brightly, the colonists' excellent band was playing away, and the spruced up boys and girls were in that festive spirit of exhilaration when a person, at their age, thinks nothing of offering up half his life, if not more. And I was thinking of those two girls who were keeping the temperature up in the greenhouse, and of Victor and Dmitry far out in the dark dry kiln and of the many others at their posts, who were working with a blithe heart.

I broached the subject of the technique of duty assignments with Makarenko. He said that the greenhouse could not be left unattended for a single hour during the cold season, and so a relay system of duty had been established there. At night the duty-men were relieved every two hours. The shift would leave the party when their turn came. Answering a question of mine, he sounded rather surprised: "What do you expect? It's no easy thing, this knack of self-restriction. Unless it's developed in childhood, you never know how a person is going to behave when he grows up and acquires greater self-reliance and boldness. He may shirk his duty and play truant. Aren't there plenty of such people? And if you ask whose fault it is–it's because they've been badly brought up."



In those days I still had my prejudices on this score and I agreed with one of the guests who remarked, "But it's so dull for the children out there. You can't deny that." Makarenko smiled. "Oh, you've got to have more respect than that for people," he said. "Why should it be dull? It's natural for a person to want to perform feats of valour and selflessness. There is more joy in this awareness of one's own strength than there is in ordinary stereotyped amusements. Only let our young people get the taste of that feeling once or twice and there's no holding them back. This joy has got to be taught. Instead, we educators teach people for years to read and write, but when it comes to upbringing we let things drift."

An argument started on this subject, although there was nothing to argue about. Makarenko said, "There is a fine passage in *Dead Souls*," and he quoted it from memory: " 'Take with you on your journey when leaving the soft youthful years for stern manhood–take with you all human impulses, do not leave them on the road, you will not be able to lift them afterwards.' " I quoted Pushkin, " 'Learn, my son, learning reduces for us the experiences of swift-flowing life.' " "That too," said Makarenko, "only subject to a Soviet amendment: youth has to be given an exact assortment of necessary human impulses to avoid dragging about an unnecessary load through inexperience. There are few of these, though. Most grab what is lightest. The danger of overloading is slight. But to make a man take on his travels the bare essentials, and be sure that he doesn't lose anything on the way–that is our pedagogical concern."

"Isn't that so, Alyosha?" he added, suddenly turning to a colonist who had been listening attentively to the conversation all the time. "See what a useful thing literature is. You don't read enough–I've been looking through the library cards. You still believe that novels are dreamt up things. But you can learn a lot from them."

Alyosha flushed with pleasure at the attention shown him. "Are *you* learning?" he countered. Makarenko looked him

gravely and steadily in the face. "Of course I am, what do you think?" Alyosha's next remark betrayed such naïve perplexity that everyone burst out laughing. "What do you have to learn for, you know everything there is to know," he said. Makarenko laughed heartily and frankly. The cloak of reserve imposed by will and duty would be thrown aside, as it were, revealing how rich he was with fellow-feeling. He would become easy and affable, and I was thinking how near the colonists felt him to be at such moments. Usually he maintained a strong barrier of reserve between himself and them. He said to Alyosha, "Don't be funny–what about human greed? The more you know the more you want to know." Outside someone with an expert flourish sounded the signal for the general meeting.

After the meeting, which was a brief affair, there was a concert followed by dancing–a regular ball complete with brass band. The grownups, guests, and teachers sat admiring the youth, as always happens in such cases. Makarenko joined us too. He asked me, "Do you like music? Ours is a good band, isn't it? Fifty instruments, but we are going to increase it." Obviously, the band was something he was frankly proud of. "I can't do without a band," he continued. "What sort of collective is it without a band! We live poorly, you know, and it was difficult to raise money for a band, but you must economise for its sake on anything you like. A good band stands for culture, it's the pride of the community and a good material expression of unity."

To the strains of the last march, we went out into the darkness of the night. The Colony had its own power station, but it was of a limited capacity and could not light up the whole yard. Makarenko conducted us, a group of lady visitors, to our sleeping apartment. It was much too dark to think of returning to town that night.

When we drew level with the church someone challenged us, "Who goes there?" A small oval of light thrown by a pocket torch revealed the lean face of a youth with a rifle on his shoulder and two straining dogs on a leash. The



Superintendent introduced us. "Misha Charsky, commander of the guard." The flashlight went on again and Misha said, "I was wondering who it was. The dogs recognised you. They flushed a suspicious bird today, you know. You can't make anything out in this darkness. So I doubled the sentries where necessary and decided to have a look round myself, just to make sure." Asked how long he had been looking round, Misha answered, "A couple of hours. It'll be light soon. You never know what may happen on a night like this." "Won't you oversleep tomorrow? You've got to go to town, remember." "Not me, Anton Semyonovich. I've never had that happen to me yet." We wished him a peaceful night duty–a thing apparently he least of all desired. Misha Charsky–I wonder where he is now? The last time I saw him he was leaving to join the Far Eastern army. After his term of military service he stayed on as a regular. I heard that he had been wounded in the fighting at Khasan.* Misha possessed no outstanding abilities, but he was singularly pure in heart. Once he were told, "Misha, this has to be done," he would tackle the most difficult jobs without the slightest hesitation. He was one of those unassuming heroes who never even suspect that what they are doing is a feat of valour.

We proceeded on our way, Makarenko grumbling good-naturedly, "The place is full o'dogs. I wouldn't mind if they were real ones, but they're just ordinary village mongrels. Listening to the yarns they tell about them you'd think they were real wolf-hounds. And what exploits they are credited with! There weren't any suspicious birds hanging around today within ten miles of this place. Pure imagination. Misha and his sentries feel like real heroes and pray to heaven to send them some adventure."

Someone asked, "Was it for this imagination that you thanked Misha?"

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* The fighting against the Japanese invaders at Lake Khasan in 1939.–*Ed.*

Makarenko laughed. "Not a bad idea, you know. They deserve it. Aren't they doing their job well? Thanks to them you can sleep peacefully.

"We've raised an orchard here, transplanted full-grown apple-trees. Teachers have not yet been able to make good use of such a splendid object lesson. But here the orchard is the talk of the whole Colony. To guard the orchard is much more pleasing and useful than breaking into other people's orchards and stealing apples. The motive is essentially the same. The apples have nothing to do with it. The thing is life, impressions, exercise in life. If there's no danger, then play at danger. Man likes risking—it acts as a spur. But he should be taught to risk wisely, for the benefit of the common cause."

When we took our leave Makarenko invited us to come again. "Come down in the summer. We'll have a nice rosarium—quarter of a hectare. We have illuminations, a band—regular club-revels. We'll be glad to see you. We don't live rich, but we have plenty of fun. The children are badly in need of friends, company. Visitors are always welcome."

Indeed, at this complex and diverse community called the Soviet collective we felt ourselves welcome visitors.

## REMINISCENCES*

### by *Semyon Kalabalin*

### I

### HOW A. S. MAKARENKO EDUCATED US

I met Anton Semyonovich Makarenko in December 1920 in rather unusual surroundings—in prison, where I was serving a term for the errors of my bitter childhood. Thirty-four years have passed since then, but I distinctly remember every detail of that meeting.

It was like this. One day the prison governor sent for me. Coming into his office, I found a stranger there, besides the governor. He was sitting cross-legged in an armchair by the desk, wearing a shabby greatcoat. He had a large head and a high clear forehead. But the first thing I noticed about him was his big nose with the pince-nez on it, and behind the glasses the kindly gleam of wise, quizzical, compelling eyes. It was Anton Semyonovich Makarenko.

"So you are Semyon Kalabalin?" he said to me.

I nodded.

"And you would agree to go with me?"

I looked at him and then at the prison governor questioningly, since my "consent" depended upon the latter. Anton Semyonovich went on:

* The writer of these reminiscences is described in the book *The Road to Life* under the name of Semyon Karabanov.—*Ed.*

"I understand. I'll arrange this with the governor myself. And now, excuse me please, Semyon, but will you leave the room for a minute. May he, comrade governor?"

"Yes of course. Go out," said the governor.

I went out of the room.

Standing outside in the corridor in the company of the warder, I repeated to myself ironically, "Excuse me. Please. Leave the room, Semyon." I couldn't make head or tail of it. And the words too–they were all new to me, almost. A queer chap this was.

After a while I was invited back into the office. Anton Semyonovich was on his feet.

"Well, Semyon, have you got any things?"

"I haven't got anything."

"Good," Makarenko said, and turned to the governor. "So we can go straight from here?"

"Yes, go along," the governor said. "Now mind, Kalabalin–"

"Please don't, everything will be all right," Makarenko interrupted. "Good-bye. Come along, Semyon."

The prison doors were thrown wide open. Accompanied by Anton Semyonovich, I stepped out on to the happiest stretch of my life's road.

Not until about ten years later, when I was one of his assistants, did Makarenko tell me:

"I sent you out of the prison governor's office that time so that you shouldn't see me signing the paper remanding you in my care. It would have been humiliating to your human dignity."

Makarenko had been able to discern in me human qualities whose existence I had never suspected. It was the first warm human touch of his that I experienced.

On the way to the gubernia Department of Education I tried to walk ahead of Makarenko. I did this so that he could keep an eye on me and also to show him that I did not intend to run away from him. But he kept me at his side, entertaining me with stories about the Colony, about



how hard it was to organise it, and touching on all subjects under the sun except the prison, my own person and my past.

Coming into the courtyard of the Department of Education Makarenko placed the Colony's horse and cart at my disposal, and sent me on an errand that startled me.

"Can you read and write, Semyon?"

"Yes."

"Good."

He took a paper from his pocket and handed it to me, saying, "Please get these products for me–bread, fats, and sugar. I have no time to do it, I'll be busy today running around the government offices. As a matter of fact, I hate having to deal with storekeepers, weighers and whatnot. As a rule they cheat me scandalously–give me short weight and short change. You'll do a better job, I'm sure."

Giving me no time to collect my wits or even make a show of protest he quickly went away. You could have knocked me over with a feather! A fine business this! I scratched the back of my head, that traditional spot where all the answers to life's puzzling questions are born, and continued to ruminate: What do you know? Straight out of jail, and to be trusted with receiving supplies of bread and sugar! Maybe this was a sort of test? Maybe there was a catch in it? I stood there for quite a time thinking out and finally came to the conclusion that Makarenko was a bit dotty. How, otherwise, could he trust a fellow like me with all this stuff!

When I entered the storehouse the keeper asked me in an oily voice, "Will you be receiving the products? And who might ye be?"

"You'll know that later," I said and handed him the delivery order.

I received all the supplies and put them in the charabanc–a ramshackle contraption on railway truck springs. Presently Makarenko turned up, and seeing that his commission had been fulfilled, he told me to harness the horse and get moving.

By means of reins, whip, shouting, and tongue-clucking this apology for a horse with 36-year experience of indolence behind him was got into motion. When we were about two hundred metres away from the Educational Department building, Makarenko told me to stop and turned to me with the following words:

"I forgot to tell you. There was a slight misunderstanding about these products. They gave us two extra loaves of bread. Take them back, please, will you, otherwise those storekeepers will kick up a hell of a row. I'll wait for you here."

My ears and face flamed with shame. What could it be? This had never happened to me before. I jumped off the cart, pulled two loaves out from under the hay and walked back to the store. In my mind was the thought: What sort of a man is he? He told me himself he had been cheated, and I thought, what was the best way to take revenge on those storekeepers? Two loaves isn't much, but he says, "Go and take 'em back, please".

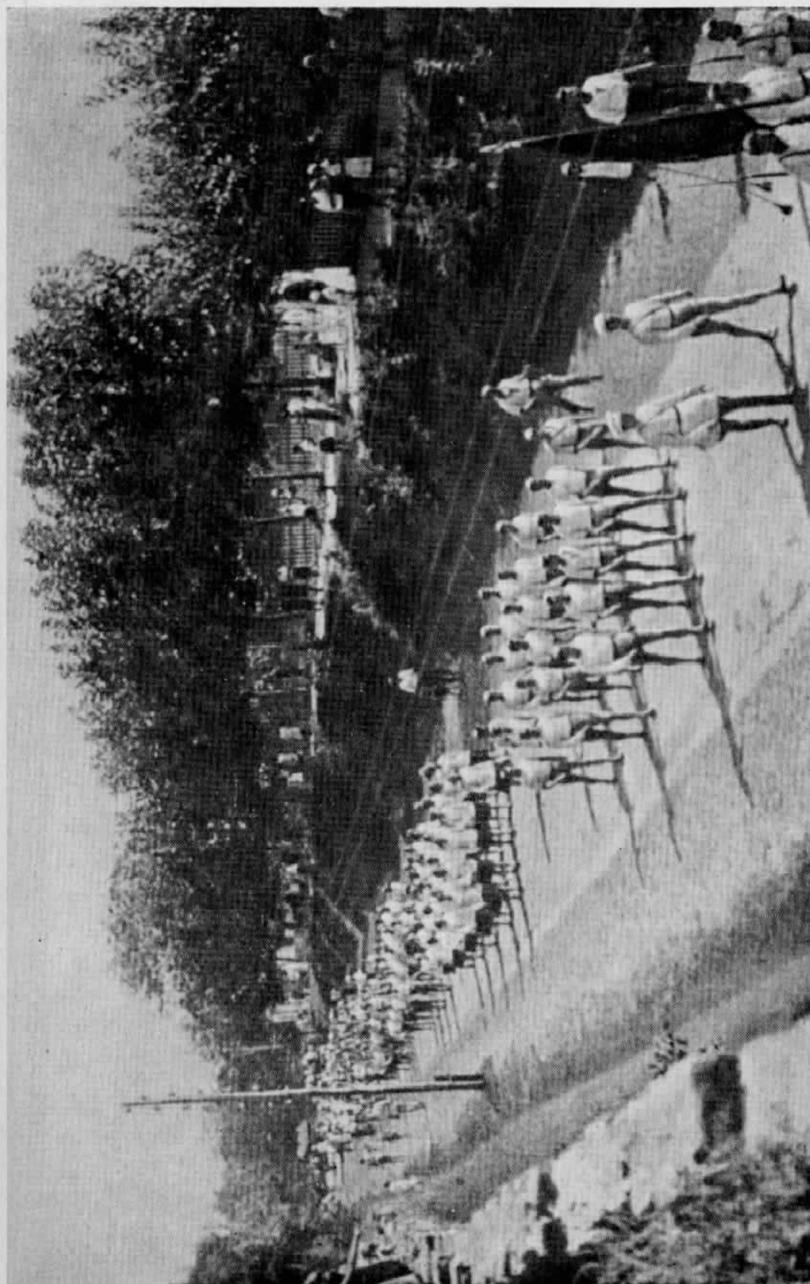
"Thank you very, very much, young man," the storekeeper greeted me. "We guessed it was just a mistake and it would be cleared up. Good day to you. Thanks."

I gave him a dirty look and quickly went out.

"Have some roasted sunflower seeds?" Makarenko said, offering me a handful when I got back into the cart. "I like them."

The bread incident was completely forgotten. Yet Makarenko could have reasoned this way: I trusted you, risked

Colonists marching in formation.



my good name in taking you out of jail, and you go and put me to shame for the sake of a couple of loaves of bread. Ah, well....

But he didn't do that. He did not repel me by such tactlessness, evidently fearing to offend me, prevent me from reassessing my own conduct, which I had wrongly regarded as an act of retributive justice. Had he started reproaching me, I doubt whether we would have made the journey to the Colony together.

That is the way Anton Semyonovich acted in other cases too—always very discreetly, tactfully and naturally, now deflating a "hero" with inimitable humour, now expressing stern protest and harsh condemnation, now flashing into anger and arousing fear in the adolescents, if not jarring them into consciousness. And in every case he acted differently, in a new way, never repeating himself. Always convincingly, sincerely, and unhesitatingly.

I now recollect that the colonists who made up the anti-*samogon** brigade were those who liked a drop themselves and had often been caught at it. The members of the special night detachment for combating robbery on the high road were colonists who had themselves been sent to the Colony for taking part in robberies. These arrangements astounded us. It wasn't until years later that we appreciated what a great trust this was on the part of a clever and tactful man, and that by showing us such trust Makarenko awakened in us the best human qualities that had lain dormant in our souls. Forgetting our own crimes and to all appearances even unreformed, we did not merely adopt a critical attitude towards crimes committed by others, but protested and actively struggled against them, and at the head of this struggle was our older friend and teacher. Together with us he lay in ambush at night and sometimes risked his life. It would have been shameful to have had to appear before him in the role of culprit, however small the offence, after hav-

* *Samogon*—illicit spirit distilled in the neighbouring villages.—*Ed.*

ing lain side by side with him in roadside ditches, lying in wait for bandits.

Makarenko's educative methods were extremely varied.

One morning a group of girls burst into his private office volubly protesting that they would not go outside any more, not for anything in the world.

"We're going to sit indoors all the time and we're not going to the dining-hall."

"Why not?" Makarenko asked.

"Because Vasya Gud swears like a cobbler.*" (As a matter of fact he was a cobbler.)

"You don't mean to say he is still swearing, girls?"

"Why should we tell lies?"

I was present during this scene and felt uncomfortable. I had heard Gud swearing so many times and had never done anything to stop it.

"Very well, girls, go along," Makarenko said, then turned to me, "Vasily should simply be given a fright, that will stop him swearing. Call him in."

Vasya Gud stepped gingerly across the threshold. By the way, there was an interesting detail: if anybody was called "to Anton" it meant a matter of business, but if it was "to the office"–that meant "on the carpet". In calling Vasya I had said, "To the office!"

"What for?" Vasya had asked.

"He'll tell you."

It was a flustered Vasya whom Makarenko greeted in an ominous hissing voice:

"So you haven't stopped maltreating our splendid Russian language? You've become so shameless that you even swear in the presence of girls! The next thing you'll be barking at me! I'm not going to have it! No, sir! How are you standing! Come along! Come into the woods with me, I'll show you

* A Russian saying, equivalent to the English "swear like a trooper". –*Ed.*



how to swear! You'll remember this for a long time, young fellow-me-lad! Come along!"

"Where to, Anton Semyonovich?" Vasya Gud bleated.

"To the woods! The woods!"

And off they went to the forest, Makarenko leading the way. When they were out of earshot, about half a kilometre from the Colony, Makarenko stopped in a small clearing.

"Now swear here. Swear for all you are worth!"

"Anton Semyonovich, I won't do it any more. Punish me any other way you like."

"I'm not punishing you, I'm offering you the facilities. Fire away! Here's my watch. It's twelve now. You can work till six o'clock. That will give you plenty of time to swear to your heart's content. Fire away!"

Makarenko went away.

Whether Vasya swore or not no one knows. Maybe he would have gone away altogether but for the watch. It held him like a leash.

At six o'clock sharp Vasya came to the Superintendent's office.

"I've finished. Here's your watch."

"For how many years have your sworn yourself dry?" asked Makarenko.

"For fifty years!" Vasya burst out.

And wonder of wonders–Vasya Gud stopped using bad language. Nor was he the only one.

Makarenko's private office was always crowded. The colonists went there to consult him not only on questions connected with the life of the collective, but on purely private matters. And Makarenko found time to spare for each one. Sometimes his talk would be grave and earnest, and sometimes a humorous remark of his would be enough to persuade his interlocutor. I experienced this myself. In 1922 I fell seriously in love with a girl named Olga. The first person I took my secret to, as I would to a father, was Anton Se-

myonovich. He heard me out, then got up from behind his desk, placed his hands on my shoulders and said quietly, feelingly, "Thank you, Semyon. What immeasurable joy you have given me. Thank you!"

"What for, Anton Semyonovich?"

"First, for your trust in me. This love belongs to you alone. There are all kinds of people. You may confide your secret to someone, and he'll either laugh or go and spread the news. Not me. I'll guard your secret as if it were my own." At this point I threw him a grateful glance, and he went on, "Secondly, you have helped me to see that you are not oddities at all, but just the same as ordinary people. Love is peculiar to all ages and all people, including my own charges. So you are a man on all points. And now about your love itself. Don't squander it, don't waste it in lies and lust. Love beautifully, decently, thriftily—in a chivalrous manner.... This is such an occasion that I don't feel like doing any more work. Come and have supper with me."

Makarenko had not scared me away, had not made me shrink in upon myself. He had not debased my love by lecturing or reproving me, had not insulted it by indifference or mock sympathy. In 1924, however, when I came to the Colony for my holidays, a boy named Anton Solovyov told me that Olga had walked out on me and was marrying another man. I ran three kilometres to the village where Olga lived. The story turned out to be true.

I returned to the Colony late in the evening and went to see Anton Semyonovich. I looked a sight.

"What's the matter, Semyon? Are you ill?"

"I don't know, I suppose I am."

"Go into the dormitory, I'll send Yelizaveta Fedorovna to see you."

"There's no need to. No Yelizaveta Fedorovna can help me. Olga has walked out on me. She's marrying. The wedding's on Sunday. They don't believe us colonists."

"Is that true?"



"Yes, it's all over. I thought it was going to be for a lifetime, but...." And I started to cry.

"Forgive me, Semyon, but I don't understand it. Only three months ago I saw Olga and spoke to her. She loves you. There's something wrong about it."

"There's nothing wrong, the wedding's fixed. Don't be angry with me, Anton Semyonovich, don't think I'm saying it just like that ... but I'll hang myself!"

"Ugh! Are you crazy, Semyon?"

"I'm not crazy, but I have nothing more to live for."

"Oh, go and hang yourself then, damn you! Snivelling milksop! But do me this favour—hang yourself somewhere at a distance from the Colony so's we don't get the stink of your lovelorn body."

Makarenko angrily shifted something on his desk. The immediate effect of his words was that I no longer felt any desire to hang myself. He sat down beside me on the sofa, and warmth and companionship flowed into my heart and fevered brain. Afterwards, at his suggestion, we went outside to sit under the starry sky and weave dreams of a better future, of better, loyal people.

Anton Semyonovich possessed noble human qualities. He was a man great of soul from whom there was much to learn. His book *The Road to Life* deals with real people who actually lived in the Gorky Colony. The author merely changed some of the names. At the end of his book Makarenko speaks about the future career of his charges. All of them, former street waifs or delinquents, made good. They became workers, engineers, agronomists, doctors, airmen, and teachers. Many of them, Communists, grown to manhood, fought bravely in the Great Patriotic War and are now working for their country's good, each at his respective job. Ivan Kolos, for instance, (who went by the name of Ivan Golos in *The Road to Life*) became an engineer and is working in Monchegorsk; Nikolai Shershnev (Vershnev) is now a doctor in Komsomolsk-on-the-Amur; Pavel Arkhangelsky (Zadorov) is

a lieutenant-colonel of the engineers; Vasily Klushnik (Klushnev) is an officer in the Soviet army. Many others were killed during the war. As a result of complications following heavy wounds Lieutenant-Colonel Grigory Suprun (Burun) died in 1954.

Anton Makarenko used to say, "A man should have only one specialty—he should be a Man with a capital letter, a real man." Makarenko himself possessed this specialty to perfection and did all he could to have his charges master it.

## II

## DISCIPLINE

What a fine time spring is! In the Gorky Colony the spring of 1922 was splendid because the community of colonists were so vernally young and healthy. All of us, from little Anton Solovyov to our dearly beloved teacher Anton Makarenko, felt with the quickened sense of spring and youth that a new road to life had opened before us, that our strength and possibilities were inexhaustible.

At the close of spring work, the Commanders' Council decided to give all the colonists a week's holiday. At the same meeting a group of senior colonists was selected to be sent to various towns to continue their education at the Workers' Faculties. After a week's rest, the group were to start studying at the rate of six hours a day. I was one of these lucky ones. In my dreams I was already a student, and I felt on top of the world.

Tomorrow's student and yesterday's hobo! Could I forget the black days of my childhood! The deadening routine of the eight-year-old farm labourer, choking in the dust of the beet plantations belonging to the sugar king of Durnovo. For nine kopeks a day I had to work from dawn till dusk. Then came the years of vagrancy, the life of a hunted little animal, winning my crust of bread by cunning and theft. Hunger, destitution, uneasy sleep in thieves' dens.

The year 1917. Came the days of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Like many other boys of my age, children of the "bottom dogs", I served in the ranks of the Red Army. Fierce clashes with the Haidamaks, the Petlurites, and other rabble bands, fighting with the Poles. Wounded. Hospital. Those dear "little sisters" in snow-white overalls, who got sugar-candy from somewhere and treated me stealthily—I was the youngest soldier in the hospital. Discharged, half alive, pale as wax, I found myself, on a sparkling spring day like this one, wandering through the streets of Poltava. Was I to face destitution again! I did not know at the time that the Revolution for which I had fought had changed life beyond recognition and that the Party was taking such care of the children. And so I became a Gorkyite, the lucky inmate and pupil of a Colony bearing the name of Maxim Gorky.

While revelling in those sunny spring days, I found the bitter memories of childhood reviving within me, and with a pang I recollected the word "Mamma". The face of my mother, that dear kind soul, worn out by the backbreaking toil of a farm hand, rose before me. How was she getting on? I hadn't seen her for five years. I'd go and see Anton, yes I must.

"Anton Semyonovich, I'd like to go and see my people, let me go home!"

"I don't mind. So you've been thinking of your mother? Good. That's very good."

"My mother? No. What makes you think that? It's my father I miss. And generally, I'd like to go home for a bit."

"Semyon!" Makarenko said and looked at me in such a way that my heart turned over in me. I felt like falling on his neck and crying my heart out on his breast, weeping tears of gratitude for my mother. "Don't be ashamed of your love for your mother, Semyon. Only a real man can love his mother. A strong man. I love my mother too. We must arrange leave for you. You're a commander, and I can't let



you go without the permission of the Commanders' Council. But I'll support you."

"Thank you."

At the Commanders' Council Nikolai Shershnev smoothed out the paper containing my application on his bare knee and explained what it was all about.

"Well then, commanders, Semyon is asking for leave until Saturday to go to his home village, Storozhevoye. To see his father and mother. Who wants to speak first?"

"What's there to speak about!" said Grigory Suprun. "Semyon is a leading commander and a colonist, and besides, he's going to the Workers' Faculty. I think we ought to give him leave."

The commanders expressed their approval in a babble of voices and with a slapping of hands on bare knees.

"Who else wants the floor? Nobody? The thing's clear, then. I put it to the vote."

The voting over, I was given the following paper:

Certificate

This is to certify that Semyon Kalabalin of the Gorky Colony, by a decision of the Commanders' Council, is given leave to travel to the village of Storozhevoye, Chutovsk District, as from Monday May 22, 1922, to 12 noon on Saturday May 27, 1922.

Signed: A. Makarenko,<br>Superintendent of the Gorky Colony<br>N. Shershnev, Secretary, C.C.

The boys came a couple of miles down the road to see me off, and then raced back.

By six o'clock that evening thirty miles of road were behind me and I was back in my half-forgotten home village. The local mongrels greeted me, I breathed the familiar evening smells of the village, listened to the creak of the carts, the rattle of the ploughs and the shouts of the ploughmen

6—2407

returning from the fields. The well sweeps groaned as they swung their buckets in the air.

And here was the bridge. The church. Somebody recognised me. Behind the wattle fence I heard a voice: "The Kalabalin boy, the youngest, the one they said had been killed."

And here was our cottage! And Mother! She looked at me. Recognised me!

"Mamma!"

I embraced her, collecting with my lips the tears of joy that ran down her face.

The days raced madly. This morning it was Tuesday, the next evening Wednesday. Not for a moment did I forget that I was on leave, that I belonged to the Colony, to the collective. But at home, too, among my family, among the village youth I felt happy and warm. I was invited to the Komsomol meeting and to rehearsals of the theatrical circle.

Things were very lively at home, where preparations were being made for a wedding. My elder brother was marrying. The last two or three days before the wedding were especially exciting. Things were being sewn, mended, adjusted. I was as busy as a bee, and my mother melted with joy, whispering to her neighbours with a furtive nod in my direction, "Look at him, isn't he wonderful!"

Lying at night in the hay cart, I suddenly remembered that tomorrow was Saturday and I had to be back at the Colony. Yes, tomorrow, and not later than 12 o'clock. It would be a disgrace if I didn't keep my word. But what about the wedding? There would be such fun on Sunday! All the young people, the dancing, the brass band. I'd like to see anyone beat me at dancing! I sprang from the cart and ran into the house. My father was already asleep, but Mother was still busy with the dough.

"Mamma! I've got to be back at the Colony tomorrow."

"What? Don't be silly!"

"I mean it. My leave is over, Mamma. I must go."



Father got up, and so did my brother and his companions. They all started protesting loudly.

"Nothing'll happen to you, Semyon. It's your brother's wedding after all. It's not as if you're shamming."

"I thought I'd see all of you on a day like this! Other people live together, all in the same home, but I've lost my children, lost all of them!" Mother complained, bending over the pots.

"So you can't stay, you say," Father said. "Ah well, if you can't you can't. You're a fine lot of boys out there. You've got good discipline. Go and have a sleep before taking the road. It's a pretty long step."

At five the next morning I was up and about. Mother kept crying and pleading, the while she tied up a bundle of wedding viands for me to take with. Father gave me a bundle of fragrant leaf tobacco.

"Give that to Anton Semyonovich from me. He's a man of great heart and mind, I see. Take care of him. Tell him this tobacco is homegrown."

"Maybe you'll stay after all, Semyon," my brother said with little hope.

"I can't, Andrei. It means going against the rules. And I voted for them myself. It would offend Anton, offend everybody. Good-bye!"

At eleven o'clock I dashed into the yard of the Colony.

"Semyon! Semyon!" the colonists shouted, running up to me from all sides.

"Hullo! Have you seen Anton? What's the news?"

"Here, treat yourselves!"

I tossed my bundle to somebody and ran into the private office.

"Good morning, Anton Semyonovich!"

"Ah, Semyon! How do you do?"

Makarenko stood up. We embraced as if we had not seen each other for years. I gave him father's present—the bundle of tobacco.

"Sit down. Tell me all about it."

"What can I tell you?"

"Everything. How are things at home? How are things in the village? What are people doing there?"

"People are living well. My father's been given a cottage and five dessiatines of land. Everybody's been given land. Out of the landowner's estate. A horse and cow too."

"Yes . . . that's good. This is good tobacco."

"To be sure, people are living well. The crop in the field is like a sea. People are contented. Practically all the young people are in the Komsomol. They've organised a reading-room. Put on shows. It's good."

"Very good. And how are the old folks?"

"They've grown younger. Yesterday they came all over me, wouldn't let me go."

"Why? Wanted you to become a farmer?"

"No. There was no talk about that. Wanted me to stay for the wedding."

"Wedding? Not yours, surely?"

"Goodness, no! My brother's getting married. Tomorrow's the wedding."

"So your brother is getting married. And you didn't stay, eh?"

"But how could I, Anton Semyonovich?"

"Ah! Semyon! Hullo!" Nikolai Shershnev poked a jovial face through the door. "Let's have the certificate, otherwise I'll put you down for being late."

I handed Nikolai my leave certificate neatly folded in four.

"Nikolai," Makarenko said, addressing Shershnev. "Summon the Commanders' Council, will you."

"Aye, aye, sir!"

Within three minutes the Council was assembled.

"Comrade commanders," Makarenko began, "excuse me for interrupting what you were doing, but this, too, is important. I request that Semyon's leave should be prolonged till Monday. His brother is getting married. Tomorrow is the wedding."



"It is important," Marusya Tereshchenko chipped in.

"Anton Semyonovich! Commanders!" I protested. "What's the idea? They can manage without me. I'm against it. . . ."

"Tell your grandmother! I bet you're dying to be there!" the commanders clamoured.

"Not so much noise!" Makarenko said, rapping on the table with his pencil. "We're not doing this for you, Semyon, we're doing it for your mother. This may be the greatest joy for her. I have a mother too, and so have they, all of them," he said, making a circular gesture with his arm.

"Semyon to be ordered back to his leave!" proposed Shershnev.

"Quite right!" cried the commanders.

"Back to leave then be it!" I answered. "But I ask for another commander to join me and be our guest."

"Can't we all go?" piped Toska Solovyov.

"Couldn't we have the wedding here, in the Colony?" threw in Frosya Kravtsova.

"We'll soon be marrying off our own people," Makarenko said, patting Frosya's shoulder.

Leave certificates were made out for me and Suprun, and a crowd of colonists gave us a noisy send-off.

The thud of horse's hoofs made us look back.

"Why, that's our phaeton, Grisha! And with Mary in the shafts!"

"So it is. But I don't see anybody on the box."

Mary was coming down at a smart trot. Drawing level with us, she stopped. Suddenly Makarenko stepped out of the carriage.

"Going far, Anton Semyonovich? Why isn't Bratkevich driving?" I asked.

"Get in! You get on the box, Semyon. I've decided to join the spree, attend your wedding."

"What, you're coming with me? Coming to Storozhevoye?"

"Why not? You fellows mooch around, and I have to sit in the woods like a monk. Get in. What are you staring at?"

"But I don't seem to get this straight," I said.

"What? You begrudge me a nip of vodka and a slice of cabbage pie?"

"Anton Semyonovich!" I squeezed his hand hard, pushed Suprun into the vehicle, and swung myself up on the box.

Feeling the reins in familiar hands, Mary started off at a brisk pace.

My feelings were indescribable. The world around me had changed as in a fairy-tale. Everything was painted in wonderful blue and golden tones. The very air tingled with silver and flowed into my soul, filling it with joy, happiness and pride. It was him, Anton Semyonovich, that I saw in those spring tones. What had made him join us? Maybe he really was tired and we had not suspected it? Or maybe he had done this just to give me a lift? I had already done 35 versts on foot that day. What sort of dancer would I be at the wedding after a seventy-verst hike. What a wonderful, all-knowing man he was!

The two years I had spent in the Colony flickered through my mind like a film. For "raiding" a farmer's melon field I was demoted on Makarenko's demand and "reduced to the ranks". For having rescued an old man from a blazing cottage during a village fire, Makarenko had said simply and tersely, "That's the way everybody should act."

And those unforgettable hours when we all went into the woods in a body with Anton Semyonovich and talked about the new happy life of our people, about culture, communism. Those had been wonderful talks—my first lessons in the rudiments of political knowledge.

And only now, today, when he is no longer with us, do I realise how far ahead this strong, tender, and courageous man was able to see life!

## THE MULTIPLICATION TABLE

by ***Yefim Roitenberg***

I first met Anton Semyonovich Makarenko in 1933. He gave the impression of being a stern man, but as soon as he began to speak—and our talk began with him asking me what seven times eight would be, and then, in a few brief words telling me about the great tasks that confronted the Commune and about the joys of collective work and life—I felt the warmth of the man, felt that he could see right through a person and understand him.

The Dzerzhinsky Labour Commune, where I was brought up, came into being in 1927. Makarenko took the first fifty inmates of the Commune from the Gorky Colony, and this hard core was supplemented by children picked up off the streets and by new arrivals from other Colonies and homes.

At first the Commune existed on funds provided by the staff of the Central Political Board, who made regular contributions towards its upkeep out of their salaries. When we had found our feet economically, Makarenko proposed that we should stop receiving these contributions and run the Commune on a self-supporting basis that would even yield a profit to the state. Eventually the Commune brought in an annual profit of four million rubles. Naturally, this was accompanied by an increase in the communards' wages—a matter to which Makarenko attached great educative importance. Money was not only an incentive for greater la-

bour productivity, but an educative factor as well. Personal earnings raise a man's cultural possibilities and demands. He learns to spend his money judiciously and calculate wisely. In order to organise such an aptitude and direct it, Makarenko distributed the wages himself. He drew up the pay sheet and decided how much this or that person was to receive in cash. Novices, who went under the name of "pupils", received only a small amount of pocket money for which they had to render an account. The rest of their earnings was put to their account in a savings bank, and not until they had grown up and received the name of "communard" were they allowed to receive large sums of money. Many of the older communards earned as much as a thousand rubles a month. A hundred and twenty rubles was deducted for the cost of their upkeep, and there were compulsory contributions towards the upkeep of the younger members of the Commune and to the Commanders' Council Fund. After these deductions and payment of monthly pocket money allowances, the balance was deposited to the respective accounts. When a communard left the Commune he would have saved up a fairly large sum of money to help him live and tide over the early years of study in the higher educational institution. In this way we learned to be thrifty spenders of the money that we earned.

The educative importance of productive and profitable work in the Commune was tremendous, but no less important than work were study and mode of life, both of which were soundly and rationally organised. Life, work, and study were the basis of education. The ten-year school, which we

A holiday trip on the Volga.

graduated, educated us up to university entry standard, and most of the communards, including myself, became students.

Makarenko treated everyone with respect and trusted the children, so much so, that we felt ashamed to betray that trust. Every year the Commune, in a body, went to the Caucasus, the Crimea or other places for their holiday at their own expense. In 1933 we went to Novorossiisk on the Black Sea coast. We had 300,000 rubles holiday money with us, packed away in a separate suitcase, with the pay sheets in another suitcase. Makarenko gave these suitcases in the care of the older communards, who were to carry them in turn. Naturally, we all appreciated what a great trust this was and were fully alive to the responsibility. Makarenko gave his revolver to the boy who was carrying the suitcases, so that he should not be robbed. During the night the lights went out in the train. Thieves boarded the moving train and stole one of the suitcases. Some of the boys jumped from the steps of the coach (with the train going pretty fast downhill) and gave chase. Unfortunately, they did not catch the thieves. It was discovered, however, that the suitcase they had stolen was not the one that contained the money, but the one that contained the pay sheets. This was a relief, although it was now hopeless to determine how much was due to each individual member of the company. Makarenko suggested that each of us should write out a new receipt for the money he had received, stating how much he had left. We didn't believe that the communards would honestly make out receipts for the correct sums, but Makarenko said, "I know that the communards will make out the right receipts and we shall restore the pay roll." The Commanders' Council was called together. The Council decided to accept Makarenko's proposal. We were all worried that the figures wouldn't square, that somebody would give the wrong sum, but believe it or not, it worked out exactly to the kopek. And Makarenko said, "There, I know you better than you know yourselves."

Makarenko had a different method of approach to every one of his charges and for every occasion. One day he had his watch stolen off his desk. The thief was caught. This boy had both Father and Mother living, but he had been badly brought up. It should be said that theft was rare in the Commune, and even Makarenko's new charges did not steal. But here was a case, and the culprit was marched off to "face the music" before the Commanders' Council. The commanders demanded that he be expelled immediately from the Commune. Makarenko opposed this and said that the boy was not a thief at all, that he was not to blame, it was just a mishap.

"But he is to blame! He stole the watch!"

Makarenko nevertheless argued us into letting the boy stay. Afterwards we asked him why he had defended him so stoutly. He said, "I left my watch lying about on the table. It was a temptation. He wanted a watch, but he's not a thief, and he had to be made to see that he wasn't one. If he steals anything after this then I deserve to be kicked out of here."

Indeed, the boy lived in the Commune for five years and never had anything like this happen to him again.

On another occasion a new boy was brought to the Commune off the street. Presently he was drawn into the amateur theatrical circle, and he cut down the curtains that hung in the circle's room. Naturally, he was hauled before the general meeting to "face the music". If the communards hated anything it was drunkards, thieves, and gamblers. Makarenko made a sharply worded speech in which he angrily accused the boy of being a thief. We were all puzzled. How could he say that of a boy who had only just come? But when we saw the effect his words had on the boy, we understood that he was right. This particular boy had to be shouted at to make him realise at the outset that he could not get away with stealing here. In fact, the boy did not steal any more. These are two contrasting examples. In difficult matters like these Makarenko always emerged the victor. He possessed to a high degree pedagogical skill and knowledge, and we respected and loved him for it, we had faith in his experience.



Makarenko demanded cleanliness and a high standard of social manners. In the Commune this was one of the principal demands in his system of education. Once a housewife, an elderly woman, said to me, "Makarenko has written a book *Learning to Live*, but it's a sheer utopia. I can't believe things should be so clean and tidy with street waifs. I have a domestic servant, but even so things are not as clean. The whole thing's a utopia."

I must say that the parquet floor in the Commune shone like a mirror and everything was spick and span. When Makarenko made his inspection round together with the "man on duty" he always carried a snow-white cambric handkerchief and a thin stick. With the handkerchief he verified the presence of dust and with the stick the cleanliness of the blankets. This control made us keep things clean and orderly, and cleanliness became a necessity and a habit with us.

Foreign delegates visited the Commune almost every day. I shall describe one such visit. We were expecting an important diplomatic personage. He arrived and went to the backyard. It appears that he was looking for the punishment cell. He couldn't believe that the inmates could be disciplined without a punishment cell. He found no such cell, but he was astonished at the cleanliness in all the rooms and outbuildings. Makarenko taught us cleanliness and made the children wear clean shirts not only for outward show. He insisted on "a clean body", and introduced cultural habits and cleanliness also in thoughts and behaviour. There could be no seamy side, no dirty backyards in the life of a Soviet person—everywhere cleanliness, sincerity, and candour. And he succeeded in teaching us that.

Absolute politeness was demanded of us in our relations with each other, and especially with our elders, with all citizens, visitors, and strangers. Makarenko used to say, "We Soviet people should show meticulously good breeding

and gentlemanly behaviour. With us this will be free from toadyism and abasement, as we are equal among equals. Our good breeding should be the envy of the world."

One day at the Commanders' Council Makarenko moved that all the communards should offer their seats to women in tramcars, but several days later one of the communards said that when giving up their seats our boys looked round to see whether their good behaviour had been noticed or not. All Makarenko said was: "You are not gentlemen, you're braggarts. Never look round when you give up your seat in a tramcar."

Himself a distinguished writer, author of admirable books and a fine connoisseur of art, Makarenko introduced us to literature, and instilled in us a love for the theatre, music, and painting. He attached tremendous importance to aesthetics in life. A great role in this respect was played by the theatre.

The Kharkov Theatre of Russian Drama together with the Opera Theatre arranged a study of *Eugene Onegin* for the communards. This "Onegin Conference", as one might call it, lasted a fairly long time. The communards gathered in their "quiet club" (we had two clubs—a "quiet" one and a "loud" one) with visiting artists and literary critics and listened to and studied *Eugene Onegin*. After that we all went to the opera in Kharkov, and went to hear *Onegin* again when guest artists of the Moscow Stanislavsky Theatre gave performances there. Our splendid Commune band played Chaikovsky with great taste and skill. Our close contact with actors and singers contributed greatly to our understanding of art. The communards speak with great affection and gratitude of actresses A. A. Skopina and N. V. Vislotskaya, actors N. V. Petrov and A. I. Yankevsky, and A. G. Kranov, the art director of the Theatre of Russian Drama, who did some very good work in this respect. In this theatre we all felt we "belonged". We had our own box there accommodating ten people, and it was never empty in the evening. We went to all the other theatres in



Kharkov too. The theatre played an important part in giving the communards a new mental equipment and inculcating a love of art.

Another very important factor in our cultural development and concrete understanding of the connection between life and literature was our acquaintance and correspondence with the great writer Maxim Gorky.

On September 10, 1934, I had the good fortune to travel to Moscow with Makarenko to see Gorky. We took with us an album—a gift for Gorky—in which our communards had written poetry and prose. This was after the Writers' Congress. Makarenko had another purpose—he had finished the second part of *The Road to Life* and was taking it to show to Gorky. At the latter's town flat we were told that Gorky was at his summer-place outside Moscow. We went there and were warmly received by Maxim Gorky. He showed great interest in the album, and afterwards sent us a letter severely criticising our literary efforts.

Makarenko told Gorky about his literary plans and that he had started to write a historical novel entitled *Vladimir Monomachus*, a subject he was deeply interested in as an historian.

Makarenko worked under great difficulties owing to the attacks of mis-critics who failed to understand his educational methods. They said, "What's this! Makarenko is introducing military drill methods! He's no educationist." But Makarenko nevertheless won the day. His literary and educational activities received recognition and he was awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labour. He said at the time that this was a reward for the work of a lifetime.

Makarenko died suddenly, and April 4, 1939, the day we buried him, was the day on which his application for Party membership was to have been examined by the Party organisation of the Union of Soviet Writers. Death prevented Makarenko from carrying out the tremendous plans he had devised.

## MY TEACHER

by *Nikolai Ferre*

A bookkeeper acquaintance of mine, a lady by the name of Y. A. Pishnova, who had joined the staff of the Colony, told me one day that Anton Makarenko was looking for an assistant, a specialist in farming. Our first meeting took place at the beginning of April 1924. It was in the evening. Tired out by his arguments with members of the Educational Department staff, Makarenko received me none too cordially in the semi-dark room. Without asking me any question, he started talking right away about the plight of the Colony's farm.

The Gorky Colony, which was then still situated at Tribi—a small place—had to take over a large farm which it had received in Kovalevka on the other side of the river Kolomak. The Colony was experiencing serious difficulties with food supply. There was little land in Tribi—about twelve hectares—and the soil was poor and sandy. The crop sometimes did not cover the cost of the seeds. It was impossible, at Tribi, to properly organise the work of the colonists, which formed the basis of the educational system applied to them. At Kovalevka, on the other hand, there were up to 80 hectares of land and the soil was good chernozem. There were also meadows there and an orchard. Ivan Rakovich



(Gorovich) had been appointed superintendent of that second Colony and a detachment of colonists had already been sent out there.

Farming had to be organised on a scientific basis and it was to be a model farm in all respects. That, Makarenko said, was why he had decided to invite a farming specialist to be his assistant. He made it clear that the employment of hired labour on the farm, with the exception of a small staff of specialists, was entirely out of the question. The children, at first, might not be able to do the work as well as experienced workers, but they had to develop a full sense of responsibility for their farm and not live at the expense of the state. Maybe not all the colonists would work properly at first. The right method of approach to them had to be found, their work had to be made interesting for them, and a sense of pride in the Colony's economic successes had to be cultivated in them.

In view of this, Makarenko said, he would like his agricultural assistant to be as imaginative an educator and teacher as he was a competent farming specialist.

Makarenko made no secret of the difficulties that faced us, neither did he conceal his doubts about my fitness for the job. I was young, having taken my degree only three years before, in 1921, and had had no pedagogical experience whatever. Spring, however, would soon be upon us, and if, he said, I was willing to work, I would have to start at Kovalevka not later than in the middle of April.

I turned the thing over in my mind. Young though I was, I had had enough experience to realise what I was up against. And Makarenko's unfriendly reception had given me uneasy doubts as to whether I would be able to get along with him. I had half a mind to back out, but some inner voice told me that to miss a chance of doing interesting work under the guidance of such a talented man would be a sign of unpardonable weakness on my part. And so I agreed.

On the appointed day—April 14, 1924—a dog-cart rolled up to my door, driven by a boy of twelve or thirteen.

At the sight of this turnout a gust of my old doubts assailed me.

"Is he coming with us?" the little driver asked, pointing to my dog Trubach, who was sniffing round the cart.

What could I say? That Trubach would come if his master went—the trouble was his master did not know himself what to do. The boy's innocent question, however, decided me.

Banishing all hesitation, I said cheerfully:

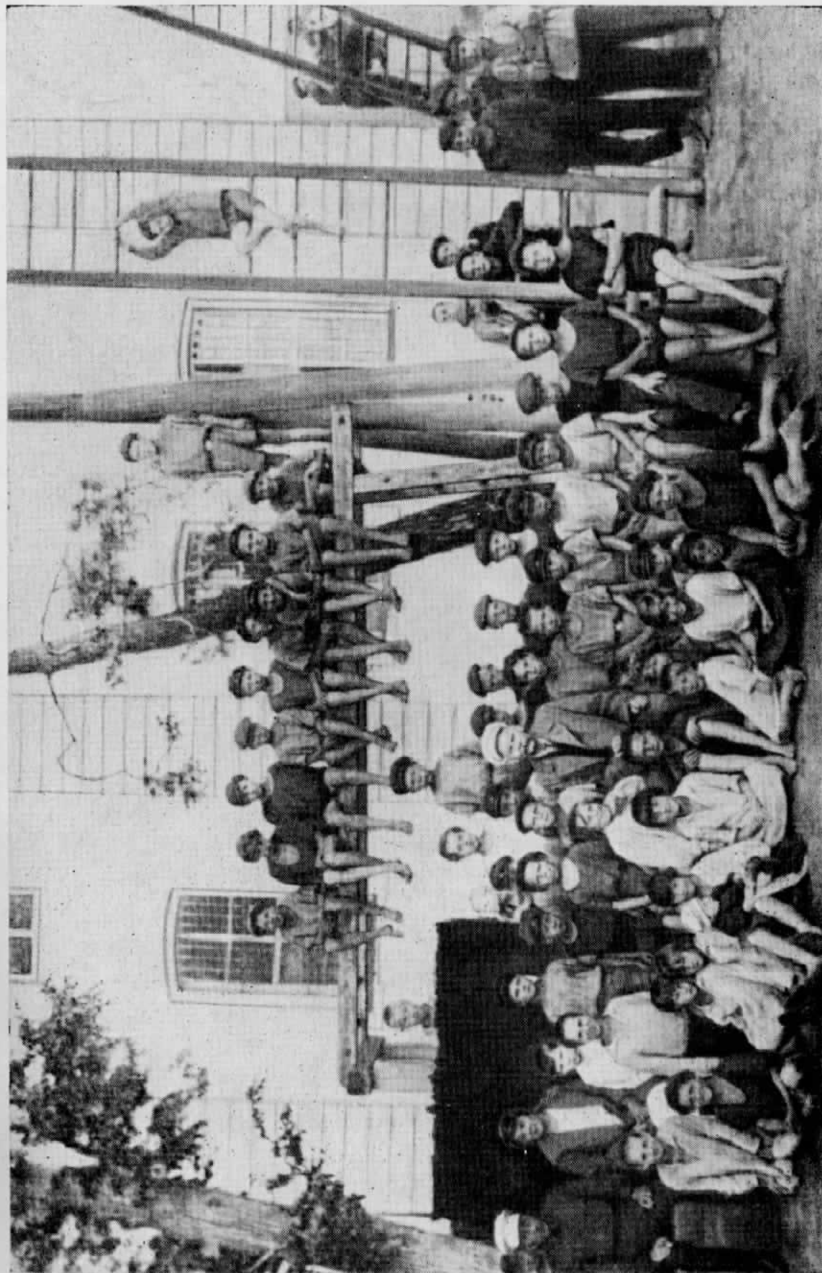
"He's coming with his master, of course!"

Dumping my scanty luggage into the dog-cart, we made straight for Kovalevka, by-passing Tribi where Makarenko was at the time.

On the way the boy passed the reins over to me and sported with Trubach, now running ahead, now lagging behind. Tiring of the game he would sit down in the cart for a rest. The spring roads were slushy and we did not reach Kovalevka until the evening. My work in the Colony started.

Spring had come into its own. The local farmers had started ploughing and harrowing, and some of them were sowing. It was high time we went out into the fields too.

At 8 a.m. the next day the colonists and their teachers assembled outside the stable. Without knowing the plots, the available labour force, or equipment, I was obliged to start giving orders and assigning jobs. Obviously, it was quite impossible to devise any special method of approach to the children under these circumstances. I had to be everywhere —in one place a plough needed adjusting, in another the seeder; here I had to show the children how to clean the seeds,



The "small chaps" of the Colony.

there to speed up transportation of the bags with seed; in one place I had to measure off a plot for a melon field, in another to help harness a horse.

From the very first day I established good businesslike relations with the children. This may have been due to the fact that I had been too busy to conduct any special "pedagogical" conversations, but had worked myself and demanded work from the children in the interests of the Colony.

Since the volume of agricultural work in the second Colony steadily increased, colonists had to be brought over from Tribi every day in considerable numbers. Apart from this being a troublesome business involving a waste of time and energy, it was bad for the colonists, who could not resist the temptations offered by the local farmers' orchards, kitchen-gardens and melon fields which they passed on their journeys. Complaints began to pour in. The owners of these "temptations" started laying ambushes timed to the movements of the detachments to and from work. The colonists took this as the commencement of hostilities and so "war" started. Makarenko had to interfere energetically in this conflict, and the trespassers were banned for a time from working in the second Colony, thereby foregoing the pleasure of a dip in the river Kolomak, which the colonists crossed twice a day during their trip to and from Kovalevka.

The "war" with the local farmers precipitated a plan for the unification of the two Colonies which Makarenko had long conceived. Without this there could be no proper organisation of educational work. In August-September 1924 things were wound up at Tribi and the whole Colony moved over to Kovalevka. There the farm flourished and blossomed forth both in the figurative and literal senses of the word.

We raised hothouse seedlings of cabbages and tomatoes, and I had set aside some of the nursery beds for flower seedlings. Later they were planted out in the flower-beds in front of the Colony's main building. The children tended the flowers lovingly, and although we were short of hands during the busy farming season, the Commanders' Council,

with the complete approval of Makarenko, always detailed the necessary number of colonists for work on the flower-beds. There were always plenty of volunteers, though, who were willing to work on our flower-beds in their spare time. There were very few children who showed no interest in flower cultivation. One of them was Galatenko, a great hulking fellow. For a fairly long time he acted as water-carrier, but was relieved of these duties on account of his rudeness and was told off by the Commanders' Council for work in the hothouse. This assignment pursued an educative purpose, Galatenko finding himself in the midst of a friendly team of gardeners engaged in a "delicate" business.

Coming into the hothouse one day, Makarenko was amazed to see the thoroughness and diligence with which Galatenko, by aid of a little split stick, was thinning out the begonias, whose stems were no thicker than horsehair. Makarenko took me aside and admitted that he had been waiting for me all the time to come and ask to be relieved of Galatenko who was totally unfit for such delicate work. I told him how keen Galatenko was on his new job, how thoroughly he had mastered the hothouse regulations and zealously observed them.

"He has one queer trait, though," I added. "He has given all the flowers names of his own and refuses to accept their official ones."

"What does he call them?" Makarenko asked, interested.

"A rose, *à la* Galatenko, is 'lassie', stock is 'laddie', mignonette is 'scent', begonia is 'quail', snap-dragon is 'frisky', lobelias are 'little crosses', phlox is 'mammy', purslane is 'children', agave is 'lion'."

Makarenko was interested in the origin of these names, and before long we were able, more or less accurately, to trace Galatenko's train of thought. The only thing that puzzled us was why he had chosen the name "lion" for agave. We had to seek an explanation from the author himself. It appears that he had once seen the picture of "a lion in the desert" in a school reader, and next to the lion there had been a plant that resembled agave.



Galatenko's metamorphosis gladdened Makarenko. He sat down on a bench outside the hothouse and became sunk in thought. Then he remarked that if Galatenko has so quickly developed an understanding and love of beauty, this sense of the beautiful had to be cultivated and stimulated in the other colonists as well. There and then Makarenko proposed that gardening should be extended to such an extent that the Colony would be buried in flowers by next year.

In my desire to be really useful to the Colony without putting my foot in it, I carefully studied the whole system of educational work among the children, and especially the treatment of offenders. I tried not only to grasp the various educational methods used by Makarenko, but discover their interrelation, their fixed features and regular tendency.

At first I thought that Makarenko must surely have a notebook in which he kept a list of punishments to be meted out to colonists for this or that misdemeanour. It wasn't long, however, before I noticed that the only thing that remained comparatively invariable with Makarenko was the organisational forms of education, whereas in the methods of persuasion, there was no constancy at all. Very often Makarenko would administer different kinds of punishment for one and the same offence, and sometimes no punishment at all. Yet the children did not show the least surprise or resentment at this "perfunctory" treatment. Apparently, they understood very well why Makarenko had different ways of looking at one and the same misdemeanour on different occasions.

After a while it was brought home to me, too, that in the system of education built up by Makarenko the chief role was played not by punishment, but by measures which made it possible to prevent misbehaviour.

Makarenko brilliantly revealed the motives that lay behind children's offences. His skill in this respect astonished even experienced teachers, not to mention myself, but most of all

the children themselves, who firmly believed that "there was no hiding anything from Anton".

Towards the end of August things started happening on our melon field which baffled even Makarenko at first. That year there was a bumper crop of water-melons. At dinner every colonist received a whole water-melon, and melons were served at supper too. In spite of this, raids were being made on the melon field. The field was guarded by a special detachment headed by Lopotetsky (Lapot), one of the senior colonists. The watchmen, however, were not vigilant enough. One morning they discovered that a thief had been at the melons, and an inventive thief at that. He had cut out big chunks in about twenty large water-melons, and carefully replaced the rind, so that the trick was not discovered until after some time.

That evening, at the Commanders' Council, Lopotetsky threatened "to cut the throat of the skunk" who had ruined so many good melons. But the culprit could not be found, although there was clear evidence that the thief was one of the colonists, since a knife had disappeared from the kitchen the day before. The following morning I heard yells and wails issuing from the melon field. Deciding that the boys had caught "the skunk" and that Lopotetsky was carrying out his threat, I hastened to the source of the uproar. The next minute, however, my fears were set at rest. I found Lopotetsky angrily taking two of his assistants to task for their negligence.

"You just look, Nikolai Eduardovich!" he shouted to me. "Look what that bloody skunk has done!" And he pointed to the shack, next to which a huge water-melon was growing. The children had been saving this melon as a present for Makarenko. They had carved out on its green surface a five pointed star, and below it the dedication: "To Anton S. Makarenko" followed by the signature: "From Gorky Col. Col." Apparently the children had first carved out "Anton Makarenko", but finding this, on second thoughts, to be disrespectful, they had squeezed in the initial "S", standing



for "Semyonovich". The last line, deciphered, meant, "From the Gorky Colony Colonists". The water-melon became known as "the Commissar", and it grew splendidly under the watchful eye of the whole community, who looked forward eagerly to the moment when they would be able to present it to Makarenko. To prevent any "tenderfoot" from getting at the "Commissar", Lopotetsky had built a watch shack next to it. And now the thief had been at it too. He had cut a slice out of this melon and fitted the rind back into its place.

Lopotetsky was beside himself with despair, and threatened to "tear the throat of the dirty skunk with his own teeth". The boys who had been on duty during the night declared that they had heard a rustling sound in the darkness as if a snake had crawled past them. Lopotetsky was cursing them for a couple of gapers.

The news of this desecration of the "Commissar" spread like wildfire throughout the Colony. The whole place buzzed with excitement. Lopotetsky and some of the older colonists started investigations on their own. Makarenko was obliged to call them to order and put a stop to their interrogations, the while he kept a careful watch all day on the colonists.

Towards the evening the excitement among the colonists mounted still higher. In the smithy Lopotetsky was making traps which he intended to set on the approaches to the melon field.

When, at last, the signal sounded "for the general meeting" the children, all agog with impatience, made a dash for the club house.

Makarenko, to start with, asked all the commanders to give him lists of absent detachment members, indicating the reason for their absence. Then Lopotetsky took the floor. He gave a detailed and colourful account of what had happened, and of how the boys, who had heard a rustling noise "like a snake crawling past", had been interrogated. Then all the detachment commanders voiced their suspicions. But

nothing new emerged. Makarenko sat with bent head, sunk deep in thought, and for a time complete silence reigned in the club.

"Very well, let's find out, to begin with, which of the colonists is especially fond of water-melons," Makarenko suddenly proposed.

Five or six colonists were named. The last to speak was Mukhina (Levchenko), commander of the Girls' Detachment. She said that the biggest lover of water-melons in her detachment was Valya.

Valya was a skinny little girl who had arrived at the Colony from Kharkov only a few months before. She was a quiet unobtrusive girl, but her case papers contained a special letter from the educational authorities in Kharkov saying that she had been used as a "nose" by a big gang of flat burglars. During an unsuccessful burglary the gang had managed to escape at Valya's signal, but she herself had been arrested. There was no direct evidence against the girl, however, and she was handed over to the Distributing Centre of the Educational Department. The gang, who had been following her carefully, helped her to escape from the Centre several hours after she had been placed there. But after a while Valya was arrested again and forwarded to our place near Poltava. The accompanying letter stated that she was to be kept under special surveillance, since the gang would probably make another attempt to get her.

When Mukhina mentioned Valya's name, Makarenko, as if struck by a sudden thought, looked up quickly. The next minute he spoke up in his usual calm voice, "Valya, come here. Come up to the table."

Valya's face, as she threaded her way between the benches and stood next to Makarenko, wore a puzzled expression, as if wondering why she had been called out. Indeed, who could suspect this quiet girl of being a party to the melon depredations.

"Why did you take a knife from the kitchen without permission?" Makarenko said in the same calm voice.



"I didn't take any knife," Valya answered, perhaps a trifle too hastily.

Makarenko took her up at once.

"Yes you did, Valya, and it won't look at all nice if I send a duty-man and he finds the knife among your things. Where did you hide it?"

Valya was silent for a while, then said quietly, "It's in my mattress. There's a hole in it, and I stuck it inside."

A few minutes later the duty-man placed the offending instrument on the table in front of Makarenko. The children whispered among themselves in a growing volume of sound, which expressed surprise rather than anger.

"Are you very fond of melons, Valya?" Makarenko continued his questioning.

"Very. I never ate them before."

"What made you put the rind back in its place?"

"I thought it would grow back again," Valya said quite seriously.

Everyone was talking at once now. It was such a surprise to find that the "dirty skunk", the "were-wolf in the guise of a snake" was this skinny little girl. Forgetting his original threat about "tearing the skunk's throat", Lopotetsky began urging the boys to pluck a good supply of nettles after the meeting.

Makarenko eyed him sternly, and he immediately wilted.

"Will you give the meeting your word, Valya, that you will never go into the melon field again and spoil the melons?"

"Yes, I won't do it any more," she answered quietly.

Makarenko moved that Valya should be forgiven, and the meeting was fairly unanimous in voting for it. The only abstentions were Lopotetsky, the members of his detachment, and several other colonists. Valya went back to her place and Makarenko proceeded to the next business—several peaceful questions concerning Colony life.

When the meeting broke up Makarenko detained Lopotetsky to discuss various business matters, then said at parting:

"If I hear of you ill-treating Valya in any way, then you can say good-bye to the Colony. Tell your boys that too."

Uttered in a casual tone though this was, Lopotetsky understood that Makarenko meant business.

Returning home after the meeting under the impression of all that I had heard and seen at the club, I could not help thinking how naïve, not to say foolish, my thoughts had been about Makarenko keeping a notebook in which all the various punishments for one or another offence were recorded.

Every untoward event in the colonists' lives, even a simple change of mood or behaviour, sometimes barely perceptible, served Makarenko as serious grounds for seeking another solution to a question that had formerly been dealt with in a definite way, and discover new forms of pedagogical influence upon the colonists. Thus, in the practice of everyday life, did Makarenko evolve his system of education. Its most important feature was consideration for "the human being in the child", its flexibility and the absence of a stereotyped approach to the children.

The next day the melon incident was forgotten. Lopotetsky's "traps", lying about unused outside the shack, were the sole reminders of that gust of childish passions which Makarenko had so ably extinguished.

A form of punishment applied by Makarenko was a reprimand publicly announced in a written order on the Holiday of the First Sheaf, on Gorky's birthday, or on any other impending holiday at the Colony.

At first I failed to grasp the meaning of this educative measure. It seemed to me that a penalty put off for a long time lost its significance. What's more, it did not seem right to me to spoil a person's holiday for him on a day that was a festive occasion for everybody.

I noticed before long, however, that such reprimands seldom reached the practical stage of public announcement.



The person who had been warned of his coming disgrace quickly made amends and the Commanders' Council usually cancelled the order before the holiday.

In the spring of 1927 we received at last the long-awaited tractor for our farm, and shortly afterwards our friends from the State Political Board presented another one to us.

These machines were hailed with genuine enthusiasm, and before long many of our colonists became qualified mechanics.

One November evening, during supper, the lights suddenly went out. The 75-HP engine at our electric station broke down. The mechanic said it would take at least a month to repair, but if somebody was given a little extra, in other words, a bribe, this term could be reduced to twenty days. We were in a dilemma. The stoppage at the electric station put our pump-house out of commission. Four hundred colonists and the Colony staff were left without water and light, and that at a time of the year when the days were short and the nights long.

The next morning Makarenko called an emergency meeting of the Commanders' Council.

Semyon Rogdanovich, the Colony's Manager of Supplies, read out a list of things the Colony would need while the electric station and the water-pump were at a standstill. Two hundred oil lamps, cans, spare lamp-chimneys, wicks, new pails—altogether about a hundred different items. The total sum of unforeseen expenses was so considerable that the children gasped and Makarenko even queried, "I beg your pardon, Semyon Lukich, how much did you say it was?"

In addition, the Supply Manager demanded a special detachment to look after and trim the lamps. The electric station mechanic, who spoke after him, dropped another hint about repairs possibly taking less than a month if some "palm grease" were used.

Colonist Belenky suddenly asked for the floor.

"I've got a new proposal," he said with assurance. "We don't have to buy anything and we don't have to grease

anybody's palm. We put our tractor to work at the electric station and give the mechanic all the time he needs to repair his engine."

A dead silence followed this brief speech of our tractor driver. And then all began speaking at once, most vehemently of all our electric station mechanic. He argued indignantly that Belenky's proposal was ridiculous.

"It's sheer nonsense. My engine's seventy-five horse-power, and your tractor is only twenty–a quarter of the power."

This was a knockdown argument, but it so happened that Belenky and his mates had it all worked out and were able to prove that our station had never operated at full capacity. The last word was Makarenko's. But even he, always a man of decision, hesitated on this occasion before saying "yes" or "no".

It was impossible to express the boys' resourcefulness in terms of hard figures, and seventy-five was really four times as much as twenty. But Makarenko and all of us had the example of the conquest of Kuryazh before us to prove that twenty could gain a victory over seventy-five.

"Would you take charge of seeing this project through?" Makarenko asked me.

"I'll try," I said. "I think the preliminaries will be finished by dusk, round about five o'clock, and then we shall see."

By five o'clock, when Makarenko arrived, everything was ready for getting the station started. The crucial moment had arrived. The engine was revved up and the belt connected with the tractor and generator pulleys. Belenky smoothly put the clutch into gear and the generator started running free. Now the mains had to be switched on, gradually and carefully increasing the load. But the man at the switch was the mechanic of the electric station, who resented the interference of the colonists. He threw on the whole load at once. The tractor's engine began to sputter and immediately slowed down. The lights, after flashing on all over the Colony, began to dim. Dismay was written all over the boys' faces. Makarenko shouted words of encouragement to Belenky.



The latter recovered himself and with a swift movement of his hand opened the throttle full out. The engine began to build up. The lamps grew brighter and brighter, until they were burning almost as brightly as they did with the seventy-five horse-power engine.

For the first time we noticed that all the colonists and staff had gathered around. And when it became perfectly clear at last that the light had come to stay, everyone began shouting, laughing, and cheering. No one went away until the signal sounded for supper, which was very late that evening.

An hour later Makarenko, at the general meeting, thanked Belenky and his assistants publicly for the initiative they had shown. He was proud of his charges' intelligence and resourcefulness.

## GORKY VISITS THE GORKYITES

At the beginning of 1928 Maxim Gorky returned from Italy. We had no doubts that our invitation to him to visit the Colony would be accepted. At the general meeting Makarenko proposed that preparations for the reception of our honoured guest should be started immediately. His idea of presenting Gorky with a book about the life of the colonists written by the children themselves was approved by the meeting with enthusiasm. It was decided to give the life stories of all the Gorkyites in that book.

From then on our community lived with a single thought, a single purpose—to accord our friend and patron a royal reception. Everything now was weighed from the conjectural point of view of Maxim Gorky—would he approve or not approve, would he be interested or not, would he like it or would it leave him indifferent?

When the mangel-wurzel was a bit late in sprouting owing to the cold weather, proposals for making the seeds grow quicker came pouring in from all sides. Someone even suggested lighting bonfires on the mangel field. The children were horrified at the very idea of Maxim Gorky seeing this section when he inspected our fields. With the appearance of the belated but strong-growing shoots, the fact was reported to the Commanders' Council by the market-gardeners as if it were a very important event.



The children cleared a large patch of waste ground and laid out a splendid flower-bed on it. Our floriculturists laid out an intricate monogram "M. G." Carefully copied quotations from the works of Maxim Gorky appeared in the club and on the walls of the main building.

Even the little ones had their hands full. They caught all kinds of small animals—a hedgehog, mice, and rabbits, got hold of some birds somewhere—a merlin, a turtle-dove, and a hoopoe, and took loving care of this menagerie with the intention of presenting it to Maxim Gorky.

In the middle of June 1928 our delegation left for Moscow to see Gorky. Its report that Gorky had consented to be our guest for a few days threw everyone into a state of intense excitement. A special meeting of the Commanders' Council was called. So many colonists flocked to it that it had to be held in the club.

The plan for decorating Kuryazh and the motions to have new summer outfits made for the colonists and to buy new crockery for the dining-hall met with no objections. The difficulties started when the subject of how Maxim Gorky was going to live in the Colony came up for discussion. What furniture was to be put into his apartment? Was a mirror to go in, and if so, what kind of mirror, a full-length one or a smaller one? And what about the bed? Would an ordinary bed fit Maxim Gorky or would a special bed have to be made because he was so tall? And what was he to be given to eat? Should not our cook be taught to make any special dishes? The commander of the bootmakers' detachment was instructed to consider the question of making jackboots for Maxim Gorky in case it rained.

It was decided that our joiner's shop was to make the missing articles of furniture itself, first and foremost a writing-desk and an armchair. A new bedstead was to be bought, measured to fit the tallest of our colonists—Kalabalin. The question of the mirror produced some argument, but in the end all came to the unanimous conclusion that nobody but an actress needed a full-length mirror and that Maxim Gor-

ky could do without it. And so the Council decided to hang up in the bedroom a small round mirror and place a three-leaved folding mirror on the toilet-table.

The question of meals was discussed at great length. The colonists proposed cooking their favourite dishes for Gorky—buckwheat porridge with pork fat for breakfast, Ukrainian borshch and boiled pork for dinner, fried potatoes and stewed fruit for supper. Our head cook and teachers protested vehemently against this menu, and the colonists were forced to admit that a lighter diet than this would have to be planned. A committee was elected to go into this matter and report.

The proposal of the commander of our bootmakers' detachment was unanimously approved, but the actual making of the jackboots was postponed since it wasn't clear what size of boots Gorky wore and how the fitting was to be done—Kalabalin, in this case, was no model.

Every day now children could be seen all over the place busily engaged in washing, mending, cleaning, and painting. When the telegram came saying that Maxim Gorky was arriving in Kharkov on July 8 everything was in perfect order.

When the parade of the colonists was over and the cheers and joyous shouts of the children that had rung out over the territory of the old monastery had died down, Makarenko offered Gorky to have a rest after his journey.

Gorky's companion, a very amiable man whose name I have now forgotten, lingered in the courtyard among the children and was immediately attacked by the excited colonist Tasia, who was a member of the Reception Committee. She decided to clear up all the complicated questions of hospitality at one go.

"Tell me please, what dishes is Maxim Gorky mostly fond of? Does he go to sleep early or late? Do you think we should give him a feather-bed? Is three pillows enough?"

Upon learning that three pillows was a bit too much, and



that Maxim Gorky liked tea with lemon after his supper and that his doctors had advised him to eat as many lemons as he could, Tasia was filled with consternation. Apart from strawberries and cherries there were no other berries or fruit in the Colony. She rushed off to Yelizaveta Fedorovna, a picture of misery.

"Oh, what are we going to do? Maxim Gorky only eats lemons. And we haven't got a single lemon!" Tasia wailed, the words coming from her in a rush.

Yelizaveta Fedorovna reassured her that she was taking an exaggerated view of Gorky's lemon requirements, but nevertheless the problem worried her too. "Something's got to be done about it," she thought. Meanwhile Makarenko's private office, where all this was taking place, began to fill up with children who had heard of the sudden dilemma.

"What are we going to do about it?" Yelizaveta Fedorovna said to them. "Who's going to Kharkov to try and get a lemon?"

The children were silent. At that time of the year this was no easy task. Someone tentatively suggested sending messengers by plane to Moscow or the Caucasus.

Then Novikov-senior spoke up. He was famed in the Colony for his quick wit and smartness, qualities which, more often than not, were misdirected.

"I'll go!" he declared.

"Have you got any definite plan?"

"In a case like this you can't make your plans beforehand, Yelizaveta Fedorovna. You've got to find your bearings on the ground and have this place full of the grey stuff," Novikov said, tapping his forehead.

"I think we ought to send one more person, just in case," said Yelizaveta Fedorovna. "Perhaps you'll go, Denis?"

No colonist worthy of the name could refuse a commission, no matter how unusual or difficult it was. Denis Gorgul, who was acting assistant manager of supplies, stepped forward without saying a word.

Within some twenty minutes the tall lank Novikov and

short thickset Denis left for Kharkov. Someone shouted after them jokingly, "Hi, Don Quixote, where are you going with that Sancho Panza of yours? Mind you don't fight any windmills, there are lots of them on the way!"

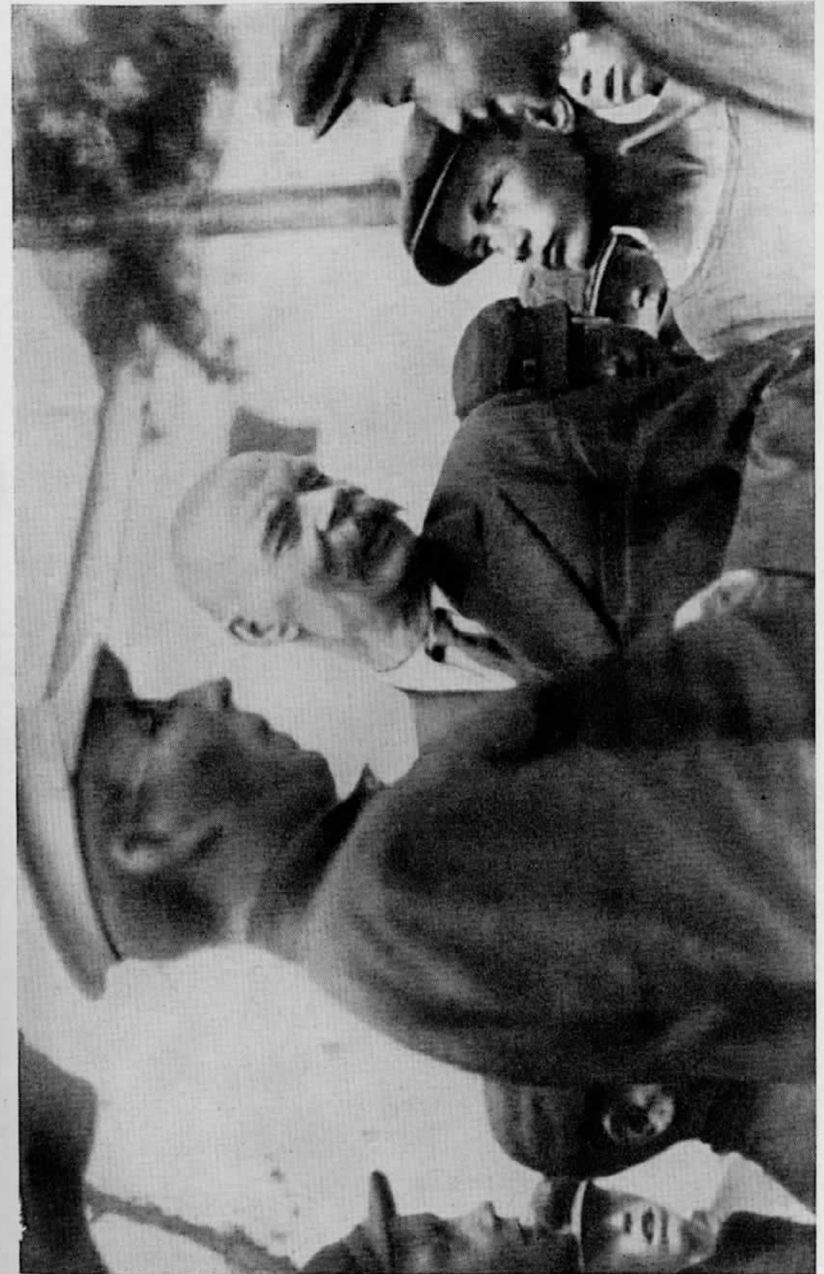
Neither of them as much as turned round, so deeply absorbed were they in the thought of the important errand on which they were bound, an errand upon which, as all the colonists thought, depended the honour of the Colony, which was entertaining such a famous guest.

After a short rest Maxim Gorky asked the children to show him the Colony.

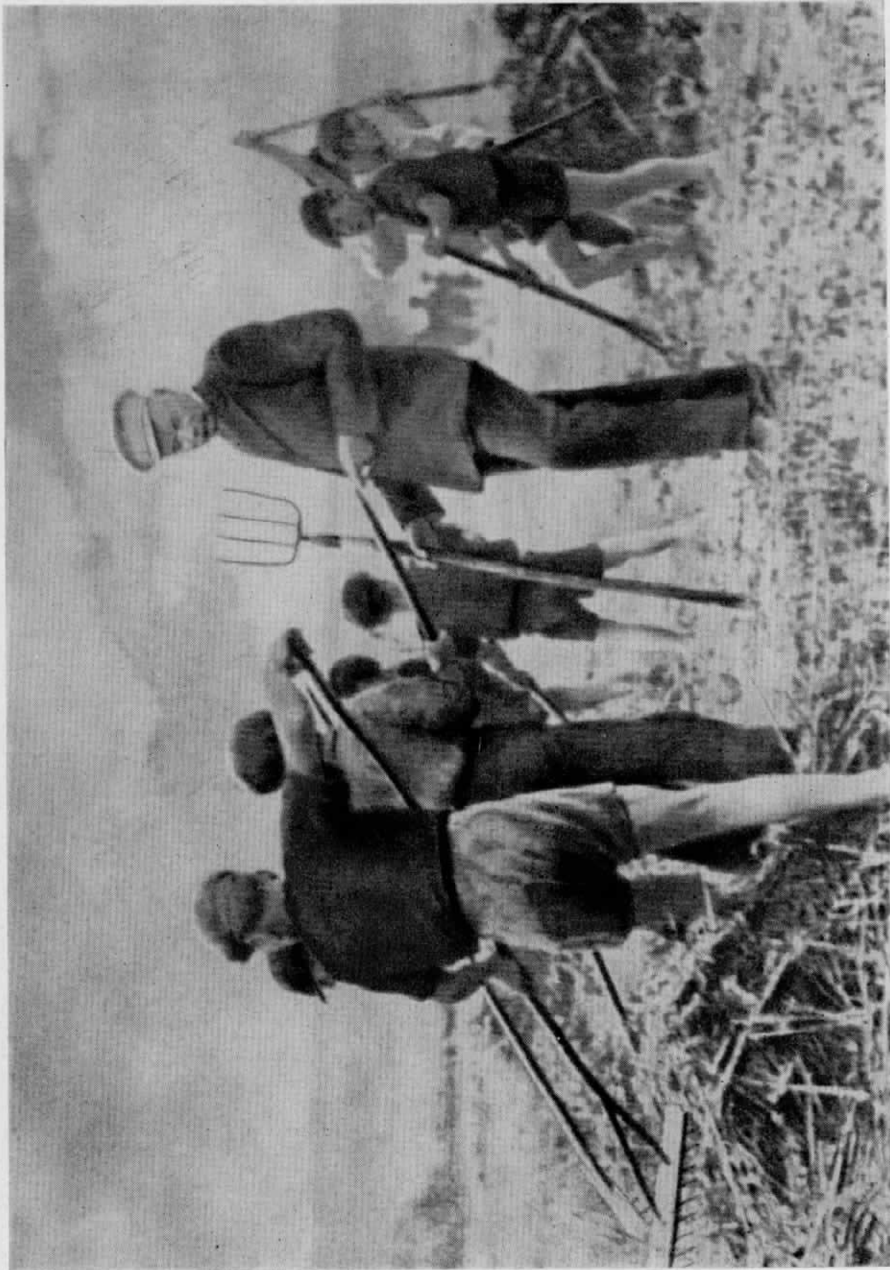
The children believed, and rightly so, that Gorky was interested in everything the Colony had to show him, and so they took him all over the place, even to the remotest corners of Kuryazh. They demonstrated to him with pride their flower-beds, the hothouse, the orchard, the dairy farm, the stables, and the pigsty. And at every step they bombarded him with questions. Gorky answered them all as fast as they came, gazing at the children with his wise, quiet, kindly smile.

"And here's our Molodets. It's true that he comes from Orlov trotter stock, isn't it?" the children said, showing Gorky into the stables.

Gorky concurred, and even found points in Molodets which confirmed his descent. He was shown the other horses too. Then they went out into the stableyard where the horse Malish, now an old-age pensioner, stood next to the feeding-



Gorky among the Gorkyites.



M. Gorky lending the colonists a hand at harvesting.

trough, head lowered. The children wanted Gorky to see even Malish.

They asked him with an innocent air how old he thought Malish was.

"I should say he was fifteen, at least," Gorky said.

The children started talking noisily all at once.

"Oh no, he's much more than that!" they cried and started calling Silanty Grishchenko, our head stableman.

Silanty, who spoke familiarly with everybody regardless of age or sex, appeared on the instant.

"Look," he said opening the horse's mouth, "he's worn his teeth down to nothing. He's thirty if he's a day. Feel how smooth they are, don't be afraid. He won't bite you so long as I hold his tongue." And Gorky, to the children's great delight, was obliged to look into Malish's mouth and feel the teeth in order to satisfy himself as to our water-carrier's ripe old age. Gorky seemed to enjoy it, though. He enjoyed the hubbub around him, the disputes with the children, their enthusiasm for everything that had to do with the Colony, and their eagerness to know what he thought of all these details of Colony life.

In the hothouse Gorky at once conceded that the stock smelt beautifully and the roses still more so, that the tobacco-plant was not much to look at, but smelt sweetly, and that the snap-dragon was misnamed because it didn't look like a dragon at all.

During the inspection of the pigsty Gorky acknowledged with a smile that Akulka was a beauty, but that Mashenka was a cut above her. Then the children showed him Zaznaika

—Lady Stuck-Up—who was letting out little squeals of displeasure. They complained to Gorky that she was a great one for making a noise. She had a habit of waking up before her time and demanding to be fed, and if you dawdled as much as five or ten minutes she would kick up such a row that Anton Semyonovich was sure to send the duty-man down to find out what the trouble was. And when they turned her out for a walk Zaznaika was sure to make a bee-line for the vegetable garden. Gorky expressed his sympathy with the children for having to suffer such an ill-bred pig, but the next question they asked him was a puzzler.

"Why is it that Zaznaika bears a litter of five, while all the other sows farrow eight and even more? Is it because she squeals all the time?" one of the boys asked in all seriousness.

Gorky wrestled with the problem. What answer could he give them without putting his foot in it?

"I tell you what, children," he said gravely. "It seems to me that you don't like Zaznaika because she's such a squealer, and so you don't take proper care of her. That's wrong. You should treat all the pigs alike."

The children admitted at once that Zaznaika did have a bad time on account of her noisy behaviour, but they promised Gorky that from now on they would take real good care of her.

Out on the mowed meadow by the river the children told Gorky what fun it had been cutting the grass, raking it and stacking the hay, with dips in the river during the breaks.

The haymakers started boasting, and one of them, the best scytheman of the lot, said he had mowed a hectare, "if not more", in eight hours. Gorky even stopped—he was so surprised—then he smiled and said gaily:

"That's a bit thick, my dear chap. You just look at my arms and shoulders—can you imagine the sweep of my scythe!" He accompanied the words with a gesture, as if he were really handling a scythe. "Well, with such a stroke, and working in the steppe from dawn till dusk on thin grass,



I managed to cut a dessiatine, that's just a little over a hectare. On this meadow, where the grass is so thick and tall, as I can see from the ricks, I'd never do more than half a dessiatine."

The children agreed with Gorky, and our scytheman had to admit that he had pitched his claims a bit too high.

In the evening Gorky attended a general meeting of the colonists and received the reports of the detachment commanders.

Meanwhile, in the kitchen, preparations were being made for supper. Tasia ran out into the yard a dozen times to see whether Zhora or Denis had come back with the lemons. Yelizaveta Fedorovna came into the kitchen to see whether everything was ready for the dear guest. Tasia, her eyes filled with tears, started complaining that Novikov and Gorgul could not be trusted to wipe their noses without a nannie, leave alone to get some lemons. But Tasia need not have worried. Suddenly the door flew open, revealing a dusty Zhora on the threshold. His eyes were shining, his hat was tipped right back over his forehead, and he was breathing heavily.

"Here are your lemons, Yelizaveta Fedorovna! Ten of 'em all told!"

"Oh, you darling, where did you get them?" Tasia cried, overjoyed.

"If I'm asked to do something, Yelizaveta Fedorovna, I do it!" Novikov said proudly, ignoring Tasia completely. "This is how it was, listen...." Having recovered his breath, he related how he had chased around all the shops in Kharkov without success, and then by a miracle, by an innate gift of diplomacy, had got the lemons from the manager of one of the best restaurants in the city.

"I walk in there, and who do you think I see? Klava, our colonist girl, sauntering among the tables in a white apron. Anton Semyonovich, if you remember, sent her to work last year at the Caterers'. 'Klava,' I says, 'you've got to help me out.' She was only too glad to do something for the Colony.

Dragged me off to see the manageress. Well, I laid on all the charm, and that manageress couldn't resist it. And so here are the lemons. I kissed her hand on going away, solid-like, and invited her down to Kuryazh to see the Colony."

"And where is Denis?" Yelizaveta Fedorovna asked.

"I don't know, we went different ways," Zhora said. "He's sure to come back empty-handed. He hasn't got the head for it."

With a gay wink at the smiling Tasia, Zhora walked out of the kitchen with the air of a hero.

Making his rounds of the dormitories after the evening signal, the duty-man found Denis Gorgul's bed empty. Makarenko, however, received the news calmly. He knew what a persevering boy Denis was and understood that he would not come back until he had discharged his errand.

Tired, covered with dust, barely dragging his feet along, Denis walked into Makarenko's office the next morning. Yelizaveta Fedorovna, now seriously alarmed, was in there together with Zhora and some other children. Denis, in silence, placed a small wicker basket on the desk.

"Lemons?" said Makarenko.

"I don't know about lemons, but they're the nearest thing to a lemon I could find," Gorgul said quietly.

Yelizaveta Fedorovna quickly unpacked the basket and drew forth two splendid yellowish fruits.

Denis told how he had come by these "nearest things".

He had learned from a Kharkov gardener that somewhere near Kazachya Lopan railway station, at some state farm or other, there was an old plant-breeder who was successfully raising lemons in his hothouse. Denis immediately went to the station and took a local train. On arriving at Kazachya Lopan, however, he found that there were several state farms there, and it was not until eleven o'clock in the evening that his search was crowned with success. He found the old man in some out-of-way place ten kilometres or so from the railway station. It took the boy quite a time to rouse him, only to learn from the sleepy-eyed gardener that he had



only three hybrid lemons, which he was keeping specially for an exhibition.

Usually a man of few words, Gorgul became so eloquent that the plant-breeder was soon persuaded to part with two of his hybrids for Maxim Gorky, provided, of course, that the manager gave his permission. So Denis had to wake the farm manager. The latter asked his nocturnal visitor to produce his papers. As luck would have it Gorgul had been in such a hurry that he had not taken any paper from the Colony and had even forgotten his identity certificate. Denis looked so utterly woebegone and tragic that the farm manager took pity on him. "Oh, all right, take the exhibits and give us a receipt for them. You needn't pay anything. Consider it our gift to Maxim Gorky." The plant-breeder carefully packed the fruits—the result of years of experimental work—and only asked to be informed what Gorky thought of their taste. Without a moment's delay Denis went back to the station and caught the early morning train back to Kharkov.

Zhora felt like laughing at Denis's "nearest things", but Makarenko's stern look checked him. Makarenko thanked Gorgul and sent him off to sleep, then went to see Gorky, who, the children said, had already got up and gone out for a walk.

Maxim Gorky expressed a desire to see our fields.

We had just overhauled the tractor and two mowing-machines to cut the vetch-and-oats.

Belenky, our head tractor driver, took the wheel, and Gorky sat down on one of the fenders, Makarenko, at his suggestion, taking the other. I stood up behind on the trailer, and we started out.

Gorky looked over our farm lands with the liveliest interest. Catching sight of him from afar, the children of the mixed detachments working in the fields cupped their hands over their mouths and shouted at the top of their voices, inviting

him to their sections. Smiling, deeply moved, he nodded his head to them in greeting, both hands gripping the fender.

"It's fine out here!" Gorky shouted to Makarenko above the roar of the engine. "I've grown young again among your children. Everything goes with a swing–both work and fun. Life out here is simply bubbling–the new life, the real Soviet life."

Seeing a group of colonists cutting the corners of a field by hand, Gorky asked Belenky to stop, then jumped down, took a scythe and joined the working children. He handled the scythe skilfully and with seemingly effortless ease.

"Well, Anton Semyonovich, will you take me on as a colonist?" he said, swinging his scythe. "I'm afraid, though, you'll take me to task at your Commander's Council for every little offence."

We walked back by a winding foot-path running along the gentle slope of a broad valley, crossed by the Southern and North-Donets railways. An enchanting scene opened up before us. All the way to the horizon lay orchards, with vivid green fields and meadows on one side of the densely populated valley and woods looming darkly on the other.

"One breathes so freely here! This view is very familiar, it reminds me of something. . ." Gorky said quietly, as though thinking aloud.

For a time he walked on in silence, then began to talk about his life abroad, about the desire awakening among people in Europe to learn the truth about the Soviet people, and also about the tremendous impression which the revolutionary innovation of the Soviet man in all spheres of life was creating on all honest people in all countries.

"Your educational experiment, too, with its brilliant results, is of world-wide significance, I can assure you," he told Makarenko. "You should, it is your duty, share this experience with progressive educationists all over the world. And the sooner the better."

Deeply moved by these words, Makarenko began to argue that he had done very little as yet in the scientific handling of



the new problems of Soviet pedagogics, but Gorky answered him, smiling, "Don't be so modest about it, Anton Semyonovich. A man should know the true value of his work."

The same day Gorky attended the ceremony of delivery of a special order fulfilled by the Colony's mechanical joiner's shop for a war works in the Donets Basin.

To record the good work done by the colonists, who had mastered rather complicated machines in a very short time, it had been decided beforehand that delivery of the order was to be made a special occasion timed to the arrival of Maxim Gorky.

At the appointed hour a string of carts loaded with the goods and bedecked with greenery and multi-coloured ribbons, stood waiting for the signal for the parade. The band struck up a march when Gorky and Makarenko appeared before the ranks. The works' representative, who was taking delivery, greeted Gorky with a little speech and pointed out that the Colony which bore his name was carrying out its contract obligations in an exemplary manner. But when, in payment of the Colony's invoice, signed and presented by Gorky himself, the representative handed us a bill of exchange, Gorky, amid shouts of approval from the colonists, said in a voice definitely lacking in ceremonial warmth, "That's not the way to do business, comrades from the works! We asked for cash for our goods. This is not the way to do business."

Gorky, followed by Makarenko, congratulated the children on their big labour victory. The next to speak was Steblovsky, the commander of the detachment employed in the joiner's shop. He told how his detachment had learnt to handle the machines, what a lot of spoilage there had been at first, and what difficulties they had had to overcome before they achieved success. In conclusion he promised Gorky that they would make it a point of honour to do still better in the future.

The next day Gorky was leaving. In the evening we had a farewell party. Gorky laughed and joked, and obviously enjoyed being with us.

Everyone was in stitches when Makarenko, with his usual skill and a wealth of comic detail, told about the adventures of Zhora Novikov and Denis Gorgul, the lemon-hunters, of which Gorky was hearing for the first time. The speaker himself could not contain his laughter and had to hold his pince-nez to keep it from falling off his nose when he enacted the scene of Denis standing before the sleepy-eyed farm manager and tearfully begging him to part with his hybrids. Gorky laughed heartily.

"How could I know that such a worthy man would be dragged from his bed for my sake!" he said between laughter. "Show me the heroes."

He shook Denis's and Zhora's hands and thanked them for the trouble they had gone to. Then he turned to Makarenko.

"You are a remarkable man, you are! You are bringing up wonderful children. Nothing is impossible for them!"

Gorky asked Makarenko to write to the Kazachya Lopan plant-breeder saying that his hybrid was delicious and in every way as good as a lemon. He asked him to thank the farm manager, too, for his kindness.

The next day, which was July 10, we saw off Maxim Gorky, who was going to the Caucasus for his holiday. Three of our colonists–Kalabalin, Shershnev, and Arkhangelsky–went South with him as his guests. The colonists and Makarenko and a crowd of Kharkovians who were seeing Gorky off waved and shouted greetings to him long after the train had steamed out. Gorky leaned out of the window and waved his white cap to us. Presently the train was lost to view, hidden by other trains drawn up on the station tracks.

## WHO IS ALYOSHA ZIRYANSKY

by *Alexei Zemlyansky*

When I speak to Kharkov audiences about my reminiscences of Makarenko I am often asked one and the same question: "Who is Alyosha Ziryansky?"

The answer is simple. In his notes to the books *Learning to Live* and *FD-1* and the play *Major Key* Makarenko gives the real names of many of the communards from whom he drew the characters of his books. Among them he mentions my name. In almost all his writings Makarenko calls me Alyosha Ziryansky, and in the story *FD-1* I am given my real name.

We all knew that Makarenko was writing books about life in the Colony and the Commune, but none had an inkling how closely he looked beneath the surface of our everyday life and conduct, how attentively he studied every one of us.

I have no difficulty in recognising myself in Ziryansky. Makarenko has described everything accurately. He correctly describes incidents to which I was a witness. The only thing I couldn't understand was how he managed to probe so deeply into our hearts.

There is a chapter in *Learning to Live* headed "The Girl in the Park". In this chapter Makarenko describes an incident in which I was actually involved.

As a detachment commander I was very strict and demanding. The chaps called me "Robespierre" on account of my character, and this nickname stuck to me for quite a long time. I really was inexorable whenever I saw dirt or disorder.

Makarenko writes: "That day the duty-man was Alyosha Ziryansky, the commander of the fourth detachment, famous throughout the Colony where he was more often known as 'Robespierre'. The detachment monitors dashed around like cats on hot bricks. . . . Nesterenko took a duster and hurriedly polished the glass. . . . 'You've forgotten who's on duty today!' he reproached the dormitory monitor."

Makarenko tells how the boys looked anxiously into the lockers and under the mattresses. "What about finger-nails?" Nesterenko asked, when they were all lined up for inspection. The nail-trimming was done there and then.

At that moment I entered the dormitory. What happened next had better be told in Makarenko's own words.

"While he was still engaged in greeting the detachment, Ziryansky had noticed everything, though one wouldn't know that from his manner. He looked Nesterenko merrily in the eyes as he received his report. He did not snoop round the dormitory or peer into anything, but, before leaving, turned to his duty-mate, a quiet modest girl.

" 'Make a note in the report that the detachment dormitory is dirty,' he told her.

" 'What do you mean, *dirty,* Alyosha?' demanded Nesterenko.

" 'What do you call this, then? First you polish the floor, then you drop nail-parings on it! Wouldn't you call that dirt?'

"Nesterenko was silent.

" 'You know very well, Vasya, that it's no good smartening yourselves up just for the commander on duty,' Ziryansky said at the door. . . ."

Rereading *Learning to Live,* I find on many pages descriptions of incidents in which I was involved and I keep



wondering—"When did Makarenko manage to notice all these things? When did he manage to write down our talk word for word?"

One day, at the Commanders' Council, we were discussing a loafer, who stubbornly refused to work. The room was crowded, there were about forty of us in it. And the talk was pretty hot. Gontar took the floor.

"Damn it all," he said. "How many more of his sort are we going to get here? I've been living in this Colony for five years and we've had about thirty of the young toffs like him in this room. . . . And every one of them gives us the same line of talk. I've had my fill of 'em. So he doesn't want to be a fitter! Have you asked him what he can do other than guzzle and sleep? What's he going to turn out into? You can guess what! A parasite, you can see that plain enough. And we go on coaxing and coaxing. What I propose is that we strip him, give him back his rags and chuck him out! It'll be a lesson to all of us."

At this point I shouted out, "That's right!"

Someone checked me, saying, "Don't interrupt. You can have your say later."

But I went on, "Oh, I've got nothing to say. He's not worth talking about any more, is he? He doesn't want to be a joiner; well, we're all joiners, aren't we? Why should we feed him, that's what I want to know? Chuck him out, show him the road."

Finally, the Komsomol Secretary spoke.

"How many times has it been said here that we can't chuck people out just like that? Where are we going to chuck him out to? Into the street? We haven't the right to do that. We have no such right!"

The Secretary fixed his large dark eyes on me. I looked at him with a perky glance that recognised the full measure of his human kindness but rejected it. The Secretary went on:

"No, Alyosha, we haven't the right. There is a Soviet law which we have to respect. And that law says, nobody can

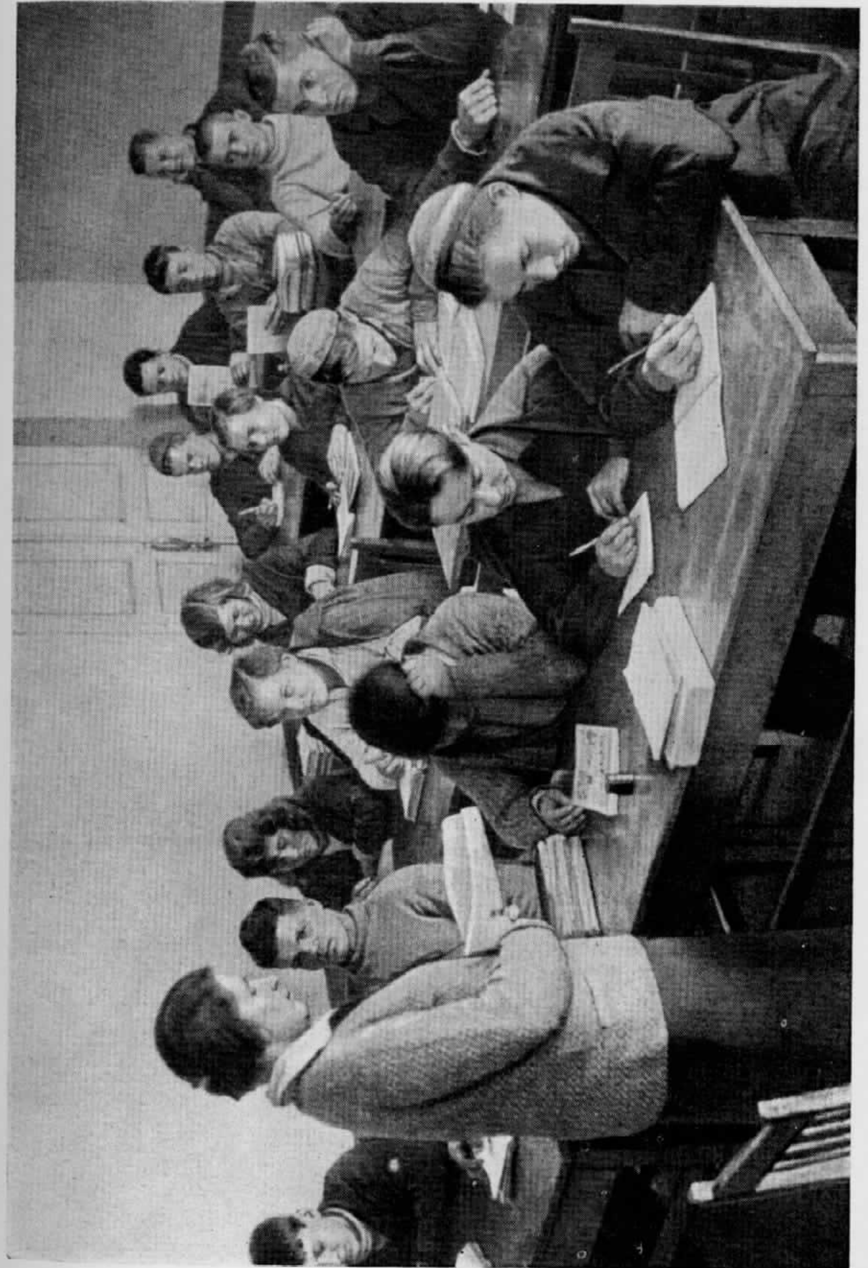
be turned out into the street. Yet, Comrades Commanders, you're always bawling: chuck him out!"

This single remark of mine, the phrase "chuck him out", led to a heated dispute, which Makarenko has described in his book *Learning to Live*, in the chapters "After the Rain" and "Anything You Like".

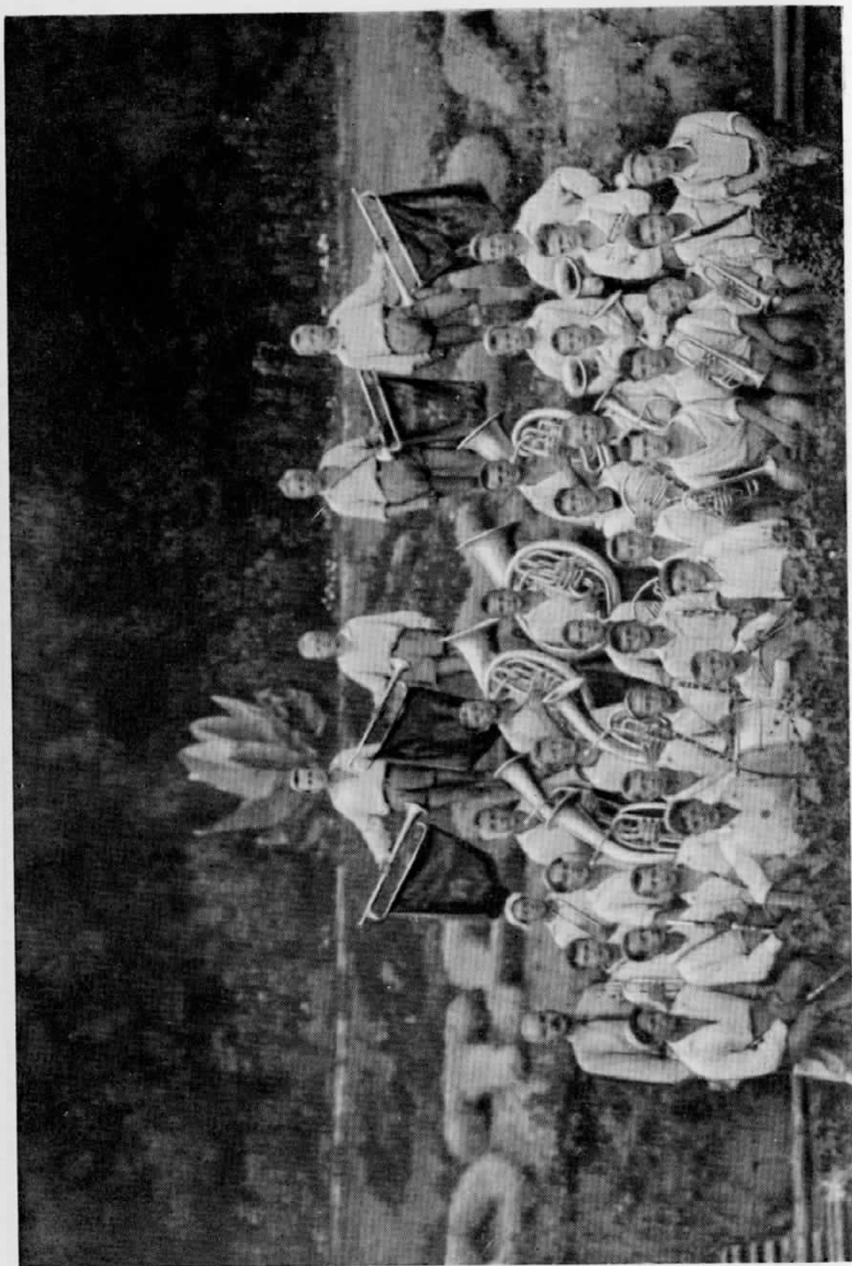
Makarenko often spoke and wrote about children being living human lives, beautiful lives, and that they should therefore be treated as comrades and citizens, and their rights and obligations should be recognised and respected–their right to happiness and their obligation to responsibility. And that is how Makarenko acted.

When the Dzerzhinsky Commune was well established Makarenko presented to the children his final demand: "No let-downs, not a day of demoralisation, not a moment of despair." Makarenko said that the children met his stern glance with smiles. Let-downs were not part of their plans either. There came a time when Makarenko no longer had to feel nervous or wake up of a morning with a sense of alarm.

The Commune ceased to be afraid of new members. One summer Makarenko conducted an experiment of whose outcome he was quite confident. In the course of two days the Commune took in fifty new children. They were simply swept up at the railway station, picked off the roofs of the railway carriages, caught between goods trains on the sidings. At first the street arabs protested and used bad language, but a staff specially set up for the purpose, consisting of veteran colonists, kept them in order and established calm while events took their course.



Communards at their studies.



The communards' band in the Crimea.

In this "operation" I took a very active part. Makarenko issued two packets of cigarettes to me every day, and I would go to the station, the cinema, and other haunts of the street waifs. I became a sort of propagandist of the Commune. I treated the waifs to cigarettes and told them about our life in the Commune, how we studied, worked, and relaxed. Some of them believed my stories and joined us willingly; others adopted a wary attitude and shied at my proposal to become members of our community.

When the newcomers arrived at the Commune all their "travelling suits" were thrown in a heap on the asphalted strip among the flower-beds. Paraffin was poured over them and the rags became a blazing thickly smoking bonfire. Misha Gontar then came along with a broom and swept up the greasy shaggy-looking ashes. "There go all your autobiographies!" he said to one of the new boys with a wink. We all remembered this episode for a long time.

Whenever I think of Makarenko I always get the picture of a man who respected the collective and reckoned with its opinion.

Just before the summer holidays the Commanders' Council decided to send out a reconnaissance to the Caucasus to make holiday arrangements for the Commune. The "scout party" consisting of Makarenko, his assistant Didorenko, bandmaster Levshakov and myself in the capacity of representative of the Council, flew out to Sochi on the Black Sea coast.

It was a most enjoyable trip in every way. During our dinner in Rostov-on-Don, Makarenko laughed and joked a

good deal. Incidentally, for the first time in my life, I saw him, shyly and reluctantly, drink a glass of vodka. I thought it rather odd, but at the same time it was borne in on me most forcibly what an unassuming man Makarenko was.

Although we had been to Sochi before, we did not stop there this time to choose a place for our holidays, but went on to Gagra. There, the manager of the seaside park, a jovial Georgian, recognised us. He remembered the communards from their previous visit to the Black Sea coast.

"Hullo, welcome!" he cried gaily. "Half the park is yours, come down, set up camp, make yourselves at home. Come and have some wine with me in the evening."

Despite this cordial welcome, we could not make up our minds about the Commune's trip to Gagra. The difficult train journey involving two changes rather put us off, especially Makarenko. We had such a lot of luggage and household goods.

"We must go to Leningrad," Makarenko kept repeating. "It's a wonderful city–theatres, museums, historical monuments. And the journey's an easy one. Besides, we've been down here in the Caucasus already."

There was a good deal of sense in what he said, but we couldn't agree to a Leningrad trip when the communards had set their hearts on going to the South. In the end we decided to go back to Kharkov and submit the question to the general meeting of the Dzerzhinskyites. And that is what we did.

At the meeting Makarenko drew such a picture of Leningrad that his eagerness to visit that city showed through every word. He warmed to his subject, repeating again and again the words "museums, monuments, palaces, the Neva. . . ."

The communards heard him out and waited to hear what I would say. And I, for the first and last time in my life, went "against" Makarenko.

"We remember our trip to Moscow," I said. "Everywhere we went we marched in formation. In the Caucasus it was different. Do you remember Sochi? The freedom, the spaces. . . ."



I knew that I had hit the mark. The children were keen on going South, and they all shouted out together: "Sochi!"

Makarenko surrendered. He no longer insisted on his variant, and accepted the opinion of the collective.

Shortly afterwards the whole Commune left for Sochi.

Neither that summer nor in subsequent years did Makarenko ever mention my speech at the general meeting, when I "rejected" his Leningrad variant. Makarenko understood perfectly well that I was only expressing the opinion of the children, and this respect of his for the collective impressed us profoundly. And that was what Makarenko taught us–to respect the opinion of the majority.

I remember numerous instances of Makarenko's extraordinary humanity, his loving kindness, especially his love for children. It is seldom that one can meet a cold-eyed man–to use his own words–of rather austere appearance who possesses such a great and tender heart. Such a man was Makarenko.

I was with Makarenko at the height of the difficult drive against waifdom. It was in the early years of the Soviet Republic's existence. One day some Cheka men came down and told us they needed our help in housing several hundred street waifs who had their haunt on the outskirts of Kharkov.

Makarenko organised the job swiftly and efficiently. We took many of the children into our own Commune, and the rest, after being washed, clothed and fed, were sent to children's Colonies and homes in Poltava, Bogodukhov, and Akhtyrka. Other members of the Rescue Committee, besides myself, were the communards Fedya Shatayev and Yelena Pikhotskaya.

The spectacle we came upon in the outskirts of Kharkov was a depressing one. There were up to eight hundred children there of all ages. Some of them were in an extreme state of emaciation. Their health worried Makarenko. He gave instructions that they were not to be given food all at once.

"Two tablespoonfuls of boiled water every two hours! Otherwise they'll die."

We followed his instructions. Gradually we introduced into their ration sugar, biscuits, and porridge.

Makarenko saw to it that his instructions were strictly carried out. As a result, we succeeded in saving the lives of all the children. Not one of them died.

Among this crowd of children there was a chirpy little girl of six, named Natasha. The communards took a liking to her, and we asked Makarenko not to send her away to another Colony but to let her stay with us. Makarenko readily agreed. We kept Natasha, who was eventually adopted by a member of the Commune's staff. I afterwards learned that she had graduated from the university and was working in Kiev.

Some of the tots who arrived at the Commune did not know their surname and sometimes even their first name. They were "christened" under the guidance of Makarenko, given new surnames and first names. The identity papers were made out for them in the Commune, and these people eventually went out into the world with new names.

During the Kharkov "rescue operation" the communards saved many children. We worked day and night, going without sleep, rest or food. We washed the children and gave them new clothes, and every one of us was proud and happy to be taking a hand in this noble work.

Happiest of all at the success of our campaign was, of course, Makarenko.

Leading musicians of the band.

## "HERE IS YOUR MARIANNA!"

by *Klavdia Boriskina*

People of the most diverse professions went out into the world from the Dzerzhinsky Commune. I became an actress.

How did it happen? How did it come about that I, a skilled armature winder, chose for myself such a difficult and thorny career?

Some people, among them even my closest friends, mistakenly believe that it was Makarenko who suggested the idea of the theatre to me, inasmuch as he was a great lover of the theatre, and himself a playwright, producer, as well as an actor on our Commune's amateur stage.

I came to the theatre by a difficult path, and the reason I dwell on this is because Anton Makarenko, in helping me to choose a future career, showed himself to be a very careful teacher.

Like many another communard, I was a member of our dramatic circle, but never did the thought of the stage becoming my profession occur to me.

One day our patrons, members of the company of the Russian Dramatic Theatre, visited the Commune. Many of them, including A. Kramov, L. Skopina and N. Petrov used to visit us often. On this occasion the actors decided to help us produce *Tartuffe.*

I was sitting in the "Quiet Club" reading a book, when suddenly Makarenko came up, put his hand on my shoulder, and said to Nikolai Petrov, the actor, "Here is your Marianna!"

The next day we began rehearsing. I began preparing the role of Marianna with enthusiasm.

Makarenko came to one of our rehearsals. Petrov could not get me to act the way he wanted. I stood shyly at the front of the stage, exposed to everyone's gaze. Makarenko, being the sensitive man he was, realised my state of mind, and said to Petrov, "Let her stand farther back, over there, behind the table—she won't feel so shy."

Petrov complied. There, at the back of the stage, behind the table, I felt somewhat more at ease, and my role went well. Our *Tartuffe* was a great success. Other members of the cast, besides myself, were Shura Siromyatnikova, Ivan Tkachuk, and Dmitry Terentyuk.

We showed some scenes from this play at the amateur theatrical festival in Kiev.

The theatre turned my head.

At our Commune one could always book tickets to all the theatres in Kharkov and I often went to see shows there. At first I was an opera fan, and was crazy about *Eugene Onegin*. At that period I was "competing" with Makarenko in learning Pushkin's poem by heart. Shortly I became a habitué of the Russian Dramatic Theatre. The play *Wit Works Woe*, for instance, I saw eighteen times at that theatre!

Theatre bookings were in the personal charge of Anton Makarenko. I often went to him for tickets and never received a refusal. I used to run off to the theatre almost every evening.

I already mentioned that some of the leading actors of the Russian Dramatic Theatre often used to visit the Commune. A particularly good friend of the communards was the actress Ludmila Skopina. She was really fond of our Commune, of



our way of life, our customs and rules. One summer she even spent her holiday with us at Svyatogorsk.

Skopina, Kramov, and Petrov told me that I had the makings of an actress. This thought struck such deep root in my mind, that when Makarenko tried to have a serious talk with me about my future I could speak of nothing else but the theatre.

I remember an evening in Svyatogorsk, when a large group of us were sitting on the bank of the Donets. Makarenko broached the subject of my choice of a profession. I was then in the ninth form at school.

"Well, and what are you going to do?" he asked me.

"I want to become an actress," I said firmly.

Great lover of the theatre though he was, Makarenko seriously warned me of the difficulties that would beset my path. There was a note of concern in his voice. I felt that my life, like the lives of hundreds of other communards, mattered a lot to him. He became grave, and spoke to me at length in a fatherly way about the difficulties of an actor's profession. He asked me to make sure of myself before deciding on such a serious choice. I realised that he did not altogether approve of my decision, but I would not give in.

I listened to all his arguments, saying to myself, "Too late now . . . I have made my choice." And looking into his eyes, I thought: "It was you, Anton Semyonovich, who pointed me out to Petrov, saying, 'Here is your Marianna!' and now you are trying to dissuade me!"

Aloud I kept repeating, "The theatre, only the theatre."

Makarenko suggested in a calm voice, "I shall be living in the country during my holiday, and I'll help you to prepare for the entrance examinations to the Historical Faculty. What do you say? Think it over. You don't know what the theatre is."

I flatly refused, however, to prepare for the university.

A year later Makarenko took up a job in Kiev, and without his knowledge, I joined the studio of the Russian Dramatic Theatre in Kharkov.

Never afterwards did I hear from Makarenko a single word of reproach for the choice I had made, although he had good reason to do so.

While I was studying at the theatrical studio Makarenko visited Kharkov. I went to see him in his hotel. I sat in his room telling him about my studies. Life is life, and I had already learnt by experience that not everything in the theatre was as easy, bright, and cheerful as I had imagined it to be when I was a pupil in the ninth form. I had to face the hard facts of life, which had thrown me in with bad people, people who made things difficult for me. Besides this, I had other troubles and worries.

I confided all this to Makarenko, told him my sad story simply and sincerely. Any other person in his place would probably have said, "There, I warned you, but you wouldn't listen to me." Here again Makarenko showed himself to be the wise, understanding teacher that he was. He heard me out attentively, then said:

"You think I have no enemies, Klava? I have any amount of them! But life is a struggle. You must keep a stiff upper lip. You mustn't fold up."

He spoke to me for a long time, telling me to hold my own in face of everything and not allow life's difficulties and worries to get me down. I saw what a strong man he was, a very strong man.

He treated me with the same warmth and kindness even when he got to know that as a result of certain changes in the management a number of former members of the Com-

A. Makarenko and K. Boriskina.

mune, including myself, who had gone out to study, had been deprived of their stipends. Makarenko sent me money every month. Every remittance from him was a piece of heart-warming news, the very breath of home.

At one of our meetings I told Makarenko that I felt awkward about receiving money from him. He turned the matter off with a joke.

"When I become an old dodderer and start walking about with a stick, I'll come to you then and let you help me."

I was a grown-up person when, shortly before Makarenko's death, I received a letter from him which contained the words: "You have always been my best-loved daughter."

He had never said anything about this in the Commune. I read these lines over a thousand times. They stirred me to the depths of my soul, roused in me a feeling of infinite love for my father, my friend, and protector.

A. Makarenko with members of the amateur theatrical group.

## MEETINGS WITH MAKARENKO

by *Kornei Chukovsky*

It was at Irpen, near Kiev. One day I felt I'd like some apples. I went to old Prokopich's orchard, and in the course of our conversation Prokopich told me, not without pride, that a writer "from that white house yonder" often came to him for fruit.

What's his name?

Who knows. A writer... maybe a commissar.

I paid the old man and was making for the gate when a girl (she may have been seven, if not less) sitting in an apple-tree, whom I had not noticed before, shouted down to me that the writer's name was "Anton Semyonovich".

Makarenko? Maybe it wasn't him. There were lots of Anton Semyonoviches in the world. I trudged along in the heat towards the low white house. The girl trailed after me.

The house was an unpretentious affair resembling a peasant's hut. I ascended the sun-heated porch, and found the door shut. While I stood hesitating whether to knock, a group of youngsters playing ball within a few paces of me, saw me standing there. There were five or six of them. Two of them ran up to me and in an extremely polite manner that for the moment surprised me asked me to wait outside a bit in the cool shade, "as Anton Semyonovich is resting



and will soon wake up–in a quarter of an hour at the most".

No, I decided, he is not Makarenko at all.

The bag with the apples, however, was so heavy and here in the shade it was so cool, that I lowered myself on to the bench with pleasure. The youngsters joined me there, and like hosts in a drawing-room, laid themselves out to entertain me. They enquired with the utmost courtesy, had I been long at Irpen, had I ever visited these parts before, and did I like the Ukraine?

I was still revelling in this exquisite urbanity which had made two youngsters give up their game in order to entertain an entire stranger, when Anton Semyonovich appeared in the doorway with a corn-cob in his hand. I recognised him at once–it was Makarenko.

Old Prokopich had been right–Makarenko did resemble a commissar of civil war days: rather grim-looking, taciturn, self-assured, he was a man of few gestures and fussy smiles. He greeted me in the most cordial fashion without losing his air of sedate dignity. He struck me for the moment as being a masterful, inexorable, indomitable man, and reminded me in this respect of my friend Boris Zhitkov. With a strong deft movement he broke his corn-cob and gave one half of it to the girl, who apparently was accustomed to receiving such gifts.

The polite youths ran off to join their companions, among whom were some charming girls. I realised then how dull they must have found it with me, and how eager they had been all the time to return to their interrupted game.

Anton Semyonovich was friendly and amiable. He took my heavy bag from me, ushered me into the cool room, introduced me to his family, and treated me to delicious melon. Nevertheless, there was a commanding air about him that put a certain restraint upon me. Not so the girl who had come with me–she did not feel the slightest shyness. Receiving a chunk of melon, she scrambled on to the sofa with it, sidling up as near as she could to Makarenko.

I mentioned during the conversation that I had taken a liking to the boys who, to guard his repose, had gone out of their way to entertain me. He chuckled, and slipping his arm into mine, took me out into the yard where the youngsters were playing. He walked with a smart soldierly step, like a commander before the ranks.

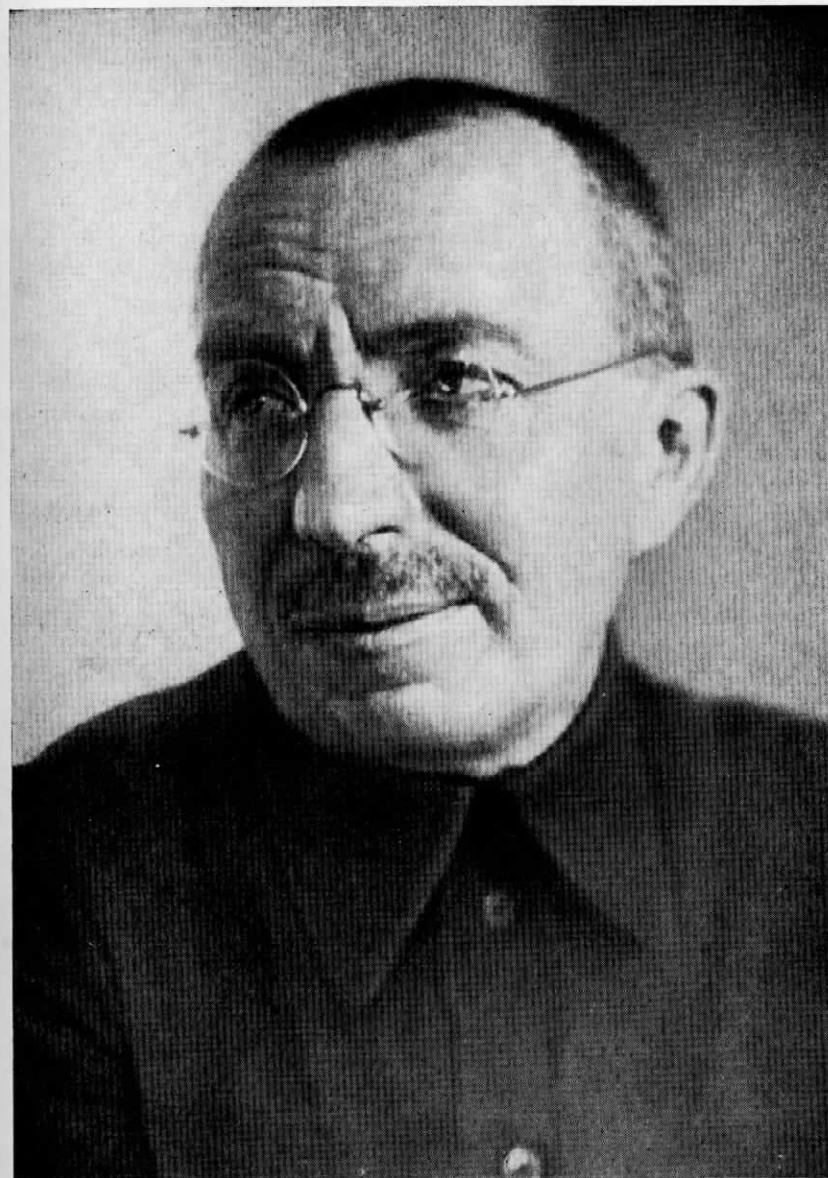
I stood admiring the youngsters at play. Somehow they remained me of Oxford undergraduates. I told Makarenko so.

"Quite right," he said, and in his voice there was a note of Ukrainian humour. "That curly one over there is a highly talented suitcase thief from Lozovaya railway station, near Kharkov. Lozovaya was famous for its thieves, and he was the most famous of them all. And that one in the white trousers is just a pickpocket, but high-class too."

He uttered this matter-of-factly, as if never suspecting that it could surprise me. After a sustained pause, he added in the same cool tone:

"And now that one is a medical worker. He'll make a good surgeon. And as for the one in the white trousers–take it from me there'll come a time when you'll queue up to book a seat for one of his concerts."

Both were his former pupils. They had probably come on a visit, since Makarenko had retired from his labour-colony activities some years ago. He had saved both of them from a criminal career. Never before that nor afterwards did I see people who loved their teacher with such a noble devoted love. Subsequently I often had occasion to see demonstrations of affection towards him on the part of these young people, but at that time, on the first day we met, what



A. Makarenko at the close of his life.

struck me most of all was the delicacy which Makarenko had cultivated in them. Obviously, it was not only work discipline he demanded of them, but a fine sensibility as well.

It was time to go. I took my leave. Makarenko accompanied me part of the way and told me about his literary hopes and plans. Here, too, everything was clear and definite with him. Although he called himself a "literary tyro" and "raw recruit" (he became a writer in his mature years, as we know), his literary plans were unembarrassed by doubts, misgivings, or indecision. Obviously, his road as a writer had been carefully thought out for several years in advance, and he would tread that road confidently despite all obstacles.

The dates have got mixed up in my mind and I don't know whether the incident I wish to mention took place that same year or the next. What I do know is that it occurred in Kiev at a special meeting of the Writers' Union.

It was a hot summer. What with the stuffiness, the tobacco smoke, and the impassioned debates I suddenly lost consciousness—"passed out", as they say—and did not come round until an hour or two later in my room at the Continental Hotel.

I was lying on the bed, and the first person I saw was a frowning and silent Makarenko. It appeared that he had been at the meeting, too, and seeing me feel queer, had taken me to the hotel and had been sitting all this time at my bedside like a sick nurse.

My consciousness came and went, and unfortunately a good deal of what Makarenko was saying reached me only in snatches. He spoke mostly about Gorky. Gorky was to him the embodiment of all that was noble and best in the world. Even his voice changed when he uttered the word Gorky—it became lyrical, melodious.

Makarenko, as I afterwards learned, was intensely busy those days, yet he found hours to spare looking after me in the most active fashion. His former pupils Klushnik, Salko and Terentyuk, took a great interest in me, too, and together

with the family of my friend, the poet Lev Kvitko, set me on my feet again in a few days.

Ill-health made Makarenko go to Kislovodsk the next year. He stayed at a sanatorium on Krestovaya Mountain. I was taking a cure there myself at the time. Our rooms were in the same corridor, and on the very first day I heard the busy clatter of a typewriter behind Makarenko's door. He was slogging away at his novel, greatly to the indignation of the medical staff.

"Please go in and tear him away from that typewriter," the head physician begged me. "Take him out for a walk. Otherwise there's no sense in him taking this cure."

But Makarenko was buried up to the hilt in his work and the slightest interruption would have caused him mental pain. As for slowing down the tempo of his "five-year plan", he would not hear of it. He was writing his novel *The Ways of a Generation* at the time. Even when I succeeded in dragging him out into the park, he would hurry back to his unfinished manuscript in a quarter of an hour.

The ascent of Krestovaya took us over an hour. We made a halt before taking the steepest climb. Resting there on a bench made for easy conversation, we spoke about literature, about Gorky, Fadeyev, and Alexei Tolstoi, and rapturously recited verses to each other. I was surprised to learn that Makarenko was a lover of poetry, of which he had a good knowledge. He was fond of Tyutchev, and could recite Pushkin, Shevchenko, Krylov, as well as Bagritsky and Tikhonov without end.

Sometimes, of course, we differed. Try as I might, I could not bring myself to admire some of the books which stood high in his estimation. He, on the other hand, was quite unmoved by many verses that delighted me.

But there was one subject that united us more strongly than anything else, and that was Soviet children, their mentality, their future. On this subject Makarenko could speak till morning. Even after he became a professional writer he



never ceased to be a teacher, a teacher by nature, by calling, by passionate love.

He wanted to see the teacher in me too. After reading my book *From Two To Five*, he began urging me, in the new edition of this book, to lay greater emphasis on its educative tasks and aims.

"The pedagogics are all hidden away with you, they are an undercurrent, as if you are ashamed of being a teacher," he said in a tone of reproach, and demanded that in describing my observations of the mentality of little children I should deduce the pedagogical "musts" and "don'ts" from these observations.

I argued with him, but when preparing a second edition of my book, I recollected Makarenko's reproachful voice and wherever possible I tried to bring out the pedagogical implications.

In this respect my book owes a great deal to Makarenko.

Towards the end of our stay in Kislovodsk, he began to drop in on us of an evening—on me and my wife—with the sole aim of talking about a person who was very dear to him and whom he missed terribly—his wife Galina Stakhiyevna. She had not been able to come out with him to Kislovodsk and had been obliged to stay in Moscow. He felt lonesome without her and sought comfort in talking about her at great length, expressing to her, from an unseen distance, the noble feelings that overflowed his soul. We listened to him respectfully, never ceasing to marvel at the wealth of lyricism and tenderness that lay hidden within that stern-looking man.

When my wife and I were leaving the health resort Makarenko saw us off at the station, and it seemed to us, as it always does at such partings, that we had long years of friendly meetings and talks before us.

But things turned out differently.

As soon as I got back to Moscow I was swamped with work and cares, and it was some time before I could get out to see Makarenko. Even so my visit was mistimed—I could

hear the familiar clatter of Makarenko's typewriter while I was still in the hall of his new flat. He was doing his daily stint with his usual dogged and passionate application. Nevertheless, he, and Galina Stakhiyevna and her son, a very attractive boy, made me heartily welcome, and showed me their new flat with its balcony. The whole flat seemed to me full of Makarenko's plans. He said that now, in Moscow, at long last, he would be free to write such and such a play, such and such a scenario, such and such a novel; he spoke about his future lectures, films, newspaper articles. He looked deathly tired, and his wife kept stealing anxious glances at him.

Scarcely had the door shut behind me when the typewriter started clattering furiously.

Two months later, when taking his new (or, I think, revised) script to the film studios, Makarenko died suddenly in the railway coach on April 1, 1939, at the age of fifty-one.

## THE HAPPINESS OF UNREST

by *Victor Fink*

Fame came to him as soon as *The Road to Life* was published. But this was not just ordinary literary fame. When I met Makarenko and became a witness to the routine of his everyday life, I saw what a hard and onerous burden this fame of his was.

A multitude of people, finding themselves for various reasons in a perplexed state of mind, turned to him for advice and comfort. They wrote to him, and came to him from far and near to unburden their hearts to him. Readers were not only captivated by the brilliance of the pages they had read. They were stirred by the author's personality, by the great feat of his own life, by the heart of wisdom they felt beating beneath his stern exterior.

I first met Anton Makarenko in February 1937 in Moscow, on the opening day of the meeting at the Writers' Club. He was wearing a soldier's greatcoat and a leather cap. He looked about fifty. He had energetic features, a prominent nose, grave eyes behind glasses, and a close-cropped head.

He was sitting next to me. I lost my heart to him at our very first acquaintance. He possessed a remarkably clear judgement, and a highly developed sense of the new. It was like the perfect ear of a musician.

In the autumn of 1937 he published an article "Happiness". It dealt with literature. The author called all world literature "a book-keeping of human woes". He drew attention to a fact which no one seemed to have noticed before him, namely, that not one of the world's great writers had ever described happiness. Not that there was more sorrow than happiness on this sinful earth of ours. The reason was the technological quality of the material. Makarenko said that human happiness was never any good for the purpose of literature because it was trivial. Usually it was personal happiness, often a matter of chance, like winning at cards. It could not serve as material for literature because it affected no one and concerned no one. Only sorrow gave the hero the right of admission into literature—it was universal. In conclusion Makarenko expressed the idea that personal happiness would enter literature only when it ceased to be accidental and when it would not be contraposed by social injustice, and that was possible only in a free classless society.

I read this article when I was in Paris and translated it verbally to a Frenchman, an old Paris University friend of mine.

"You're such a restless people, damn it!" he said. "Why should it bother you that this old world of ours is standing where it is? Must you shake everything loose, even the pillars of literature?"

I started defending Makarenko's point of view, but he interrupted:

"Don't! You needn't try to prove it. He's right. And profoundly so. I realise it myself. Still.... Just think. We're accustomed to believe that our gods are made of marble, that they are eternal, and he comes along—and bang!—the eternal god falls to pieces like so much clay."

"You're wrong," I said, trying to comfort him. "There were gods, and they really were made of marble, but time, time, my dear chap! The marble started crumbling."

But he disagreed.

"They'd have stood for another hundred years if not for



you!" he shouted. "You people haven't got your Dalila! She'd have snipped your mane for you in no time!"

On my return to Moscow I began to pour out my raptures to Makarenko over his article. He let my effusions drift past his ears, as usual, but there was a sly gleam in his eye when he started speaking.

"No, really, I am right!" he began. "Can you name a single work of world literature in which personal happiness is described? You can't and you know it! There are no such works. Do you think Pushkin did not describe happy love only because Lensky was killed in a duel, and Onegin lost his Tatyana through his own folly? You mean to say Pushkin did not see in life a single happy marriage? Nonsense! Simply, such limited happiness is of no use to an artist. Take Tolstoi. So long as Pierre Bezukhov was married to the beautiful Helen and unhappy with her, Tolstoi shows him this way and that. But then Pierre finds happiness in his marriage with Natasha Rostova, and Tolstoi drops them—he has no use for such happiness. After all it's the shameful happiness of slaveowners."

There was a brief pause. A shadow seemed to cross Makarenko's face. Apparently his heart was playing tricks again. To divert him I started telling him about my Paris friend, who had threatened us with Dalila.

Makarenko laughed heartily.

"Dalila! You should have told him that she has long been a member of the trade union here. She works as a barber in Pyatnitskaya Street, and shaves and cuts men's hair all day long. Who's afraid of her!"

At this he was a great hand—I mean rounding of a serious conversation with a sudden gay joke.

Once he read a lecture at Moscow University on the subject "Must a man have faults?"

The gist of it was this: people have a multitude of petty but repellent vices for which—alas!—they are not punished. A much-respected man may be a liar, a braggart, a grabber, a vulgar or rude fellow, or treat his subordinates arrogantly,

but you will always hear it said of him: "He's a splendid worker! As for failings, who hasn't got them? Every man has his faults."

And here Makarenko suddenly asks, "Strictly speaking, must a man necessarily have faults? Won't he be able to do his job well if he stops being a liar or a boor?"

And then we started talking about that lecture.

"You're an enemy of philistinism, I see, Anton Semyonovich. Have you noticed how this streak is developing in our own midst, among us writers?"

I cited several examples and added:

"Mind you, this stink of philistinism was something that even the old bourgeoisie couldn't stand."

Makarenko exploded.

"Don't tell me about the old bourgeoisie. It couldn't escape the stink of philistinism, because it was its own, natural, organic smell. But our man of today can easily wash it off. He is wearing out the old clothes of the past. Don't forget the difference, maestro!"

"This Nikolai is the limit!" he said on another occasion, after receiving a letter from one of his pupils, a former street waif, who had become a doctor and was now working and complaining that there were too many fools about.

"How do you like that–too many fools about!" Makarenko growled. "You tell me this–what would have happened to this Nikolai of mine if it hadn't been for the Revolution?"

"How do I know?"

"I'll tell you then! He'd be stuck away in some poky provincial hole, living like a fool himself without even realising it. He wouldn't have the brains to feel it and kick against it. And he'd probably be happy too. But would he put up with that kind of happiness now, I wonder?"

"According to you, then," I said judiciously, "there are several kinds of happiness?"

He smiled.

"Of course there are! There are all kinds of happiness. Happiness at work, in struggle with Nature, with bad social



arrangements, with scoundrels–a hard, troublesome, restless happiness. It always goes about in bumps and bruises, but, mark you, it's the only thing that keeps the world going. There is also the quiet happiness of a man who is contented with everything and who wants nothing."

"Well, I suppose everyone can be happy in his own way," I said.

He gave me an odd look. Evidently he thought I was defending the quiet happiness of a man who wanted nothing. The mere thought of it depressed him. "Well, yes..." he drawled without glancing at me, then, with a strong Ukrainian accent which he lapsed into whenever he was irritated, he added, "Only it's pig's happiness. Let the pigs eat it!"

He was a man of insatiable industry. At first I thought it was simply a trait of character. But afterwards I saw it in a new light. It was simply that the man had a lot to do yet, but realising how frail his health was, he was in a hurry to steal a march on death.

He did not fear death. He regarded it merely as a nuisance because it interfered with one's work and he despised it.

In a letter written at this period, heavy with foreboding, he says as much: "Nature has invented Death, but man has learned to defy it."

I could picture it vividly. Night. He sits at his desk, working. In his breast something contracts and expands–that is Death grimacing. But in the man's eye there is a humorous twinkle as he looks squarely and defiantly into its vile face, and right there, in its very presence, writes down in black and white that he defies it, and goes on working.

That was the kind of man he was.

## THE LIFE PATTERNS OF MAKARENKO'S PUPILS

by *Faina Vigdorova*

Every book has a destiny of its own. Some books are forgotten the moment they are laid aside. Others may appeal to the reader, even stir emotions, but in a year or two, on coming back to them again, they will leave him unmoved, because they are shallow and short-lived. But there are books that live without aging.

Among these fortunate, unaging books is *The Road to Life* by Anton Makarenko. This is a book that leaves no one unmoved or indifferent. It takes hold of the reader's heart from the very first line and does not let it go. One is completely under the spell of this unobtrusive schoolteacher, who, in the autumn of 1920, was given the job of organising a Colony for juvenile delinquents. His troubles are your troubles, his thoughts, dreams, cares, and misgivings are shared by you.

The book deals with many events, but each of them sinks deep into one's mind. They have a good deal of thought behind them, and this in turn begets new thoughts in the reader. One parts with this book as one would with a living person whom one is eager to meet again.

Another unusual feature of this book is that Life is finishing the writing of it. Its characters continue to live outside



its pages. For all of them are real living people, not imaginary ones. They are living and working amongst us, both those whom we know from *The Road to Life* and those who, though not described in it, grew up and were brought up and educated in the Gorky Colony and the Dzerzhinsky Commune. Just now, after the war, it is difficult to obtain information about all of them. Things have changed a lot in recent years, and many people have gone away to new places, some of them to the remotest corners of our vast country. Nevertheless, grains of information about many of them can be collected from the letters which Galina Stakhiyevna, the writer's widow, received, and from the words of the communards, who, travelling through Moscow, never missed an opportunity of looking her up at Lavrushinsky Pereulok, where Makarenko used to live. The life and work of these former pupils of Makarenko make a splendid new page to his biography and add a new chapter to his book.

Makarenko's files contain copies of the characters he issued to a group of communards, who finished school in the early thirties.

Every one of these former street arabs is described by Makarenko as being "absolutely honest", "a very honest person", "a very upright, honest, and noble nature", "cultured, absolutely honest, no trace whatever of street-waif taint". Almost every testimonial mentions traits of character that are considered of the highest importance, such as "collectivist", "a splendid comrade", "straightforward", "no traces of egoism". Coming from Makarenko, this is the highest praise. The word "collectivist" means a lot to him. "A good member of the collective" stands for a disciplined, intelligent worker, a capable organiser, a real builder of communism. Egoism stood for all that was old, obsolete and most repellent in the human being.

Every line of these testimonials reveals the moral fibre of the man who wrote them, reveals an attitude towards people that is rich with fellow-feeling, sincerity, and a deep interest.

Where his pupils are concerned he cannot speak with detached restraint, as an official school-teacher for whom these are merely so many graduates. These people are near and dear to him, because in each of them there is a particle of his own soul, of his own mind and heart. These brief testimonials show a keenness of observation on the part of a perspicacious teacher. And the most remarkable thing about them is that their bearers have lived up to them.

Of Leonid Konisevich, who, on leaving school, wanted to become a water-transport engineer, Makarenko wrote: "A disciplined, honest boy and excellent comrade, ardently devoted to the Commune.... Water transport appeals to his romantic nature. Wishes to surround himself with ships, rivers, and river banks." The gentle humour of the last sentence expresses a doubt whether this chosen specialty is the genuine calling of the "romantic". Nor was Makarenko mistaken. The year 1937 found Konisevich in Spain, where a struggle was developing from which he could not stand aloof. He received an award for saving Spanish children in Bilbao. Then his restless nature drew him to Kamchatka, to the remote station of Paratukka. Here we find him working in a children's home. The place was in a bad state when he took it over. But this did not daunt Konisevich—he was not a pupil of Makarenko for nothing. He tackled the job the Makarenko way, and within a year and a half he wrote that the children were unrecognisable. The transformation had been brought about by what Makarenko considered to be the greatest and most effective educative force—collective work. The children's home was situated near a river in a place that abounded in fish. But nobody had done any fishing. There was land all round, but nobody had cultivated it. Now everything was different. They had a kitchen-garden of their own, their own fish, and good strong furniture which they made themselves. For helping the neighbouring collective farm the Home had received special expressions of thanks. "And so Anton Semyonovich now has grandchildren," Konisevich finishes his letter.



And here is another testimonial, another life pattern. Makarenko wrote of Leva Salko, a communard: "Cultured, absolutely honest, has great abilities, a go-ahead. Will make a splendid engineer. Disciplined, a collectivist, an excellent comrade, straightforward. Work always lends itself to his hands even better than in his schoolbooks."

About twenty years have passed since this character was issued. And today we find Leva Salko a certified aircraft and glider testing engineer. His certificate speaks very highly of him as being a splendid engineer "with a leaning towards design and research work". The character given to him by Makarenko as a boy has been confirmed in every line of his engineer's certificate, which says: "Besides theoretical training, he possesses a practical flair and good skills in the field of aircraft and glider testing ('work always lends itself to his hands'). He is distinguished for his honest and straightforward character ('an excellent comrade, straightforward')." This is not a mere coincidence, it is proof positive of Makarenko's ability to see all that was best in a person and to foresee years ahead how that person would shape.

A man may make one, two, or three correct guesses as to how a boy or girl is likely to develop in twenty years' time, but Makarenko never guessed, he foresaw these things, and his prognostications were justified dozens of times because he was an admirable teacher, a past master in the art of moulding young minds and characters.

"A man of very upright, honest, and noble character," Makarenko wrote of Bogdanovich, a member of the Commune, "he was always a good communard and everyone loved him. Politically irreproachable, disciplined." Victor Bogdanovich served in the army throughout the war. The Regimental Communications Officer wrote this of him to Makarenko's widow: "As a result of well-organised communications with the ground and with each other in the air the airmen of our regiment won brilliant victories, no little credit for which goes to Comrade Bogdanovich. He always enjoyed the deep affection and respect of his comrades." At present

Victor Bogdanovich is an instructor at a Military Signals School.

The war was a grim test of strength, courage, and fortitude for everybody. Makarenko's pupils came through this test with flying colours. Many of them fought in the war bravely and talentedly.

Readers of *The Road to Life* will remember Burun. At the beginning he was one of the heroes of the book's first bitter pages, and then became a reliable support to Anton Makarenko in his work, the chief character in the Celebration of the First Sheaf—perhaps the most vivid and powerful pages in the book, which sound like a paean to triumphant labour. "The detachment was led by Burun. . . . A gleaming, keen-bladed, combined scythe and rake, decorated with dog daisies, is held high above his herculean shoulders. Burun has a majestic beauty today, that I alone am capable of appreciating to the full, for I alone know that this is not merely a prominent figure in a tableau, not just a colonist who is good to look at, but, first and foremost, an active commander, one who knows whom he is leading, and where he is leading them." In those far-off days Burun commanded that wonderful festival of the first sheaf. And in the grim year 1941, under his real name, Grigory Suprun, he commanded other fighters and led them into other battles. He fought on the Volga, took part in the capture of Königsberg, and is now a Colonel of the Guards. By all his gallant deeds he lived up to the appraisal that Makarenko gave him—always and everywhere he remained a true commander, knowing that he was leading his men to victory for his country's glory.

And the Zheveli brothers—Dmitry and Alexander?

Dmitry Zheveli was Makarenko's closest assistant during the days when the Colony at Kuryazh was being rehabilitated. Every reader of *The Road to Life* must have admired this young man, seen him vividly among the crowd of street waifs—gay, cool, imperturbably confident that dirty, neglected Kuryazh would not be able to hold out against the forces of



light, reason, and beauty which the Gorkyites had brought with them.

His younger brother Alexander Zheveli, a lively, enterprising boy, who contracted a touching friendship with Makarenko's old mother, is another figure readers will remember.

The brothers, whose real name is Cheveli, fought the nazis in the air. Alexander was a pilot during the war. Dmitry became a navigating officer, and was killed fighting for his country on the Murmansk coast.

Alexei Yavlinsky came to the Dzerzhinsky Commune a boy of fourteen. In a letter from the front during the early difficult period of the war he wrote: "Not a day passes that doesn't remind me again and again of what I owe to Anton Makarenko. One day I picked up a stray soldier in the forest, a young lad, hungry and frozen. 'Why didn't you light a fire?' I asked him. 'I don't know how,' he answered. 'Why didn't you pull up some beetroot out of the frozen ground—there are vegetable gardens nearby—and cook it for yourself?' And again: 'I don't know how.' Yet this is all nothing to me. I walk and never get tired, I don't freeze in the cold, and I know all the time that I can take care of myself. The Commune did that for me."

All these people, so unlike each other, have traits in common. They are all people of the collective, who appreciate the word "comrade" at its true and noble worth. They all have a sense of duty, a profound respect for labour, for the great power of human activity. They know the joy of common work, they know that nothing is impossible or impracticable for such work. And they are able to throw themselves into this great constructive work with all the resources of their mind and energies of their body. And another thing: they all have profound and implicit faith in the infinite power of education.

No wonder that Semyon Karabanov, impulsive and irrepressible, one of the most striking characters in the book *The Road to Life*, dedicated himself, like Leonid Konisevich, to

the education of children. He became a teacher, manager of a children's home. During the war he fought at the front, where he was badly wounded, and has now returned to his favourite job.

Practically all who were brought up under Makarenko feel themselves more or less to be educators and teachers. He passed on to them his profound unshakable belief that every person working with people and for people can become stronger and cleaner and that everyone can and should be helped to achieve this.

Readers of *The Road to Life* also remember Alexander Zadorov. He came to the Colony with the first batch of juvenile delinquents. He had nothing but a supreme contempt for the establishment, for its teachers, for all and every kind of work, and for everything else in the world. And he became one of Makarenko's best friends and assistants, the pride and glory of the Colony, its first student at the *Rabfak* –the Workers' Faculty. Zadorov (his real name is Pavel Arkhangelsky) became a hydraulic engineer and worked on the Moscow Canal. He wrote to Makarenko's widow in December 1942: "It seems to me that the questions of child and adult education were never so acute as they are now. It is more important than ever to cultivate a sense of duty, of honour, of comradeship, of love of country. This was the keynote of all Anton Semyonovich's work with us. I carry this all within me and try to cultivate it in my subordinates to the best of my ability."

Ex-colonist Ivan Tkachuk is an actor. He wrote to Makarenko's widow: "I am in love with my profession. Frankly, successes and failures do not turn my head or dishearten me.... I am happy that I, a former pupil of Anton Semyonovich, am engaged in such a noble profession as that of an actor, and to the best of my ability am serving the cause (of Soviet education) to which Anton Semyonovich devoted his wonderful life."

Shortly before his death Makarenko wrote to his pupil, now a lieutenant-colonel in the Soviet Army, Vasily Klyushnik, that former communards often came to see him. "They have all made good and my conscience doesn't torment me," he concluded his letter. To know that his former pupils had made good and his conscience was clear on account of them was his best reward for long years of hard work devoted to the Commune and the children.

Anton Makarenko gave the world many "straight" people, capable intelligent workers, inheritors and continuers of his legacy.

# MAKARENKO ON EDUCATION

(Talks, Articles, Letters)

# LECTURES ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

(Abridged)

### *The General Conditions of Upbringing in the Family*

Dear parents, citizens of the Soviet Union,

The bringing up of children is the most important sphere of activity in our lives. Our children are the future citizens of our country and citizens of the world. They will make history. Our children are fathers and mothers to be, who will bring up their own children. Our children must grow up to be fine citizens, good fathers and mothers. And that is not all. Our children are our old age. If they are properly brought up, this old age will be a happy one; if they are badly brought up they will be our future sorrow, our tears, our guilt before other people, before the whole country.

Dear parents, above all you should always remember the great importance of this business and your great responsibility for it.

Today we are starting a series of talks on questions of upbringing in the family. Later on we shall deal in detail with the various aspects of educative work, such as discipline and parental authority, play, food and clothes, manners, and

so on. All these are very important departments dealing with useful methods of educative work. But before saying anything about them, let me draw your attention to certain questions of general significance, which apply to all departments, to all aspects of upbringing and which should always be kept in mind.

First of all we draw your attention to the following. It is much easier to bring up a child properly and normally than to re-educate it. Proper upbringing in earliest childhood is not such a difficult thing as many people think. It is not too difficult for anybody, for any father and mother to cope with. Any person can easily give his child a good upbringing if he really wishes to do so, and besides, it is a pleasant, joyous occupation that brings happiness. Not so re-education. If your child has been brought up badly, if you have gone wrong somewhere, given little thought to him, or, as often happens, neglected the child through sheer indolence, then you will have many things to redo and repair. Now this work of repairing, this work of re-education, is no easy job by any means. Re-education requires more energy and more knowledge, more patience too, for that matter, and this is a thing that not every parent will be found to possess. Very often there are cases when the family can no longer cope with the problems of re-education and is obliged to send its son or daughter to a labour Colony. Sometimes even the Colony is unable to do anything, and then an imperfect citizen is turned out into the world. Take a case where reformation has been effective and a man has made good. Everyone looks at him and everyone is pleased, his parents included. But no one cares to reckon up the loss that has been sustained. If this person had been properly brought up at the very beginning, he would have taken more from life, he would have started upon life's road stronger, better equipped for it, and therefore happier. Besides, the work of re-education, reformation, is not only more difficult, it is disheartening. Even if fully successful it wears the parents to shreds with anxiety and often spoils their character.



We advise parents always to bear this in mind, always to try to bring up their children in such a way that they would not be obliged afterwards to redo it all over again.

We know that not everyone performs this job with equal success. There are many reasons for this, first and foremost the use of correct methods of upbringing. A very important factor, however, is the structure of the family itself. To a certain extent this structure is of our own making. We can, for instance, definitely assert that it is far more difficult to bring up an only son or only daughter than it is to bring up several children. Even if a family is in financial straits, it should not limit itself to a single child. An only child very quickly becomes the centre of the family. The cares which a father and mother lavish on an only child usually exceed the useful measure. Parental love in such cases tends to become somewhat highly strung. The illness of such a child or his death is often a stunning blow in such a family, and the fear of such a disaster always preys upon the minds of the parents. Very often the only child gets used to its exclusive position and becomes a real despot in the home. It is very difficult for parents to moderate their love for him and their cares for him, and willy-nilly, they bring up an egoist.

Only in a family in which there are several children can the parental care be of a normal character. It is distributed evenly among all of them. In a large family the child, at the earliest age, gets used to the collective and acquires experience in mutual relationships. If there are older and younger children in a family, an experience of love and friendship is established between them in its most diverse forms. Life in such a family enables the child to practise various kinds of human relationships. Things enter into the fabric of his life which are beyond the ken of an only child, such as love for an older brother and love for a younger brother—these are quite different feelings—an ability to confide in a brother or sister, and the habit of sympathy for them. It goes without saying that in a large family the child, at

every step, even in play, gets used to being in the collective. All this is very important as far as Soviet education is concerned. In a bourgeois family this question is not so important, as the whole community there is based on the egoistic principle.

There are other kinds of incomplete families too. The fact that parents do not live together, have parted, has a very painful effect on the upbringing of a child. Children often become an object of discord among parents, who openly hate each other and do not try to conceal it from their children.

Parents who for any reason have parted should be recommended to think more about their children in their quarrel. There are no differences that cannot be settled tactfully. Such things as animosity and hatred for a former husband or wife can always be concealed from the children. Naturally, it is difficult for a father who has left the family to continue to bring up the children. If he cannot exercise a good influence on his old family, the best thing he can do is to make that family forget him completely. This would be more honest. This does not of course mean that he is freed from financial obligations towards his deserted children.

The structure of the family is a very important matter, and it should be treated sensibly.

If parents really love their children and wish to bring them up properly, they will try to patch up their differences and avoid a break, which is very distressful for their children.

The next question very serious attention should be given to is the aim of upbringing. Some families give no thought to this matter at all. Parents and children simply live side by side, the parents hoping that things will work out by themselves. The parents have no clear aim, no definite programme. Of course, in such cases the results will always be accidental, and such parents afterwards are often surprised at having raised such bad children. No job can be done well unless you know what you are aiming at.

Parents should have a clear idea what they want to bring up their children to be. They should be perfectly clear in



their minds what their own desires are. Do you wish to bring up a real citizen of the Soviet Union, an accomplished, energetic, honest person devoted to his people, to the cause of the Revolution, a hardworking, cheerful, well-bred person? Or do you want your child to grow up a philistine, a greedy, cowardly person, a crafty, petty businessman? Go to the trouble of putting this to yourself, turn it over in your mind, and you see at once all the mistakes you have made and all the ways of rectifying them that still lie ahead.

Your own behaviour means everything. Don't think that you are educating a child only when speaking to him, lecturing him, or ordering him about. You are educating him every moment of your life, even when you are not at home. The way you dress, the way you speak to other people and about other people, the way you express joy or sadness, the way you treat your friends and enemies, the way you laugh and read the newspaper—all this means a lot to the child. A child catches the slightest inflection in your tone; every turn of thought reaches him by invisible paths. You do not notice these things. And if you are rude at home, if you are boastful, or drunk, or, still worse, if you insult his mother, you do not have to think of upbringing any more—you are already bringing up your children, bringing them up badly, and no amount of good advice or methods can help you.

Setting a high standard to oneself, respect towards one's family, control of one's every word and step are the first and chief method of upbringing on the part of a parent.

Yet one sometimes meets parents who believe that all they have to do is find some cunning recipe for bringing up children and the trick is done. They think that if this recipe were put in the hands of a congenital lazybones, he would be able to bring up a hardworking person by means of it; if given to a crook, that recipe would be the means of bringing up an honest citizen; in the hands of a liar it would work a miracle, and the child would grow up to be a truthful person.

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There are no such miracles. No recipes are of any good if there are serious flaws in the educator's own personality.

It is to these faults that attention should be paid in the first instance. As for tricks, it should be borne in mind once and for all that there are no such things as pedagogical tricks. Unfortunately, we sometimes see people who believe in such tricks. One attaches special importance to punishment, another introduces a sort of bonus system; one tries with all his might to play the clown at home to amuse the children, another bribes them with promises.

Bringing up children requires the most serious tone, the most simple and the most sincere. These three qualities should form the pattern of your life. The slightest hint of falsity, artificiality, or flippancy, dooms all educative work to failure. This does not mean that you should always be pompous and pontifical. You should simply be sincere, and let your mood fit the moment and the occasion.

Tricks prevent people from seeing the real tasks that face them. They, in the first place, amuse the parents themselves and are a waste of time. And so many parents like to complain about having so little time!

Of course, it is better for parents to be with their children more often. It is very bad if parents never see their children. Nevertheless, proper upbringing does not require that parents should keep a constant eye on their children. This kind of upbringing can cause nothing but harm. It develops passivity of character; such children become accustomed too much to the society of grownups, and their mental development proceeds too quickly. Parents like to boast about this, but afterwards realise that they have made a mistake.

You must know exactly what your child is doing, where he is, and by whom he is surrounded, but you must give him the necessary freedom; he must not only be under your personal influence but under the numerous and varied influences of life. Do not think that you are obliged to shelter him from outside influences that are bad or even hostile. Remember that in life he will meet with all kinds of temptations, with alien and wicked people and circumstances. You should develop in him an ability to sort these things out for himself, to recognise them when he sees them, and to cope with them. This ability cannot be developed in the sheltered life, under a hothouse method of upbringing. Therefore, quite naturally, you must give your children the most varied environment, without, however, losing sight of them for a moment.



Children need to be given timely help, they need to be timely checked and guided. All that is required of you, therefore, is to act as a constant corrective to the child's life, but certainly not to keep him in leading strings. We shall deal with this question in greater detail later on, and mention it here only because we have broached the subject of time. In bringing up children we require not a long time, but sensible use of a short time. I repeat, upbringing is taking place all the time, even when we are not at home.

The essence of the whole problem of upbringing, as you will have probably guessed by now, lies not in our talks with the child, not in direct influence on the child, but in the organisation of your family, of your private and social lives and the organisation of the child's life. The work of upbringing is, above all, the work of an organiser. In this business, therefore, there are no trivial details. You have no right to call anything trivial here and to forget about it. It would be a terrible mistake to think that you can single out something big and important in your own life and the life of your child and give it all your attention while dismissing everything else. There are no trifles in educative work. Such things as a bow that you tie up your girl's hair with, a hat, or a toy, may be of great importance in the life of the child. Good organisation takes care of every minute detail and occasion. The little things have a regular, a daily, an hourly effect, and life is made up of them. To guide that life and organise it will be your most responsible task.

In our next talks we shall examine various methods of upbringing in the family in greater detail. Today's talk was an introduction.

What is parental authority? How is it organised?

Parents whose children are disobedient are sometimes inclined to think that authority is nature-given, that it is a special talent. If one hasn't the talent, then nothing can be done about it, and one can but envy the person who has it. These parents are mistaken. Authority is organisable in any family, and this is not so very difficult at all.

Unfortunately, there are parents who organise this authority on false foundations. Their object is to command obedience from their children, and that is where they are wrong. Authority and obedience cannot be an aim. There is only one aim, one object—proper upbringing. This is the only aim to be pursued. Obedience may be only one of the ways of achieving that object. Obedience for the sake of obedience is aimed at by those very parents who give no thought to the real purpose of upbringing. If children are obedient their parents have a quiet time. And it is this quiet that is their real object. Experience has shown that neither quiet nor obedience last long. Authority built on false foundations works only a very short time; it quickly breaks down, leaving nothing—neither authority nor obedience. Sometimes parents, in trying to secure obedience, neglect all the other objects of upbringing, and the result is weak, if obedient, children.

There are numerous brands of this false authority. We shall examine some of them in more or less greater detail. We hope that after such an examination we shall be clearer as to what real authority is. To proceed then.

*The authority of suppression.* This is the most fear-inspiring authority, though not the most harmful. Those afflicted with this authority are mostly fathers. If at home the father is always snappy and grumpy, goes up in the air over any trifle, grabs the cane or belt in and out of season, returns a rough answer when asked a question, and punishes a child for every offence, this is a case of the authority of suppression. This paternal bullying terrorises the whole family, mother as well as children. It is harmful not only because it frightens the children, but also because it makes the mother a nonentity, a creature capable only of being a servant. There is no need to prove how harmful such authority is. It does no upbringing, it merely teaches the children to keep away from their frightful Dad, it cultivates mendacity and human cowardice in the children together with cruelty. Such browbeaten, weak-willed children grow up to be either good-for-nothing weaklings, or petty tyrants who avenge their suppressed childhood as long as they live. This vicious brand of authority is found only with uncultured parents and, happily, is dying out lately.

*The authority of distance.* There are fathers and mothers who seriously believe that children will be more obedient if they are less spoken to, if they are kept at a distance, and admitted rarely to the commanding presence. This form was a particular favourite with some intellectual families in the old days. Here the father always has a separate sanctum from which he emerges on rare occasions like a high-priest. He has his meals separately, takes his entertainment separately, and even issues orders to the family under his charge through the mother. There are mothers like that too. They have their own lives, their own interests, their own thoughts. The children are in the care of a grandmother or even a domestic help.

Needless to say, this kind of authority is useless and such a family could not be called a Soviet family.

*The authority of swagger.* This is a species of authority of distance, only probably more harmful. Every citizen of the Soviet Union has his merits, but some people rate themselves very highly, throw their weight about, and adopt the grand manner even before their own children. At home they are even more puffed up with importance than at work, keep talking about their virtues, and treat all other people with arrogance. It often happens that children catch the infection from their father and become little snobs. They boast and brag to their chums and repeat at every turn: "My Dad

is a chief, my Dad is a writer, my Dad is a commander, my Dad is a famous man." In such an atmosphere of arrogance the important Dad is no longer able to make out where his children are heading and whom he is bringing up. This kind of authority is met with also in mothers. A unique dress, an important acquaintance, a trip to a health resort, and similar status symbols give them cause for boasting, for keeping aloof from other people and from their own children.

*The authority of pedantry.* In these cases the parents give more attention to their children, and work harder, but work like bureaucrats. They are convinced that children should receive every parental word with a thrill of awe, that every word of theirs is a holy of holies. They issue their orders in a cold tone, and once issued, they immediately become law. More than anything these people fear lest their children should think that Papa is wrong, that Papa is not a man of his word. If such a Papa says, "Tomorrow it is going to rain, you must stay indoors," then stay indoors you must even if the weather tomorrow is fine. Papa disliked some movie, so he forbade the children going to the cinema to see even good pictures. Papa punished a child, then discovered that he wasn't so much to blame as he had at first thought, but Papa will not cancel his punishment for anything in the world: once I have said it, that's how it's got to be. Such a Papa has his hands full every day. In every movement the child makes he sees a breach of law and order and plagues him with new laws and regulations. The child's life, his interests and growth pass unnoticed for such a father–he sees nothing but his bureaucratic bossing of the family.

*The authority of moralising.* In this case parents make children's life a hell with their endless sermons and edifying talks. Instead of saying a few words to the child, perhaps even in a jocular tone, the parent sits him down opposite him and starts a nagging tedious speech. Such parents are convinced that edifying sermons are the very soul of pedagogical wisdom. In such a family you will find little joy, few smiles. The parents try their hardest to be virtuous and ap-



pear infallible in the eyes of their children. They forget, however, that children are not adults, that children have their own lives, and that these lives must be respected. A child lives more emotionally, more passionately than a grownup, and is least given to reasoning. The thinking habit comes to him gradually and rather slowly, and the parents' constant effusions, nagging and garrulity hardly leave any mark on his mind. Moralisings cannot serve as parental authority for the children.

*The authority of love.* This is the most prevalent form of false authority with us. Many parents believe that children will be obedient if they are made to love their parents. To win this love, the children should be shown their parental love at every step. Words of affection, endless huggings, kisses, and caresses are showered upon the children in superabundance. If the child is disobedient, the question is put to him immediately: "So you don't love Daddy?" The parents jealously watch the expression of their children's eyes and demand love and tenderness. Very often a mother will tell acquaintances in front of the children: "He loves Daddy terribly, and he loves me terribly, he's such an affectionate child."

This kind of family wallows in sentimentality and tender feelings, so much so that it is blind to everything else. Many important little details of upbringing escape the attention of the parents. The child is expected to do everything out of love for his parents.

This line has many pitfalls. Here are sown the seeds of family egoism. Children, of course, are not equal to this kind of love. It does not take them long to realise that Papa and Mamma can easily be deceived, so long as you do it with a tender expression. Papa and Mamma can even be frightened just by your looking sulky and pretending that love is beginning to pass. A child learns very early in life that you can get round people. And since he cannot love other people as strongly, he tries to get round them without love, by cold cynical calculation. It sometimes happens that love for pa-

rents lasts a long time, but all other people are regarded as strangers and outsiders for whom there is no affection, no sense of companionship.

This is a very dangerous form of authority. It breeds insincere and false egoists. And very often the first victims of such egoism are the parents themselves.

*The authority of kindness.* This is the most fatuous kind of authority. Here, too, the child's obedience is organised through his love, which is evoked not by kisses and gushing, but by compliance, gentleness, and kindness on the part of the parents. Papa and Mamma appear before the child in the guise of a good angel. They permit everything, grudge nothing, they are not stingy, they are wonderful parents. They carefully avoid all conflicts, they stand for peace in the home, and are prepared to go all lengths in order to secure it. In such families the children very soon start bossing the parents, and the parents' acquiescence gives the widest scope to the child's desires, caprices, and demands. Sometimes the parents put up a show of resistance, but it is already too late, because a harmful practice has taken root in the home.

*The authority of friendship.* Very often, before any children have been born yet, the parents agree between themselves "our children will be our friends". Generally speaking, this, of course, is a good thing. Father and son, mother and daughter can and should be friends, but the parents still remain the senior members of the domestic community and the children their charges. When friendship reaches its limits, upbringing ceases and the reverse process sets in: the charges begin to educate their parents. Such families are sometimes met with among the intellectuals. Here the children call their parents Pete or Lizzy, poke fun at them, answer back rudely, lecture them at every step. There can be no question here of obedience. Neither can there be any friendship, since no friendship is possible without mutual respect.

*The authority of bribery.* The most immoral form of authority is that when obedience is simply purchased by gifts



and promises. The parents admit as much when they say straight out, "If you do as you're told I'll buy you a gee-gee, if you're obedient we'll go to the circus."

Of course, some form of encouragement, some form of bonus system, as it were, should exist in the family, but on no account must children be given a bonus for obedience, for treating their parents properly. A bonus may be given for good progress at school, or for performing a really difficult task. Even so, the amount of the award should never be announced beforehand, and children should never be spurred on in their school work or any other work by tempting promises.

We have examined several kinds of false authority. There are many other kinds besides these. There is the authority of joviality, the authority of learnedness, the authority of the hail-fellow-well-met kind, the authority of beauty. As often as not, however, the parents think of no authority at all, but just muddle through anyhow with their children's upbringing. Today the parent goes up in the air and punishes his boy for some trivial offence, tomorrow he pets him like a poodle, the day after he promises him something by way of a bribe, and the next day he punishes him again and throws all his good deeds into his face. Such parents act like a cat on hot bricks, always in a flutter of helpless excitement, completely at sea. It often happens that the Father adheres to one form of authority, the Mother to another. The children in such cases necessarily become diplomats, learn how to steer a course between Papa and Mamma. Finally, it sometimes happens that parents simply take no notice of the children and only think of having a quiet time.

What should real parental authority in a Soviet family be?

The only true foundation of parental authority is the life and work of the parents, their civic character, their behaviour. The family is a big and important job, and the parents handle that job and are responsible for it to the community, to their own happiness, and to the lives of their children. If the parents handle that job honestly and intelligently, if they set

before themselves splendid and important aims, if they are fully alive to the implications of their own behaviour and conduct, then they can be said to possess parental authority, and they have no need to seek any other ground, still less to invent anything artificial.

As soon as children begin to grow up they are always interested to know where their father or mother works, and what their social status is. They should know what their parents' interests are, whom they associate with, and the sooner they learn these things the better. The work which a Father or Mother is doing should appear to the child as a serious job worthy of respect. The parents' merits in the eyes of a child should be such as the community would recognise as merits, as services of intrinsic value, and not a mere semblance. It is most important that the children should see these merits not isolated, but against the background of the country's achievements. The children should be proud, not snobbishly, but in a good Soviet way, of their father or mother. At the same time, they should also know the names of our country's great and notable persons, and see their own parents as members of that great and distinguished company.

It should always be borne in mind that every form of human activity has its tensions and its virtues. Never should parents appear to their children as top-notchers in their particular sphere, as unique geniuses. Children should be able to recognise the merits of other people, especially those of their parents' nearest friends. The civic authority of the parents will attain its proper height only if it is the authority of a member of the collective, and not that of an upstart or a braggart. If you have succeeded in bringing up your son in such a way that he is proud of the factory at which his father works, if the successes of that factory gladden him, then you may be sure you have brought him up properly.

Parents, however, should not only be actors in the limited sphere of their collective. Our life is that of a socialist society. The Father and Mother should appear to their children in the role of participants in this life. Events on the international stage, the achievements of literature—everything should be reflected in the Father's thoughts, feelings, and aspirations. Only parents who live a full life as citizens of our country will enjoy real authority with their children. Please don't imagine, though, that you must live such a life "on purpose" for the children to see, for them to be impressed by your qualities. That is a false practice. You should live such a life sincerely, genuinely, and not go out of your way to make a display of it to your children. Don't you worry, they will see themselves what there is to see.

You are not only a citizen, however. You are also a Father. And you must do your parental job to the best of your ability. Herein lie the roots of your authority. First of all, you should know what your child's interests are, what he likes and dislikes, what he wants and does not want. You should know who his friends are, whom he plays with and what he plays at, what he reads and how he understands what he has read. When he goes to school it is your business to know what his attitude is to his school and his teachers, what difficulties he meets with, and how he behaves in the classroom. You should know all this always, from your child's earliest years. All kinds of trouble and conflicts should not come as a surprise to you. You should foresee them and anticipate them.

Although these are things you should know, it does not follow from this that you should pester your son with constant and nagging questioning, with cheap and tiresome spying. From the very outset you should put yourself in a position when your children themselves will tell you about their affairs, will want to tell you, and will be anxious to draw upon your knowledge. Sometimes you should invite your son's companions down, treat them to something, and sometimes visit their own homes and make it your business to meet their families at the earliest opportunity.

You will not want much time for all this. All that is required is an interest in the children and in the children's lives.

Given this knowledge and this interest, you will find that these qualities will not pass unnoticed as far as your children are concerned. Children like this kind of knowledge and respect their parents for it.

The authority of knowledge is bound to lead to the authority of assistance. There are many occasions in the life of a child when he does not know what to do, when he stands in need of advice and assistance. He may not ask this help of you because he does not know how to do it. You should volunteer this help yourself.

Very often it can be given in the form of direct advice, sometimes in the form of a joke, an order or even a command. If you know the life of your child you will be able to decide yourself what is the best thing to do. As often happens, this assistance needs to be rendered in a special way. It may be necessary to join in the children's games, or make the acquaintance of the children's companions, or pay a visit to the school and talk to the teacher. If there are several children in your family—and that is the happiest occasion of all—you can enlist the co-operation of the elder brothers and sisters.

Parental help should not be obtrusive, tiresome or annoying. In some cases it is absolutely necessary to let the child extricate himself from his difficulties. He should be taught to overcome obstacles and deal with more complicated problems. But you must always see how the child performs this operation, you must not allow him to become tangled up and give way to despair. Sometimes it is even necessary that the child should be aware of your watchfulness, your interest, your trust in his own powers.

The authority of assistance, of discreet and thoughtful guidance, will be happily supplemented by the authority of knowledge. The child will feel your presence at his side, your judicious concern for him, your guarded interest, but at the same time he will know that you demand something of him, that you have no intention of doing everything for him, relieving him of all responsibility.



This line of responsibility is the next important line of parental authority. On no account must the child think that your guidance of the family is a pleasure or amusement for you. He should know that you are responsible not only for yourself but for him as well to the Soviet community. You should not be afraid to tell your son or daughter openly and firmly that they are being brought up, that they have a lot to learn, that they must grow up to be good citizens and good people, that their parents are responsible for achieving this goal and that they do not shirk this responsibility. From this line of responsibility there stems not only assistance, but demand as well. In some cases this demand should be expressed in the sternest form, which brooks no denial. Incidentally, let it be said that such demand can only be made with benefit when the authority of responsibility has already been established in the child's mind. Even at the earliest age the child should always realise that his parents are not living with him on a desert island.

### *Discipline*

The word "discipline" has several meanings. Some people understand by discipline a system of rules of conduct. Some call discipline an established pattern of trained habits. Others see in discipline only obedience. These different opinions are all more or less near the truth, but for the proper work of an educator one needs a more accurate definition of the very concept of "discipline".

The word "disciplined" is sometimes applied to a person trained in the habits of obedience. As a general rule, of course, prompt and exact execution of orders from bodies and persons in authority is required of every person. Nevertheless, in Soviet society, mere obedience is a quite inadequate criterion for a disciplined person. Simple obedience cannot satisfy us. Still less can we make do with blind obedience such as was usually exacted in the old pre-revolutionary school.

We demand a far more complex kind of discipline from the Soviet citizen. We demand that he should not only know why and for what purpose this or that order has to be carried out, but that he himself should try actively to carry it out in the best possible way. Moreover, we demand of our citizen that every minute of his life he should be prepared to do his duty without waiting for orders, that he should possess initiative and self-reliance. At the same time we hope that he will do only what is useful and necessary for our community, for our country, and that no difficulties or obstacles will deter him. On the contrary, we demand of the Soviet citizen an ability to refrain from actions and conduct that would benefit or please only himself, while causing harm to other people or to the community at large. Moreover, we always demand of our citizen that he should never limit himself to the narrow circle of his own affairs, his own section, his own work-bench, his own family, but should be able to see the affairs, the life, the behaviour of the people around him, be able to come to their assistance not only by word, but by deed, even if to do so involved a partial sacrifice of his personal peace. In regard to our common enemies, however, we demand of every person determined counter-action, constant vigilance, no matter how unpleasant or dangerous it may be.

In a word, in the Soviet community we have a right to apply the term "disciplined" only to such a person who always, under all conditions, is able to choose a correct line of conduct which is of greatest service to the community, and who has it in him to go through with it in face of all difficulties and obstacles.

Needless to say, you cannot train such a disciplined person by means of discipline alone, that is, by exercises in habits of obedience. The disciplined Soviet citizen can only be trained by a sum-total of proper influences, among which a conspicuous place should be occupied by: a broad political education, a general education, books, newspapers, work, social activities, and even such seemingly unimportant things



as games, relaxation, and recreation. Only by the combined action of all these influences can a proper education be carried out, and only as a result of it can there emerge a real disciplined citizen of socialist society.

We particularly recommend parents to remember always this important principle: discipline is created not by any individual "disciplinary" measures, but by a whole system of education, by all the conditions of life, by all the influences to which children are subjected. In this sense discipline is not a cause, not a method, not a means of correct education, but its effect. Correct discipline is a desirable goal to which every educator should strive with all his might and by all the means at his disposal. Therefore, every parent should know that, in giving his son or daughter a book to read, in introducing him to a new companion, in talking to the child about the international situation, the affairs of his factory or of his own successes, he is, incidentally, working towards a more or less disciplining object.

Thus, by discipline, we understand the broad general result of all educative work.

But there is a narrower field of educative work which stands closest of all to the training of discipline and which is often confused with discipline, and that is—routine. While discipline is the result of all educative work, routine is only the means, only a method of education. The distinction between routine and discipline is an important one, and parents would do well to distinguish it. Discipline, for instance, is one of those things of which we always demand perfection. We always wish for the best and strictest discipline in our home, in our work. And so it should be, for discipline is a result, and it has become a habit with us always to strive for the best results. It is difficult to imagine anyone saying, "Discipline with us is not up to much, but we don't need anything better."

The person who says that is either a fool or a real enemy. Every normal person should strive for the highest possible degree of discipline, that is to say, the best possible result.

Routine is quite another matter. Routine, as we have already said, is only a means, and we know that every means in whatever sphere of life should only be applied when it fits the end, when it is suitable. Therefore, one can imagine the best possible discipline—and that is a thing we are always striving to achieve—but one cannot imagine an ideal, a best possible routine. In certain cases one kind of routine will be the most suitable, in other cases another kind.

Domestic routine cannot and should not be the same under different conditions. The ages of the children, their capabilities, the environment, the neighbours, the size of the flat, its conveniences, the way to school, the traffic and many other factors determine and modify the nature of this routine. There should be one routine in a large family where there are many children, and quite a different kind of routine in a family where there is only one child. A routine that is useful in the case of little children may cause great harm if applied to older children. Similarly, there is a special routine for girls, particularly the older ones.

Routine, therefore, does not stand for something that is constant and unchangeable. Some families often make the mistake of believing religiously in the efficacy of a fixed routine, the inviolability of which is guarded to the detriment of the children's interests and their own. This kind of fixed routine soon becomes a lifeless device, which is not only useless, but harmful.

Routine cannot be of a permanent nature precisely because it is only a means of education. Education of any and every kind pursues definite objects, and these objects always follow a changing and more complicated pattern. In early childhood, for instance, the parents are confronted with a serious task—that of teaching the children habits of cleanliness. In endeavouring to achieve this object the parents establish a special routine for the children, that is to say, a set of rules for washing, for using the bath or shower, for tidying up, for keeping the rooms, bed, and table clean. This routine should be regularly maintained, the parents should never



forget about it, should see that it is strictly adhered to, should help the children when they are unable to do anything themselves, and should demand good performance from their children. If this routine is well regulated it can be very useful. There comes a time at last when the children form habits of cleanliness, when the child himself can no longer sit down at the table with dirty hands. We are now able to say that our object has been achieved. The routine that was necessary for its achievement is no longer needed now. Of course, that does not mean that it can be abolished in a single day. It should be gradually replaced by another routine the object of which is to make good this newly formed habit of cleanliness, and when this habit has become firmly established the new, more complicated and more difficult aims will arise before the parents. To continue fussing about with cleanliness at such a time is a waste of parental energy, and a harmful waste at that, because it tends to breed kid-gloved prigs, who have nothing to their name but a habit of cleanliness, and who are capable sometimes of muddling through a job so long as they do not dirty their hands.

In this example of cleanliness routine we see that a correct routine is a temporary and passing thing, for it is only a means to an end.

Consequently, no one single routine can be recommended to parents. There are many routines, and the thing is to select one of them that is most suitable for the occasion.

Despite such a wide choice of possible routines, it should be borne in mind that the routine of a Soviet family should be distinguished by certain definite qualities that hold good for every occasion. We shall try to ascertain what these general qualities are in our present lecture.

The first thing we have to draw the attention of parents to is this. Whatever kind of routine you have chosen for your family, it must, above all, be an expedient one. A rule of life should be introduced in a home not because somebody else has introduced it in his, and not because living with such a rule is more pleasing, but only because it is necessary for

achieving the rational object aimed at. You should know that object well yourself, and the children, too, should know it in the great majority of cases. At any rate, in your own estimation and the children's, this routine should be in the nature of a sensible rule. When you demand that the children should come together for dinner at a definite time and sit down at the table together with the others, the children should understand that this arrangement is necessary in order to make things easier for the Mother or the domestic servant, as well as to enable the family to get together a few times a day and talk things over. When you demand that the children should not leave food on the plate uneaten, the children should understand that this is necessary out of respect for the labour of the people who produced this food, out of respect for the labour of their parents, and for reasons of domestic economy. We know of a case when the parents demanded that their children should be silent at the table. The children, of course, submitted to this demand, but neither they nor their parents knew the reason why this rule was introduced. When the parents were asked about it, they explained that if you talked during a meal you were likely to choke. Such a rule, of course, is senseless. All people usually talk at table, and there have never been any accidents as a result of it.

While recommending parents to introduce a routine that is sensible and expedient, we must nevertheless warn them that there is no need whatever to explain the meaning of one or another rule to the children at every step. These explanations and interpretations can be very tiresome. You must try to make the children work these things out for themselves. Only in the last resort, use a little prompting to suggest the right idea to them. Generally speaking, you should see to it that the children form good steady habits, and the best way of achieving this is by constant practice in good behaviour. Constant harping upon this subject, however, is likely to ruin the whole idea.



Another important feature of every system of routine is its consistency. If you clean your teeth today, you must clean them tomorrow; if you have made your bed today, you must make it tomorrow as well. There must be no such thing as the Mother demanding that the child should make his bed today and then making it herself the next day. This inconsistency makes the routine a meaningless thing, a mere set of casual haphazard rules. Correct routine should be consistent, accurate, allowing no exceptions to the rule other than in cases of real emergency, when important circumstances call for it. As a rule, things should be so arranged in every family that the slightest departure from the fixed routine is noted without fail. This should be done from the earliest age of the child, and the stricter the parents are in demanding adherence to the routine, the less infringements will there be, and the rarer will the parents have recourse to punishments.

We draw the special attention of parents to this. Many people mistakenly think: "The boy did not make his bed this morning, but why make a fuss over it? For one thing, this is the first time it's happened, secondly, it's such a trifle, it's not worth upsetting the child about it." This line of reasoning is absolutely wrong. In the business of education there are no trifles. A bed left unmade signifies not only the beginnings of slovenliness but the beginnings of a negligent attitude towards the established routine, an incipient form of defiance which may later develop into outright hostility towards the parents.

The consistency of a routine system, its definite and compulsory nature, are greatly endangered when the parents themselves treat it insincerely, when they demand adherence to it on the part of the children while they themselves lead a disorderly life unregulated by any kind of routine. Naturally, the routine of the parents will differ from that of the children, but these differences should not be fundamental. If you demand that your children should not read a book during a meal, you should not do it yourself. In insisting

on your children washing their hands before a meal, do not forget to apply the same rule to yourself. Try to make your own bed—it is not in the least a difficult or shameful task. All these trifles are far more important than people usually think.

The routine in the home should consist of the following "musts": the time for getting up and going to bed should be strictly scheduled, and should be the same for holidays and week-days; there should be rules for tidiness and cleanliness, with definite periods for changing underwear and linen, and care of clothes; children should be taught that all things have a place of their own, and after work or play should leave everything in order; from the earliest age children should be able to use the lavatory, the hand basin and the bath; they should look after the electric light, switch it on and off when need be. There should be a special routine for table manners. Every child should know his place at the table, come to it in time, behave himself at the table, be able to use a knife and fork, keep the tablecloth clean, not scatter bits of food over the table, eat up everything that is put on his plate, and not ask for more than he can eat.

The child's work time should be strictly regulated. This is most important when the child starts going to school, but even before this it is desirable to have fixed times for meals, play, walks, etc. Considerable attention should be given to questions of movement. Some people think that it is a necessity for children to run about a lot, to shout, and generally give violent outlet to their energy. That children are in greater need of movement than grownups is beyond doubt, but this need should not be followed blindly. Children should be taught the habit of expedient movement, the ability to check it when necessary. In any case, no running about or jumping should be permitted indoors; the place for this is the playground or the garden outside. Similarly, children should be taught to control their voices. Shouting, screaming, and squalling—all these are things of the same order; they testify



to the child's unhealthy nerves rather than to any actual physical need. The parents themselves are sometimes to blame for this nervous obstreperousness on the part of their children. They often raise their voices to a shout and lose their temper when they should be trying to introduce an atmosphere of sustained tranquillity in the home.

This is the general method for organising the domestic routine. On the basis of these general recommendations every parent can arrange the domestic routine best suited to his own family. A question of paramount importance is the form of routine relations between parents and children. In this field we find a great variety of exaggerated and absurd practices which are very harmful. Some people overdo the method of persuasion, others that of explanatory talks; other methods that are abused are those of kindness and command, encouragement and punishment, indulgence and firmness. In the course of family life, there are many occasions when kindness, talks, firmness or even indulgence are called for. But where the routine is concerned, all these forms should give way to a single form, which is the only best form—that of decree.

The family is a very important and very responsible job in a person's life. The family gives a sense of fullness of living, it brings happiness, but every family, especially in a socialist society, is above all a matter of great national importance. The domestic routine, therefore, should be arranged, developed, and run as a practical business. The parents should not be afraid of using a business-like tone. They should not think that such a tone is out of keeping with paternal or maternal affection, that it is likely to lead to unemotional relations and coldness. We assert that only a real business-like tone is capable of creating that calm atmosphere in the family that is necessary for the proper upbringing of the children and for developing mutual respect and love between members of the family.

The parents—the earlier the better—should adopt a calm, steady, friendly, but always firm tone when issuing orders,

and the children should get accustomed to that tone from the earliest age, should get accustomed to receiving orders and obeying them willingly. You can be as kind as you like to a child, you can joke and play with him, but when the occasion calls for it, you should be able to give your order curtly without repeating it, give it with such an air and tone that neither you nor the child can have any doubt that it is correct and has to be carried out.

Parents should learn to give such orders at a very early stage, when the first child is 1½-2 years old. It is not difficult at all. All you have to do is make sure that your order answers the following requirements:

1. It should not be given angrily, shoutingly, or irritably, but neither should it sound like pleading.

2. It should be performable by the child and not put too great a strain upon it.

3. It should be reasonable, i.e., it should make sense.

4. It should not run counter to any other order of yours or of the other parent.

If an order has been given it should be carried out without fail. It is a very bad thing to give an order and then forget about it. In the home, as in every other business, a constant unremitting control and follow-up is necessary. Of course, parents should try to exercise this control for the most part imperceptibly; the child should never have any doubts that an order is given to be obeyed. Occasionally, however, when the child is given something more difficult to do and when the quality of the performance is of no little importance, open control is quite appropriate.

What is to be done if the child has not carried out the order? You must first of all try to avoid such an eventuality. But if it so happens that the child has disobeyed you the first time, the order should be repeated in a more official and colder tone, something like this, "I told you to do this, but you didn't. Do it at once, and see that this doesn't happen again."



In repeating an order and making quite sure that it is carried out, you should at the same time try to find out the reason why the resistance to your order arose on this particular occasion. You are sure to discover that you are partly to blame for it yourself, that you went wrong somewhere, overlooked something. Try to avoid such mistakes.

The most important thing is to see to it that the children do not accumulate experience in disobedience, that the domestic routine is strictly adhered to. Never allow things to come to such a pass as would give the children an idea that your orders are optional.

If you take care to avoid this from the very outset you will never have grounds eventually for resorting to punishment.

If the routine develops properly from the outset, if the parents keep a careful eye on its development, punishment will be unnecessary. In a good home there is no such thing as punishment, and that is the best and correct method of upbringing.

There are families, however, in which upbringing is so neglected that punishment is unavoidable. In such cases parents usually administer penal methods in a very clumsy way and more often than not make matters worse.

Punishment is a very difficult business that demands unerring tact and care on the part of the educator. Therefore, we recommend parents to avoid punishment as much as possible, and to try first of all to restore the proper routine. This, of course, takes a long time, but you must be patient and wait calmly for results.

In the last resort certain forms of punishment are admissible, namely: withholding pleasures or amusements (if a cinema or circus performance was contemplated, this should be put off); keeping back pocket money, if this is practised; forbidding the culprit to go out and join his companions.

Once more we draw the attention of parents to the fact that punishment, as such, is useless without a well-regulated domestic routine. Given a proper routine, punishment can

freely be dispensed with, and all that is needed is patience. At any rate, it is far more important and far more useful in home life to organise the right experience than it is to correct the wrong experience.

You must likewise be careful in the matter of encouragement. You should never announce a reward or a bonus beforehand. The best thing is simple praise or approval. Children's joys, fun, amusements should not be regarded by them as a reward for good behaviour, but as the natural satisfaction of normal needs. What a child needs he should get under all circumstances without regard to merit, and what he does not need or what is bad for him should not be given to him in the form of a reward.

## *Play*

Play is of great importance in the life of a child; it means as much to him as work, activity, and employment mean to a grownup person. What a child is in play will largely show itself in work when that child grows up. Therefore it is in play that the future citizen first begins his training.

In order to guide a child's play and educate him through play the parents should give serious thought to the question: What is play, and in what way does it differ from work? Unless the parents ponder this question and work it out for themselves they will not be able to guide their child, they will always find themselves at a loss, and will spoil the child rather than educate him.

For one thing, there is not such a great difference between play and work as most people think. Good play resembles good work, bad play resembles bad work. This resemblance is very great. In fact, bad work is more like bad play than good work.

In every good game there is first of all a labour effort and a mental effort. If you buy the child a mechanical mouse, and keep on winding it up all day with the child looking on and



admiring it all day, this play will have nothing good in it. The child will remain passive in this play, and his only participation in it will be to stare. If your child will go in only for such games he will grow into a passive person, accustomed to stare at other people's work, lacking initiative, unaccustomed to creating anything new in his work, unaccustomed to overcome difficulties. Play without effort, play without active participation is always bad play. As you see, play in this respect is very much like work.

Play gives the child joy. It will be the joy of creativeness, or the joy of victory, or aesthetic joy—the joy of performance. Good work gives the same joy. Here we have complete identity.

Some people think that work differs from play in that work involves responsibility whereas play does not. This is a mistake. There is as great a responsibility in play as there is in work—this, of course, refers to good play, to the right kind of play, of which more will be said anon.

In what way, then, does play differ from work? There is only one distinction: that work is man's participation in social production or in the management of such production, in the creation of material, cultural, in other words, social values. Play does not pursue such aims; it has no direct bearing on social aims, but has a bearing indirectly in that it trains a person to the physical and mental efforts that are necessary for doing work.

It is clear now what we must demand of parents in the matter of guiding their children's games. The first thing is to see to it that play does not become the child's sole striving, does not divert him completely from social objects. Secondly, that the play should be of a kind that cultivates mental and physical habits necessary for work.

The first is achieved, as we have already said, by gradually drawing the child into the sphere of work, which slowly but steadily comes to take the place of play. The second is achieved by proper guidance in the game itself—the choice of a game, assistance to the child during the game.

In this talk we shall deal only with the second aim. The question of work training will be dealt with in a special talk.

Parents very often act wrongly in attempting play guidance. They make three kinds of mistakes. Some parents simply take no interest in their children's games and think that the children know best how to play. The children of these parents play how they like and when they like, they choose their own toys and organise their own games. Other parents give far too much attention to their children's games, interfere in them all the time, give instructions and demonstrations, set game tasks and often perform them before the child has been able to do it, and thoroughly enjoy themselves in the process. Nothing else is left for such a child but to do as his parents tell him and imitate them. As a matter of fact these parents have more of the game than the child has. If the child of such parents has any difficulty in a game of building, his father or mother will sit down beside him and say, "That's not the way to do it. Look, I'll show you how it's done."

If the child is cutting something out of paper the Father or Mother will watch his efforts for a while, then they will take away the scissors, saying, "Let me cut it out for you. See how nice it comes out?"

The child looks and sees that his father has indeed done a better job of it. He holds the sheet of paper out to his father and asks him to cut out some more, and the Father does so gladly, pleased with himself. With such parents the children only repeat what their parents do, they are not taught to cope with difficulties, to strive independently to improve their performance, and they very soon become accustomed to the idea that only grownups are able to do things well. Such children grow up lacking in self-reliance, they are diffident, easily discouraged by failure.

Other parents believe that what matters most is the number of toys. They spend a lot of money on toys and are proud of it. The children's corner in such a home resembles a toy



shop. These particular parents happen to be fond of cunning mechanical toys and fill up their children's lives with them. And these children, at best, become collectors of toys, and at worst—and most often—they pass from toy to toy without the slightest interest, play with them without enthusiasm, spoil and break them and demand new ones.

Proper guidance in this matter of games requires a more thoughtful and careful attitude on the part of parents to their children's games.

A child's play passes through several stages of development, each of which requires a special method of guidance. The first stage is the period of indoor games, the period of toys. It begins to pass into the second stage at the age of five or six. The first stage is characterised by the fact that the child prefers to play alone, rarely allowing one or two companions to join him. During these years the child likes to play with his own toys and is reluctant to play with somebody else's. It is at this stage that the child develops his individual abilities. You should not be afraid of your child growing up to be an egoist because he plays by himself. He should be allowed to play by himself, but care should be taken not to allow this stage to drag out; it should pass to the next stage in good time. During the first stage the child is incapable of playing in a group; he often quarrels with his companions and fails to discover a collective interest. He should be given freedom in this individual play without having companions forced upon him. This enforced companionship is likely to destroy his play mood and cultivate habits of petulance and bad temper. It can safely be said that the better a child plays by himself at an early age, the better companion he will make in the future. At this age the child tends to be very aggressive, and, in a certain sense, "possessive". The best method is not to allow the child to exercise this aggressiveness and develop "possessive" impulses. When the child plays by himself he develops his faculties of imagination, constructive habits, and habits of material organisation. This is useful. By making the child play in a group against

his will you will not be curing him of aggressiveness and selfishness.

With some children sooner than with others, this preference for playing alone gradually gives way to an interest in companions, to group play. The child should be helped to make this rather difficult transition with the best possible advantage. The circle of companions should be widened under the most favourable conditions.

The second stage of a child's play does not lend itself so well to guidance, since at this stage children no longer play within sight of the parents, but step out into a wider social field. The second stage lasts up to 11 or 12 years and covers part of the school period.

The school brings with it a wider society, a wider circle of interests and a more difficult field, notably that of games, but it also brings a ready-made and more efficient organisation, a definite and more systematised routine, and, most important of all, the assistance of qualified teachers. In this second stage the child now acts as a member of society, but a society still of children, which lacks strict discipline and social control. The school gives both of these things. It is likewise a form of transition to the third stage of play.

In this third stage of play we now find the child acting as a member of the collective body, not only the play collective, but the practical studying community as well. Therefore play at this age assumes more rigid collective forms and gradually becomes a sport, that is to say, games with definite physical-culture aims, rules, and—most important of all—notions of collective interest and collective discipline.

In all three stages of game development the influence of parents is of tremendous importance. Of course, first in importance comes the influence during the first stage, when the child is not yet a member of any collective body other than the family, and when the parents are often the only guides he has. But in the other stages, too, the influence of the parents can be very important and useful.



In all three stages of play you should cultivate an urge towards more valuable satisfactions than mere staring or simple enjoyment; you should cultivate grit, the ability to cope with difficulties, develop imagination, and mental alertness. At the second and third stages you should always bear in mind that your child has already become a member of society, that what is required of him is not only an ability to play, but an ability to adopt the right attitude to people.

### *Education by Work*

One of the first things parents should always remember is this. Your child is going to be a member of a working community. Consequently, his significance in that community, his value as a citizen, will depend solely on the extent to which he is able to participate in the work of the community, the extent to which he is fitted for that work. His well-being, his standard of living will also depend upon this, for the Soviet Constitution, among other things, says, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work". We know very well that all people are endowed by nature with approximately similar work capacities, but in life some people are able to work better than others, some are capable only of the simplest form of work, while others are able to do more intricate work, consequently, more valuable work. These different work capacities are not a gift of nature, but are cultivated in a person throughout his life, and especially in his youth.

Consequently, work training, the cultivation of a person's work capacity, is not only the training and cultivation of a future good or bad citizen, but the cultivation of his future standard of living, his well-being.

It is difficult, of course, within the limits of the home, to give a child a work training which usually goes by the name of skill or qualification. The family is not fitted to provide the child with a good special qualification. This is a thing that

a boy or girl will receive in some social organisation—in school, at the factory, in an office, or at special courses. The family should never attempt to provide a child with any special skill or qualification. In the old days it usually happened that if the Father was a shoemaker, he would teach his son the same trade; if he was a joiner, his son would be taught joinery. And the girls, as we know, always qualified as housewives—that was about all they could count on achieving. In our Soviet times the qualifications of its future citizens are taken care of by the state, which has at its disposal many high-grade and well-equipped institutes, colleges, etc.

Parents should not think, however, that upbringing in the family has nothing to do with the acquisition of skills. As it happens, work training in the home is a very important factor as far as a person's future professional skill is concerned. The child that has received a proper work upbringing in the family will be a greater success in his future special training. And the children who have not been so conditioned in the family will not acquire good skills, they will not make a go of it, and they will make poor workers despite all the efforts of the state institutions.

In training a child in habits of work, the most important aspect of the method is this. The child should be given a certain task which he is able to perform with the aid of one or another work device. This task need not necessarily be of short duration, one or two days, say. It can last a long time, for months or even years. The important thing is to let the child have a certain freedom in the choice of ways and means, and to bear a certain responsibility for the performance and quality of the work. It is no good telling the child, "Here's a broom, go and sweep that room, do it like this or like that."

The best thing is to charge a child with keeping a definite room clean and leave it to him to decide how he is going to do it and to be responsible for his own decision. In the first instance you have set the child only a manual task, in the second you have set him an organisational task, which is



definitely more superior and useful. Consequently, the more intricate and independent a work task is, the better will it be from the point of view of educative conditioning. Many parents fail to take this circumstance into account. They tell their children to do one or another job, but the only effect of this is a dispersion among minor errands. They send a boy or girl to the shop to buy a certain article but it would be much better if they imposed upon the child a definite and regular chore, for instance, that of keeping the family supplied with soap or tooth-paste.

Work participation of children in the home life should start very early. It should start with play. The child should be told that he is responsible for looking after the toys, and seeing that the places where the toys are kept and where he plays with them are kept clean and tidy. This work should be explained to him in a general way: things should be kept clean, and not left lying about, you must not spill things, or let the toys get dusty. Naturally, certain ways of tidying up can be shown to the child, but on the whole it is a good thing if the child discovers for himself that for dusting things a clean cloth is required, if he asks his mother for that cloth himself, if he sets certain sanitary standards of his own to that cloth, if he demands a better duster, and so on. Similarly, he should be left to his own devices in the matter of mending broken toys, in so far, of course, as he is able to cope with the task. For this purpose he should be given the necessary materials.

Work tasks should become more complicated as the child grows older and should be separated from play. We shall list certain chores for children, which each family can rectify or supplement according to its living conditions and the age of the children.

1. Watering plants in the room or in the whole flat.
2. Dusting the window-sills.
3. Laying the table.
4. Looking after the salt-cellars and mustard-pots.
5. Looking after Father's writing-desk.

6. Taking care of the book-shelf or the book-case and keeping them in order.

7. Receiving the newspapers and putting them away in a definite place, keeping the old and new ones separate.

8. Feeding the kitten or the pup.

9. Keeping the hand-basin clean, buying soap, tooth-paste, and razor blades for Father.

10. Doing a separate room completely, or doing part of the room.

11. Sewing torn off buttons to one's clothes, and having the necessary outfit for this, which is to be kept in perfect order.

12. Keeping the pantry or larder in order.

13. Brushing one's own clothes, or the clothes of a younger brother or of one of the parents.

14. Taking care of room decorations–portraits, picture postcards, reproductions.

15. If the family has a garden or flower-beds, to tend a definite section of them, including planting, cultivation, and harvesting.

16. Seeing to it that there are flowers in the home, and for that purpose occasionally taking a trip outside town (this is for the older children).

17. Answering the telephone and keeping the family's private telephone book.

18. Keeping the family's private bus and tram guide for routes which the members of the family most often use.

19. Planning and organising the family's visits to the theatre and cinema–studying programmes, booking tickets, looking after them, etc. (this is for the older children).

20. Keeping order and seeing that the domestic medicine chest is replenished in good time.

21. Helping Mother or sister with the home chores.

Every family will find numerous similar jobs that are more or less interesting and not too difficult to perform. Naturally, the child should not be overloaded with work. In any case, there should be no striking difference between the work load



of the parents and that of the children. If the Father or Mother find it very hard to run the household, the help of the children should be enlisted. It sometimes happens that in a family where there is a domestic servant the children become accustomed to rely upon her to do everything that they could very well do themselves by self-service. Parents should look into this carefully and see to it, as far as possible, that the domestic servant does not have to do jobs which the children could and should do themselves.

It should always be borne in mind, however, that when children go to school they have a lot of homework to do. This work, needless to say, should be given top priority. Children should be made to realise that in school work they are fulfilling not only a private but a social function, that for their progress at school they are responsible not only to their parents but to the state. On the other hand, it is wrong to give priority to school work to the exclusion of all other tasks. This exclusive attention to school work is very dangerous, since it breeds in children a negligent attitude towards the life and work of the family as a collective body. There should always be an atmosphere of collectivism in the family, and assistance rendered one another by members of the family should be practised as often as possible.

The question arises, by what means can and should one or another work effort on the part of children be elicited. There are various means. In early childhood, of course, a child needs a good deal of prompting and showing, but the ideal form is when the child himself sees the need for this or that job, sees that his mother or father is too busy to do it, and comes to the assistance of the family on his own initiative. To cultivate this willingness for work, this attention to the needs of the collective, is to cultivate a real Soviet citizen.

It often happens that a child, through inexperience or poor orientation, is unable to grasp the need for one or another job. In such cases the parents, by judicious prompting should help the child define his attitude to the task in hand

and take part in its performance. This is often best done by awakening a simple technical interest in the job, but this method should not be abused. The child should also be able to perform jobs which do not evoke any special interest and which at first glance look tedious. He should be brought up in such a way that the decisive feature of a work effort, as far as he is concerned, should be its utility and necessity, and not its enjoyableness. Parents should cultivate in the child an ability to do unpleasant jobs patiently without complaining. Eventually, as the child develops, even the most disagreeable work will give him pleasure if he realises the social value of that work.

If necessity or interest is not sufficient to evoke a desire to work, the method of request may be used. Request differs from other forms of address in that the child is given complete freedom of choice. And that is what the request should be. It should be made in such a way that the child should think he is meeting it of his own free will and without compulsion of any sort. The thing to say is: "I want you to do me a favour. Though it's difficult, and you're busy with other things. . . ."

Request is the best and gentlest form of address, but care should be taken not to overdo it. The request form is best of all used in cases where you are well aware that your request will be gladly complied with by the child. But if you have any doubt on this score, use the form of assignment given in a calm, confident, business-like tone. If you use the proper method of alternate request and assignment from your child's earliest age, especially if you are successful in encouraging the child's initiative, in teaching him to see the necessity of doing the job himself on his own initiative, you will find that your instructions will be carried out without a hitch. Only in the event of your having neglected the child's upbringing will you sometimes be obliged to resort to compulsion.

Compulsion may take different forms—from simple repetition of an order to sharp and peremptory repetition. In any



case physical coercion should never be used, as it is least effective and most likely to produce aversion to the task.

A most perplexing problem for parents is how to deal with so-called lazy children. It should be said at this point that laziness, i.e., an aversion to any labour effort, is very rarely due to a poor state of health, to physical weakness, or low spirits. In such cases, of course, the best thing is to seek medical advice. For the most part, however, laziness develops in a child as a result of incorrect upbringing, when parents, from the child's very early age, fail to stimulate his energy, do not teach him to overcome obstacles, do not excite his interest in the household, do not teach him habits of labour and a habit of enjoying the pleasures which labour gives. There is only one way of combating laziness, and that is by gradually drawing the child into the sphere of work, steadily stimulating his work interest.

A few words concerning the quality of work. Quality should always be a decisive factor, and a high standard should be demanded always and in all seriousness. Naturally a child has no experience and often he is physically incapable of performing a job that would be perfect in all respects. The standard of workmanship demanded of him should be something that is within his powers of performance and understanding.

A child should not be reproved, shamed or scolded for poor work. You should say simply and calmly that the job has not been done satisfactorily, that it needs redoing or rectifying. Parents should never, in such cases, do the work for the child, but they may, on rare occasions, do part of that work when it is obviously beyond the child's powers and when its object is to correct the original mistake of giving such an assignment.

We emphatically disapprove of the use of any forms of encouragement or punishment in the sphere of labour. The work task itself and its performance should give the child the satisfaction to make it enjoyable. The mere fact that his work is acknowledged to be good should be the best reward

for his labour. A similar reward will be your approval of his inventiveness, his resourcefulness, and his techniques. But this verbal approval, too, should not be abused, and care should be taken not to praise a child for his work in the presence of your friends or acquaintances. Still less should a child be punished for work done poorly or not done at all. The important thing in this case is to get the work done in spite of everything.

### *Sex Education*

Sex education is considered one of the most difficult of pedagogical problems. Indeed, in no other question has there been so much confusion and misconception. Practically speaking, however, this problem is not so difficult at all and in many families it has been dealt with very simply and without painful misgivings. It only becomes difficult when it is treated on its own, when too much importance is attached to it by singling it out from the general mass of educational questions.

The problem of sex education in the family can be correctly dealt with only when the parents have a clear idea of the purpose they are pursuing in their children's sex education. If this purpose is clear to the parents the way it is to be achieved will be clear to them too.

What are the requirements of social morality in matters of sex life? It requires that the sexual life of every person, every man and woman, should be in constant harmonious relation with two spheres of life, namely, with the family and with love. The only kind of sexual life that it recognises as normal and morally legitimate is that which is based on mutual love and finds expression in the family, that is, in an open civil union between a man and a woman, a union that pursues two aims—that of human happiness and the birth and upbringing of children.

In this light the aims of sex education are clear. We must educate our children in such a way that only in love could



they enjoy sexual life and that this enjoyment, this love, could be realised in the family.

When we speak of educating the future sexual feeling of our child, we really mean educating his future love, educating the family man to be. Every other kind of sex education is bound to be harmful and anti-social. Every parent, every Father and Mother, should make it their aim to educate the future citizen or citizeness in such a way that they will be happy only in family love and that only in this form can they seek the joys of sexual life. If the parents do not set themselves this object or if they fail to achieve it, their children will lead an irregular sex life, consequently a life full of emotional stress, unhappiness, sordidness, and social evil.

In matters of love and family life the decisive factor will always be the individual's general capabilities, his political and moral character, his development, his efficiency, his honesty, his devotion to his country, his love of the community. Therefore, there is perfect truth in the assertion that a person's sexual life is being educated all the time, at every step, even when his parents or tutors are least of all thinking of sex education. The old saying that "idleness is the mother of all evil" correctly expresses this general law, but evil has more than one mother. Not only idleness, but every deviation from right social behaviour is bound to lead to a person's misbehaviour in society, including the sin of promiscuity.

In questions of sex education, therefore, the important thing is not this or that particular method specially aimed at sex education, but the whole general aspect of educative work, the picture of it as a whole.

But there are also some educative methods which would seem to be specially designed to serve the purposes of sex education. And there are people who rely entirely on these methods and consider them the wisest expression of pedagogical creativeness.

It should be borne in mind that the most harmful methods of sex education are implicit in just these special counsels, which should be treated with the utmost caution.

Far too much attention was given to sex education in the old days. Many people believed that the sexual sphere was the principal and decisive sphere in the physical and psychological constitution of the human being, and that all human behaviour was governed by it. The adherents of these "theoretical" postulates tried to prove that the education of a boy or girl was essentially sex education.

Many of these "theories" remained buried in books, without reaching the reading public at large, but a good many of them gained currency and gave rise to the most mischievous and dangerous views.

What worried people most was how judiciously to prepare the child for sexual life, how to make him see that there was nothing "shameful" or secret about it. To achieve this object they tried to initiate the child in all the mysteries of sex and explain to him the secret of childbirth at the earliest possible age. And, of course, they pointed with genuine "horror" at those "simpletons" who fooled the children with tales about storks and other fictitious agents of childbirth. It was assumed that if the child had everything explained to him and no longer saw anything shameful in sexual life, the true aim of sex education would have been achieved.

Such counsels should be treated with the greatest caution. Questions of sex education need to be treated much more calmly, and no irreparable tricks should be played with it. A child does sometimes ask where babies come from, but the fact that a child is interested in this question does not mean that you can tell him all there is to know about it at an early age. There are many things a child does not know apart from the sexual sphere, but we never hasten to burden his mind with premature knowledge. We never explain to a child of three the whys and wherefores of hot and cold, why the day grows longer or shorter. Nor do we explain to him at the age of seven how an aircraft engine is constructed, though he may show an interest in this question. There is a time for every kind of knowledge, and there is no harm



in telling a child: "You're too little, you'll understand this when you grow up."

Besides, a child does not and cannot evince a particularly insistent interest in sexual questions. This interest does not appear until the age of puberty, and usually by that time there is no mystery left in sexual life as far as the child is concerned.

Therefore, there is no urgent need to hurriedly reveal "the mysteries of childbirth" because of a casual question asked by the child. These questions have no sexual curiosity in them yet, no hidden secrets of an emotional nature that may cause suffering to the child. If you more or less tactfully evade the child's question, dismiss it with a joke or a smile, the child will forget all about it and occupy himself with something else. But if you start telling him about the most secret details of the relations between a man and a woman, you are bound to develop his curiosity towards the sexual sphere, and subsequently a prematurely excited imagination. The knowledge you will impart to him is quite needless and useless, but the play of imagination that you will excite in him will start off sexual emotions for which the time has not yet come.

You should not be afraid of your child learning the mysteries of childbirth from his or her comrades and keeping this knowledge a secret. This kind of secretiveness is nothing to worry about. The child should get used to the fact that there are many intimate and secret aspects of human life, which do not have to be shared with everyone or made a public display of. And not until such an attitude towards the intimacies of life has been cultivated in the child, not until he has formed the steady habit of chaste silence about certain things—and that means not until the child has reached a more mature age—can one discuss with him sexual life. These talks should be held in strict secret between Father and son or between Mother and daughter. They will be justified by the real benefit to be derived from them, since they will conform to the natural sexual impulse of the boy

or girl. Such talks, at this stage, can do no harm, since both the parents and the children understand that they are touching on an important and secret subject, that the discussion of this subject is serving a useful purpose, which, while remaining intimate, is at the same time real. Such talks should deal with questions of sexual hygiene and especially sexual morality.

While recognising the need for such talks during the period of sexual maturity, we should not overemphasise their significance. In fact, it would be much better if these talks were given by a doctor, should they be organised at school. It is highly desirable that between parents and children there should always exist an atmosphere of trust and delicacy, an atmosphere of chastity, which is sometimes marred by too frank a discussion on such difficult subjects.

There are other reasons which make such premature discussions of the sexual question with children objectionable. As a result of such premature and frank discussions of sex the child conceives a crude rationalistic view of the sexual sphere, this tends to breed that type of cynicism which sometimes makes an adult think nothing of sharing his intimate sexual experiences with others.

Such talks present the subject of sex to the child in its narrow physiological aspect. Sexual themes in such cases will not be ennobled by love themes, that is, by a more honourable and socially estimable attitude towards woman.

In what words can you tell a child that sexual feelings are justified by love when the child has no idea of love yet? Such talks will necessarily be confined to bare physiology.

In discussing sex with your son or daughter at a later age you will be able to link sexual life with love and cultivate in the boy or girl an attitude of deep respect towards these matters, an attitude of civil, aesthetic, and human respect. Our boys and girls are introduced to love themes through literature, through the experience of the people around them, and through social observation. Parents should



take full advantage of the knowledge and ideas which the young have formed in this respect.

Sex education should be essentially love education, that is, the cultivation of a deep and genuine feeling, a feeling beautified by the unity of life, aspirations, and hopes. Such sex education, however, should be achieved without a too frank and unavoidably cynical delving into purely physiological questions.

How should such sex education be carried out? Example here is better than precept. Genuine love between the Father and Mother, their respect for each other, help and care, openly permissible manifestations of affection and tenderness, if all this takes place in front of children from the first year of their lives, are a powerful educative factor which cannot but compel the attention of the children towards such serious and beautiful relations between a man and a woman.

Another important factor is the general cultivation of a feeling of love in the child. If the child, in growing up, has not learned to love his parents, his brothers and sisters, his school, his country, if the germ of gross selfishness has been allowed to develop in his character, he will hardly have a deep love for the woman of his choice. Such men often display strong sexual feeling, but are always inclined to show lack of respect for the woman who attracts them. They care nothing for the qualities of the woman's mind and are not even interested in it. They therefore change their affections lightly and are only a step removed from plain debauchery. Of course, this happens not only with men, but with women too.

Non-sexual love–friendship, experience of this love-friendship gained in childhood, experience of lasting attachments formed for individuals, love of country cultivated from childhood–all this is the best method for cultivating a future highly social attitude towards woman as a friend. Unless such an attitude is cultivated it is very difficult to discipline the sexual sphere and keep it within bounds.

Therefore, we advise parents to give very careful attention to the question of their child's feelings towards people and society. Care should be taken that the child has friends (his parents, brothers, comrades), that his attitude towards those friends should not be casual or egotistical, that the interests of his friends should preoccupy the child. The child's interest in his home-town or village, in the factory where his father works, and eventually in our country at large, in its history and its distinguished personalities, should be kindled at the earliest possible age. Obviously, talks alone are not enough for this purpose. The child should be made to see a lot and think a lot about things and absorb artistic impressions. These purposes are admirably served by literature, the cinema, and the theatre.

Such an education will be good sex education too. It will mould traits of personality and character essential to the collectivist, and a person so conditioned will behave morally in the sexual sphere as well.

Another useful contributing factor is the establishment in the family of a proper system of rules and routine. A girl or boy trained to habits of orderliness and lacking experience in disorderly and irresponsible living will eventually apply those habits in their attitudes to a man or woman.

A proper system of domestic rules is important from another angle. Disorderly sexual life very often begins when boys and girls meet casually and indiscriminately, when they are bored and idle, and engage in uncontrolled and time-killing amusements. Parents should know exactly whom their child keeps company with and what interests these meetings pursue. Last but not least a proper routine contributes to the child's physical well-being and does not give rise to precocious sexual emotions. To go to sleep in time and to get up in time and not lie about in bed without need is itself a good moral, and consequently, sexual discipline.

Another important condition of sex education is the maintenance of a normal work load. This subject has been dealt with in other talks, but it is an important contributing factor



in sex education as well. A certain normal pleasant sense of fatigue towards the evening, an awareness of one's duties and jobs throughout the day and in the mornings—all this is an important conditioning factor that develops the child's imagination and helps him to distribute his strength evenly in the course of the day. Such conditions leave the child no time for any urge, mental or physical, towards loafing, towards flights of fancy, or casual meetings and impressions. Children who have spent their early childhood under a proper scheduled domestic system usually grow up to like that system, to get used to it, and their attitude to people is more orderly as a result of it.

Sport, too, plays no little part in this general conditioning, and has its effect on the sexual sphere as well. The utility of properly organised sport exercises, especially skating, skiing, boating, and regular indoor gymnastics, is too obvious and well known to need proving.

All the educative recommendations and principles mentioned above would seem to have no direct bearing on the aims of sex education, but they work steadily towards that object inasmuch as they contribute most effectively to the education of character and tend to organise youth's psychological and physical experience. In this sense they are powerful factors of sex education.

Only if these methods are used in the family will the impact of the parents' talks with their children be made easier and more effective. If these conditions are not observed, if the child's feeling towards individuals and the community is not cultivated, if a scheduled routine and sports are not organised, no talks, however clever and timely, will be of any use.

These talks should always be well-timed to fit a definite occasion. Never hold such talks in advance, never lecture a child in advance without having something definite to go on in regard to his behaviour. At the same time no departure from the normal in such behaviour, however slight the occasion may be, should be overlooked or neglected if you do not wish to be confronted eventually with a *fait accompli*.

The occasion for such talks should be: free and cynical conversations and expressions, a heightened interest in other people's domestic scandals, a suspicious and unwholesome attitude towards loving couples, frivolous friendships with girls plainly indicative of a simple sexual interest, lack of respect for women, a passion for clothes, early coquetry, and an interest in books which deal too openly with sexual relations.

At a later age these talks may take a wider form, revealing and analysing things, showing more positive ways of handling the problem, and pointing to the example of other boys and girls.

At an earlier age these talks should be briefer and sometimes given in a tone of direct prohibition and reproach, in the form of a simple demand for more becoming behaviour.

A much more effective form of influence in comparison with talks is parental comments involving strangers whose behaviour raises problems of a sexual nature. In such comments the parents are able to freely express their condemnation or disgust, showing that they expect a different pattern of conduct from their son or daughter, and are so confident of this that they have no need to speak about their own children. In such a case you should never say: "Never do that, it's bad," but better put it this way: "I know you wouldn't do that, you're not that kind."

## EXTRACT FROM THE ARTICLE "THE FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S UPBRINGING"*

In this brief talk I want to touch on some of the basic questions of education which are worrying most of us. In this respect our talk may serve a useful purpose in helping us to define our attitude towards this most important sphere. After my book *The Road to Life* appeared, all kinds of people from different walks of life started calling on me, among them teachers, people young and not so young, who were seeking new Soviet moral standards, and wished to apply them in their own lives. These people came to me for advice.

One day a young scientist, a geologist, comes to me and says, "I am offered the Caucasus or Siberia for my scientific work—which place shall I chose?" I answered, "Go where the work is hardest." He went to the Pamirs, and the other day I received a letter from him thanking me for the advice I gave him.

With the publication of *A Book for Parents* the people who started calling on me were parents who had failed to do their job. Indeed, why should a parent who has good chil-

* A. S. Makarenko read a lecture on this subject to an audience of readers at the offices of the magazine *Obshchestvennitsa* (*The Social Woman Worker*) in July 1938. The lecture is printed here in abridged form.—*Ed.*

dren call on me? The kind that call are like that Father and Mother who introduced themselves with the words:

"We are both Party members, social workers. I'm an engineer, she's a schoolteacher, and we had a good son, but now we can't manage him at all. He's rude to his mother, he keeps late hours, and things disappear from the house. What are we to do? We bring him up well, he has every attention, a room to himself. He had all the toys he needed, all the clothes and shoes, all kinds of entertainment. And now too (he's fifteen), if he wants to go to a cinema or the theatre, he can go, if he wants a bicycle, he gets a bicycle. Just look at us—we're normal people, there can be no question of any bad hereditary streak. Why have we such a bad son?"

"Do you make the child's bed?" I asked the Mother. "Always?"

"Yes, always."

"Didn't it ever occur to you to tell him to make his own bed?"

Then I tackled the Father.

"Do you shine your son's boots?"

"I do."

"Good-day to you," I said, "and don't waste your time and other people's. Sit down on a quiet seat in the boulevard and try to remember what you have been doing with your son and ask yourselves who's to blame for having made him what he is. You'll find the right answer then and the right way of improving your son."

What kind of son can you expect of parents who clean his boots for him and whose Mother makes his bed for him every morning?

I shall devote the second volume of *A Book for Parents* to this question—why it is that sensible people, people who can work well, study well and have even received a higher education, that is to say, people of normal intelligence and abilities, who are capable of managing institutions, departments, factories or other enterprises, who are capable of



maintaining normal relations, comradely, friendly and every other kind, with a great variety of people—why these people, faced with the problem of their own son, fail to grasp the simplest things. The reason is that in such cases they lose that common sense, that practical experience, that very intelligence and wisdom which they had accumulated during their life. They stand baffled before their children like "abnormal" people who are incapable of grasping even trivial things. Why is that? The one and only reason is love for one's child. Love is the greatest of feelings, which works miracles, makes new people, creates the greatest human values.

Put more precisely, our conclusion boils down to this: Love requires a certain dosage, like quinine or food. No one can eat twenty pounds of bread and pride himself on having had a good meal. Love, too, requires dosage, a measure.

Whatever aspect of education we may take, we shall always come up against this question of measure, or, to be more exact, an average mean. The word average strikes our ear unpleasantly. What is a mean, what is an average person? Many educators, who live and think "ecstatically", have pointed this out to me as being a mistake. If you recommend a mean, they say, you will be educating an average person, one neither wicked nor good, neither talented nor mediocre, neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring.

This kind of argument did not put me off. I started to verify myself—was I mistaken, was I not educating such average people, and in saying that there should be a mean in my pedagogical method was I not producing dull, uninteresting average people capable of living happily but incapable of creating anything great or of experiencing the highest human intellectual emotions? I verified this in practice, and after thirty-two years' activities as a schoolteacher and educator, and eight years' experience in the Dzerzhinsky Labour Commune, I have come to the conclusion that this method is correct and applicable to family upbringing.

Some other word can be substituted for the word "mean", but as a matter of principle it should always be borne in mind when dealing with the problem of upbringing. We must create a real man, one capable of great deeds and great emotions, capable, on the one hand, of becoming a hero of our epoch, and on the other, a person who is not an unpractical "lamb" capable of giving away everything he has and boasting, "See what a good person I am." Even our ideal, which is unchallengeable, contains the principle of a certain mean, a certain measure, a certain dose. And I understood why the word "mean" does not put me off. Of course, if one were to say that the mean is a mixture of black and white, then you would be right–mix black paint with white and you will get grey. Such a mean would really seem to be a shocking thing. But if you leave word-hunting alone and simply think of the human being, you will see at once what kind of person we consider the best, the ideal type of human being, such as we would wish our own children to be. And if we do not get off on a side track, if we do not indulge in needless verbal "philosophy", we shall always be able to say what we want our children to be. Everyone will say, "I want my son to be capable of great deeds, I want him to be a real Man with a great soul, great passions, desires, ambitions, and at the same time I do not want him to be a silly softy who can give everything away because he is so good and kind, and be left a beggar and make his wife and children beggars, losing even his spiritual wealth in the process of being so kind."

The human happiness which our great proletarian Revolution has won, and which will increase from year to year, should belong to everybody, and I, the individual, have a right to that happiness. I want to be a hero and perform great deeds, I want to give the state and the community as much as I possibly can, and at the same time I want to be a happy man. This is what our children should be. They should be able to abandon themselves when need be without a backward look, without regret, without running a



bookkeeping account of their actions with entries for happiness or sorrow, but, on the other hand, they should be happy.

I haven't fully verified this, unfortunately, but this is what I see: the best children are to be found with parents who are happy. By happy parents I do not mean a flat with gas, a bath and all other conveniences. Not at all. I see many people who have a five-roomed flat with gas, with hot and cold water, and two domestic servants, but who are unlucky with their children. Either the wife has deserted, or the husband has deserted, or something has gone wrong at work, or they want a sixth room, or a bungalow in the country. On the other hand, I see many happy people who go without many things that they need. I see this in my own life, too, but I am a very happy man. My happiness did not depend on any of the so-called good things of life. Recollect the best days of your own life, when you were short of this, and didn't yet have that, but there was a spiritual unity, a moral strength, a forward urge.

The full possibility of such pure happiness, its necessity and obligatoriness have been won by our Revolution and are guaranteed by the Soviet system. Our people's happiness lies in their unity, in their devotion to the Party. One must be honest both in thought and deed, because an indispensable prerequisite of happiness is the confidence that you are living rightly, that you have behind your back neither meanness, nor swindling, nor cunning, nor scheming, nor any other kind of nastiness. The happiness of such a candid, honest person yields a large interest both to himself and more still to his children. Therefore, allow me say this to you: if you want to have good children, be happy. Work your head off, use all your skill and talents, enlist your friends and acquaintances, do everything you can to be happy with real human happiness. It sometimes happens that a person aspiring to happiness gets hold of some stones to be used to build that happiness with. I made that mistake myself at one time. It seemed to me that if I got hold of that thing, it wouldn't be happiness yet, but happiness could be

14—2407

built up on it afterwards. These foundation stones on which you plan to build the future palace of happiness very often come tumbling down on your head and turn out to be simply a misfortune.

It is not difficult to conceive that happy parents, parents who are happy in their social activities, in their culture, and their life, and who are able to command this happiness, will always have good children and will always bring them up properly.

Here we have the root of the problem as formulated by me at the very beginning, namely, that there must be a mean in our pedagogical practice as well. This mean lies between *our main job given to society and our happiness, which is what we take from society.* Whatever method of family upbringing you take, you must find the right measure, and to do that you must cultivate in yourself a sense of proportion.

Let us take the most difficult question (I see that people consider it the most difficult)—that of discipline. Strictness and kindness—this is the most vexed question.

In most cases people are unable to regulate the limits of kindness and strictness, and this, in upbringing, is an essential qualification. Very often we find people who understand this, but think: to be sure, there must be a limit to strictness and a limit to kindness, but these are necessary when the child is six or seven, and until then you can do without them. As a matter of fact the essential elements of upbringing are those that are applied up to the age of five, and what you have done up till five is ninety per cent of the whole educative process. The person's education, his conditioning, continue after that, but generally speaking you begin to enjoy the fruits, whereas the flowers that you tended appeared before the age of five. Therefore, up to the age of five, the question of the measure of kindness and strictness is the most important question. Very often a child is allowed to be capricious and he screams the livelong day, or else he is not allowed to cry at all. Another child will be fidgety, will grab hold of everything, pester you with questions and give you no peace. A third will be reduced to docile obedience and go about like a doll, but that rarely happens with us.



In all these instances you will observe a lack of any standards of strictness and kindness. Of course, even at five, at six, and at seven, there should always be this standard, this golden mean, a certain balanced harmony in the dispensation of strictness and kindness.

People met this argument by saying, "You speak about strictness, but a child can be brought up without any strictness at all. If you do things sensibly and kindly, you will go through life without having to be strict with a child."

By strictness I certainly do not mean anger or hysterical shouts. Strictness is good only when it is free from all traces of hysterics.

In my own practice I learned to be strict while using a very kindly tone. I could, kindly and calmly, with perfect politeness, utter words from which people, my colonists, paled. Strictness does not necessarily imply shouting or screaming. That is unnecessary. Your coolness, your assurance, your firm decision, if you express it kindly, will make a still greater impression. "Get out!" is forcible, but so is saying, "Will you please go away"—the latter perhaps still more so.

The first rule is to set a definite limit, especially as regards the extent of your interference in the life of the child. This is an extremely important question, which is often wrongly handled in the family. What degree of independence and freedom should the child be allowed, to what extent does he need "leading by the hand", what is he allowed to do and not allowed to do?

The boy goes out into the street. You shout, "Don't run here, don't go there." To what extent is this correct? Unlimited freedom for the child, if we can imagine such a thing, is bad. On the other hand, if the child has to get permission for everything he does and do only what you tell him, he has no scope left for his own initiative, for his own resourcefulness and his own risk. That, too, is bad.

I used the word "risk". At seven or eight a child should already be taking risks sometimes in his behaviour, and you should be aware of that risk, and should allow a certain degree of risk, so that your child should learn to be brave and should not fall into the habit of accepting your responsibility for everything he does on the grounds that Mamma said so, that's what Papa said, they know all about it, they know best. Given such a full degree of interference on your part your son will not grow up a real man. Sometimes such a child will grow up a weak-willed person incapable of making his own decisions, incapable of taking risks. Sometimes, on the contrary, he will submit to parental pressure up to a point, and then something will snap, the pent-up forces will burst into the open, and the result will be a family row. "He was such a good boy, I don't know what's happened to him." As a matter of fact something had been happening to him all the time he had been submissive and obedient, but the inherent powers with which nature had endowed him had been developing as he grew up and studied, and now they had begun to take effect. At first his resistance was secret, then it became open.

The other extreme, which is often to be met with, is when people consider that the child should display full initiative and do as he pleases. These people pay no attention whatever to how their children are living and what they are doing. The children get used to uncontrolled living, thinking, and making of decisions. Many people believe this develops strong character. Quite the contrary. Character in such a case does not develop for the simple reason that real strength of character is not merely an ability to desire something and to get it. Among other things, it is an ability to deny oneself something if need be. Will-power is not merely desire and its satisfaction, it is also desire and restraint, desire and its denial at one and the same time. If your child practises only gratification of his desires without practising restraint, he will not have a strong will. There is no machine without a brake, and there can be no will-power without a brake.



My communards were only too familiar with this question. "Why didn't you put the brake on, you knew you had to pull up there," I used to tell them. At the same time I demanded of them: "Why did you let things slide, why didn't you face it out, instead of waiting for me to tell you?"

Children should be taught restraint, the ability to check themselves. This is not so simple, of course. I shall deal with this at length in my book.

At the same time you should develop in the child—and that is not so difficult as you think—another extremely important faculty—the faculty of orientation. This quite often manifests itself in trivial things, in minute details. Impress upon the child from an early age how he is to orient himself. The child is speaking, say. Just then somebody comes in—a stranger, or perhaps not quite a stranger, but some outside element as far as your company, your family are concerned: a visitor, a guest, an aunt or grandmother. The children should know what they may say and what they may not say in such cases (for example, they should not speak about old age in front of elderly people, as this is unpleasant to them. First hear a person out before starting to speak yourself, and so on). This ability on the part of children to take their bearings, and to do so instantaneously, is a very important part of their education, and is not at all difficult to cultivate. It is sufficient to draw attention to two or three instances and talk to your son or daugher about them for your prodding to have the desired effect. The faculty of orientation is very useful and pleasing both to the people around you and to the one who possesses and uses that faculty.

This was a more difficult thing for me in the Commune than it is in the family. There were a lot of children in the Commune and the situation was much more complicated. Everything was always public. Our own people and strangers—engineers, workmen, builders—were constantly coming and going, not to mention regular visitors, excursions, etc. Even so I managed to achieve good results, and similar re-

sults can be achieved still quicker in the family. This ability to sense the changing surroundings is revealed everywhere: a boy running across the road should be able to see what or who is coming; at work he should be able to distinguish safe and dangerous spots. This faculty of orientation helps him to choose the time and place to employ his courage and will, and if need be, to apply the brakes. I am giving you here just a rough idea. Actually, orientation has finer nuances when it comes to real life.

Take such an example. Your children love you and wish to show their love. Here again, the expression of this love is controlled by the same law of action and restraint. How unpleasant it is to see girl friends (it happens most often with them), one of them in the eighth form in one school, the other in the eighth form of another school, who have met only two or three times in their life, perhaps in the country during the summer holidays, and now, on meeting each other, they kiss and fairly languish with love for each other. Do you think they really love each other? More often than not it is sheer imagination, playing at affection, and sometimes this grows into an habitual form of amorous cynicism, an insincere expression of feeling.

You are acquainted with families that have children, and you know how children express their love for their parents. In some families it is a constant kissing and cuddling, constant endearments and expressions of affection, so constant, in fact, that one begins to doubt whether there is genuine love or merely an habitual game behind these outward manifestations.

In other families you will find a chill sort of tone, as if all its members live separate lives. The boy comes in, addresses his father and mother rather coldly, then goes about his business as if there were no love between them. And only on rare pleasant occasions will you catch beneath these outwardly restrained relations a fleeting glance of affection that goes as quickly as it comes. This is a real son, who loves his father and mother. The ability to cultivate, on the



one hand, a real, sincere feeling of affection, and on the other, restraint in the display of such love, so that paraded affection and endearments will not be substituted for the real thing, is an extremely important ability. This ability, this genuine expression of love for one's Father and Mother, can be used to educate a noble human soul.

The communards loved me as one can only love a Father, and yet I achieved this in such a way that no tender words, no tender touches passed between us. Our love was none the poorer for it. The children learned to show their love in a simple, natural, restrained manner. This is important not only because it educates a person outwardly. It is important also because it preserves the force of sincere impulse, builds up restraints which will always come in useful to a person.

Here again we come to that basic principle of standard, a sense of proportion.

This sense of proportion is revealed also in such an intricate and difficult sphere as in questions of business, material relations. Recently a group of women from the same apartment house came to see me. There had been painful happenings in their house. Two families were on friendly terms, and in both families there were children. The boy Yura (he was in the 7th form at school) was suspected of having taken some article or money from his home without permission. The friends knew of this incident.

Now these friends discovered that a set of drawing instruments was missing. Yura was a frequent visitor and considered "one of themselves" in that family. Apart from that boy there was no stranger in the home who could have taken that set. The suspicion fell upon him. And the two families, both of them consisting of cultured people who were fully responsible for their acts, suddenly found themselves engaged in the process of investigations. They had to ascertain beyond a shadow of doubt whether it was Yura who had stolen the set of instruments or not. They were at it for three months. True, they did not call in a police dog or enlist outside assistance, but they made a thorough check up, they in-

terrogated, they raked up witnesses, they conducted secret talks, and made Yura ill. Finally, they began to demand:

"Tell the truth, we shan't punish you."

His father beat his breast, saying, "Have pity on me, I want to know whether my son is a thief or not."

The boy himself was forgotten. The Father became the chief object, one who had to be relieved of his sufferings.

And so they came to me, saying, "What are we to do? We can't go on like this."

I asked them to bring the boy to me. I cannot always tell by a person's eyes whether he stole something or not, but I said to him:

"You didn't steal anything. You didn't take the instrument set and don't let them ask you any more questions about it."

As for the parents, I gave them a piece of my mind. I said:

"Drop all this talk. The set of instruments has gone, it has disappeared, whoever stole it. What's worrying you is whether your son is a thief or not. It's as if you were reading a detective story and were keen to know how it ends, who the thief is. Drop this curiosity. Your son's life is at stake. The boy stole something before this, and maybe he has stolen again this time. He has that inclination, and you must educate him. But this incident must be forgotten. Don't torment yourselves and the boy."

In some cases, if you have found the child stealing, and you can prove it, and feel you must talk to him about it, then do so. But if you have nothing to go on besides suspicion, if you are not sure that he has stolen the thing then defend him against all outside suspicions. But be vigilant and take more careful notice of your child.

A girl in the Labour Commune, a former prostitute, was actually guilty of stealing. I was sure of it. I saw that all the other children were sure of it, too, and she looked embarrassed. I had the last word. I knew that she was so used to stealing, it was such a customary thing with her, that if we told her, "You ought to be ashamed of yourself", it would make no impression on her whatever. And so, at the Com-



manders' Council, where they were all serious people, I said, "Leave the girl alone. I am sure that she has stolen nothing, and, besides, you have no proofs."

They shouted quite a lot, but what I said went. They let her go.

And what do you think—that girl was very upset at first and kept glancing at me gravely, with deep distress. She was no fool either. It was pretty clear to her. How could I believe her, did I really believe her? Was I playing or was I so deeply convinced?

Whenever I had the chance I gave her errands of responsibility to fulfil. This went on for a month. The girl lived through the pain of this honour method. After a month she came to me and broke down.

"I'm so grateful to you. Everyone accused me and you were the only one who took my part. Everyone believed I had stolen, and you were the only one who didn't believe it."

I told her, "It *was* you who stole it. I knew it all the time. But now you won't steal any more. I shan't tell anybody about this. You have stolen nothing, and this talk has not taken place between us."

Naturally, she never stole any more after that.

Moves like this are not lies, they are based on a sense of proportion, and should be applied in the family as well. Truthfulness can sometimes be overdone. Children should always be told the truth—that is a proper rule on the whole, but there are occasions when they have to be told an untruth. In those cases when you know the child to be a thief but are not sure of it, keep it to yourself. And in some cases when you are sure of it and have proofs, play a game of trust. It is merely a sense of proportion. Where the child's personality is concerned you have no right to express your feelings, your indignation, your mind without a sense of proportion.

To bring up children not to steal is the easiest thing in the world. Much more difficult is it to educate character, such as courage, restraint, an ability to control one's feelings, an ability to overcome obstacles. To educate a respect

for things (not to take them) is easiest of all. If good order prevails in your family and the Father and Mother always know where things lie, there will never be any theft in your home. But when you don't know yourself where you have put things, when you toss money on to a cupboard or into the sideboard or put a purse away under a pillow and forget about it, your children may begin to steal. Once things are disorderly at home, the child cannot but be aware of such disorder. He sees that the whole system of things in the household is given cursory attention on your part, and he is sure that if he takes some trifle amid this disorderly system you will not notice it.

The first case of theft by a child is not theft at all. It is "taking something without permission". Afterwards it becomes a habit, and then it is theft. If your child knows exactly what he may take without permission and what he may not, that means your child will never steal. Take a simple thing like a pastry left over from dinner or after a party; it lies in the sideboard, unlocked, and nobody says you mustn't take it. If the child takes it furtively, without asking permission, that is theft. If it is made a rule in the home that the children will not take that pastry without permission, that is a good thing. It is good if they do not have to beg for a thing, but simply let you know they have taken it. In such an event thieving will not develop.

If, on the other hand, you prohibit everything, and the child will ask for the pastry with the feeling of a person to whom it may and may not be given, this, too, may develop thieving tendencies. If you allow the child to take or take out anything, or if he is not allowed to take anything, if he has no will of his own and must get permission for everything he does, in both these cases he is liable to develop the habit of stealing.

Moreover, it is important that everything in the house should be clean and tidy, without unnecessary or broken things lying about all over the place. This is extremely important, far more important than you may think. If the house is cluttered with things, which you can't bring yourself to throw away either because they are of some material or sentimental value, if you leave fragments of old dresses and rugs lying about only because there is nowhere else to put them, you are tending to cultivate habits of untidiness and a lack of responsibility for things. If your house contains only things that are really necessary, or in any way useful and pleasant, if there are no shabby, worn out odds and ends lying about the place, the habit of theft will breed with difficulty. This responsibility, expressed in your attention to some thing you have installed or thrown away when no longer needed, this responsibility for a thing is cultivated in the child as well, in whom it assumes the form of regard for a thing and guarantees immunity from theft.

I have spoken about what I consider to be the most important thing in our educative work, namely, a sense of proportion in love and strictness, in kindness and severity, in your attitude towards things and the household. This is one of the basic principles upon which I insist.

Only by such a method of upbringing, I emphasise, will you be able to rear people capable of exercising great patience without complaint or tears, and capable of performing great deeds, because, by such an upbringing, you will be cultivating will-power.

## QUESTIONS ANSWERED

*Question*: We all have our troubles and we are all anxious to talk to A. S. Makarenko about them.

I have two boys. The conditions of upbringing are the same, but the boys are different. One is not interested in money, the other cannot see money without wanting to take it. Locks are no help. Ours is a working family and the parents get on well together. If you leave the jam out he is sure to eat it up. If you leave a purse containing thirty or forty rubles he will take it all to the last kopek.

He is a good boy. He will take nothing that belongs to other people, and will give away his own things. I just don't know how to handle him. His father gets angry when you speak about it. The boy is sixteen, but is physically developed like a boy of eighteen. The elder is a member of the Komsomol, but this one is not interested in the Komsomol. He is very good-looking. He likes girls. He doesn't want to learn and has been making poor progress at school since the first class. He passes up only with "satisfactory" marks. He hates work, but tries his hand at everything.

"Do you want to learn?"

"I do."

"Then why don't you?"

He doesn't answer.

"If you don't want to learn, then go to work. What are you out for in life, generally?"

"I don't know."

He's fond of football. Comes home at three in the morning.

"Where were you?"

"Ask no questions and you'll be told no lies."

He's rude at home, but not rude to strangers. And this stealing business, too. What are we to do about it? His father says he didn't take anything, and I say he did. His father tries the honour method, but nothing comes of it.

Now he has passed up into the ninth form.

*Answer*: Why have you met failure in bringing up your younger son?

It is impossible to answer your question without seeing the boy. If I could meet him and have a chat with him I could give you some advice, but not knowing the situation in your family, not knowing your mistakes, mistakes of tone and others, not knowing your acquaintances and mode of life, I cannot take the responsibility of giving you any definite advice.

Judging from the facts, though, I must say the outlook is not very comforting. In *A Book for Parents* I have tried to deal with a single subject–how to bring up a child prop-



erly. But neither in the book nor in my talk here today have I attempted to deal with the subject of re-education. For the family this is an exceedingly difficult job. To re-educate a child you must change the whole tone of the collective in which he lives. In the commune your son would have been the easiest boy, inasmuch as he is literate, normal and good-looking, but in your family you are really at a loss what to do with him. You beat about, you try this and that. But I am sure that if you invited me to your home and we discussed things with you, we would work something out. I have many such homes which I visit in the capacity of pedagogical consultant. This is important for me too, as it extends my field of observation. Please don't stand on ceremony with me, I shall be only too pleased to give you my advice and assistance. It is to our mutual benefit.

*Question*: I have a girl of six. I should like to bring her up to be a brave good girl, but in spite of all my efforts and the care I have taken not to frighten the child, she is nevertheless a timid, nervous thing. When she goes to bed she always asks, "What kind of dreams will I have?" As if she were afraid of having dreams. She wakes up when she has dreams.

In what way can I cultivate courage in the child? I have tried hard but without result.

*Answer:* You ask how can you counter-act the girl's timidity?

You have nothing to be afraid of. Girls of six are usually hypersensitive and nervous. A girl who's timid at six or seven will often be a holy terror at eleven.

Aren't there some neighbours or somebody in the family who tells her creepy tales? What is she afraid of?

I can't imagine what type of fear this is. Perhaps it's just fancy? Sometimes it's due to a very strongly developed imagination.

A doctor would be more helpful here. What you tell me is not enough to enable me to determine the nature of the girl's behaviour. I can't very well speak about the girl with-

out having met her. Allow me to call on you, or better still consult a neurologist.

*Question*: What's to be done in such a case. At home you tell the boy what he may and what he may not do. You teach him good habits. And you let him go with other boys, that is to say, you place no restrictions on his being in the company of other boys, although you know he keeps company with all kinds of children, you know that he may learn bad language, and that the boys talk among themselves about thieving and what not. You can't very well keep the child indoors, just to sit there and be looked at, and deprive him of all fun. To let him go is dangerous because he can pick up all kinds of nasty things from the children in our yard.

*Answer*: The question is a difficult one—how to safeguard a child from harmful outside influences. A well-known French politician once visited the Soviet Union and came to see our Commune. He liked the Commune very much. He wept while the communards' band was playing Beethoven. He couldn't imagine former "street arabs" playing Beethoven to him. He decided to make their closer acquaintance.

"It's all very well," he said, "but one thing I can't agree with, and that's how you can allow good normal children to be brought up together with former thieves and little vagrants."

My answer was brief.

"And how is it in life—don't the good people live side by side with the bad?"

We cannot rear children to live only in the society of ideal people. If you bring up a boy like that he will go under the moment he finds himself in such society. Your child should get used to the society of all kinds of people. He should be able both to get on with people and to resist them, and the more he is surrounded by all conditions of life the better for him. To isolate him and keep him indoors may cause great harm. He will get so used to the family incubator, that anyone will be able to get round him and take him in. You should cultivate resistance. There is an excellent method



for doing this, and that is the tone of your family. If there is a real good tone in your family, if you possess authority, if the boy believes that his mother is the most beautiful, the justest, the neatest, the jolliest and at the same time the most serious of women, then there is no need for you to try to persuade him that you are a paragon to him, and your word is law. Once you begin trying persuasion, he thinks: "She can't be such a paragon, once she is trying to persuade me." Speak quite simply: "You ought to know that this is not done." If, nevertheless, he has misbehaved, demand of him: "Explain yourself." Let him explain his behaviour to you, and not you to him. This moment of command, unconditional and peremptory—"you must not"—will be your son's first step towards acquiring the faculty of resistance.

If the boy your son plays with is a bad boy, you should not forbid your son to play with him, but should get closer to that boy, find out in what way he is bad, and when and how that badness expresses itself. Don't try to persuade or argue with that boy, but impress him with your assurance, your calmness, so that your son should see that you are not trembling for fear that he will become bad too. This is not so much a thing of the mind and the heart, as it is of the eye as well, an ability to help your son and strange children if need be. You will find that your son will confidently follow your lead, and then evil influences need not be feared, as he will easily overcome them.

*Question:* My boy is in the fourth form at school. He treats his parents wonderfully. If he's not well he will never bother his mother during the night. "You're tired, I'll get up myself," he says. He's a disciplined child. At school the teacher seats undisciplined children next to him. I have nothing against that. The trouble is the child is developing a disagreeable trait of character. He comes home and says, "D'you know, my '*charge*' received excellent marks today for a change. I suppose they'll put him at another desk and give me Petrov or Ivanov. I'll have to take this one in tow too."

I'm not so sure whether this kind of thing is good for him,

and I don't know how to explain to him that he's not a schoolteacher yet, he's only a little boy.

Another case. In a family I know of there was a boy growing up. I know him from the age of eighteen months. He had the makings of a good boy. His father was an actor, his mother a housewife. The father died when the boy was twelve. For a time he remained a good boy. His sister is a very pretty girl. When she was little her brother cared for her. Now he doesn't care either for her or his mother. Why is it that after the father's death the boy suddenly changed his behaviour, and now, at sixteen, is a rude, cheeky young cub? Mind you, the mother was very fond of the children and gave everything she had to them. Now, too, she'll go without eating in order to feed her son.

*Answer*: If the mother stints herself everything, and even gives her food away to her son, this is the worst kind of crime. A son should give his food away to his mother, he should stint himself for his mother's sake. But in the family you are speaking of, it is for the mother to start the struggle. It is a difficult struggle.

I am for children offering their seats to adults in public vehicles. This is correct, but very often you have to argue about it with parents. I am for the parents getting all that's best in the family, enjoying priority over the children. If you have a length of silk, mother should make herself a dress out of it. If you have a hundred rubles and the question arises of who is to take a trip along the Volga-Moscow Canal—the parents or the children, the best answer is the parents first, the children second. This does not imply that you no longer care for the children. You can care for them by all means, but in such a way that they will be quite persuaded in their heart that the parents come first.

I have heard this kind of reasoning. A Komsomol girl, and an excellent pupil at that, tells her mother when discussing the question of a new dress, "What do you want a dress for? You're thirty-eight, how long more have you got to live, but I am young, I want to live!"



I have no daughter of my own, but my niece lived in my home and was brought up by me. If my wife had four dresses and my niece two, I insisted on my wife making herself a fifth dress, while the girl could wait for her third. I would suggest that girls up to sixteen should have only inexpensive dresses. When a girl finishes secondary school she can have a simple dress, real silk. There should be a fixed limit of two or three inexpensive dresses, which the girl should mend and iron herself, and have them remade if she likes. If a girl-friend has made herself a smart expensive dress, that is no reason for demanding one as well. A girl should be made to feel proud of the fact that she has a simple inexpensive dress and that she had let her mother have preference.

As for your son, the boy-teacher, what can I do against a whole school and its teaching staff? They are learned people there, they know what they are doing.

I used to have my communards supervise the more backward pupils too. But the thing should be staged differently. I never used to tell a communard that he was better and the other worse. I used to say, "You didn't do this and that, so I am giving you an extra job. Take on this backward pupil and see that you make a go of it. If you don't you will answer for it." With the question put in this form the pupil who gave another a helping hand did not feel himself to be a teacher. He was simply doing a job he had been told to do.

In your case it is a mistake not to have other boys in the class doing the same thing as your son is doing. By helping one another no one will imagine himself a teacher. It depends entirely on the style of the teacher's work. You can't lay down a single rule. It's bad if your son gives himself airs, very bad. He should be told, "Your teacher is on the wrong track—you need taking in tow a bit yourself."

## EXTRACT FROM THE ARTICLE "EDUCATION IN THE FAMILY AND AT SCHOOL"*

The education of children in the family and at school is such a vast subject that it would take more than an evening's talk to deal with it more or less adequately. In a single evening we can touch only on some of the principal problems. On one of the most important of them I am, perhaps, no specialist. You will ask—why? You will see that after I have told you briefly about myself.

I am a teacher. A teacher since the age of seventeen. For the first sixteen years I worked in a railway school. I am the son of a workingman and worked as a teacher at the same factory where my father was employed. I worked there sixteen years. It was under the old regime, in the old school.

I was a teacher, and then superintendent of a factory school attended by the children of an industrial community. I was myself a member of the workers' community, member of a working-class family. Both my pupils and their parents were part of this industrial community.

* A. S. Makarenko spoke on this subject at the Teachers' Club in Moscow on February 8, 1939.—*Ed.*



Consequently, I had very great opportunities. Here in Moscow I should say you have less opportunities, since you unite children on a territorial basis. Their parents do not belong to the same single workers' community. You probably have less opportunities for a family approach than I had. On the other hand, you enjoy splendid facilities provided by the Soviet system. I had no such facilities. The Russia of my time was the old autocratic Russia.

After the Revolution my life followed a pattern that kept me away from the family. For sixteen years I worked with children who had no parents, no family. I hardly ever met any parents.

Lately, though, I have come closer to the family again, but my chief work during the Soviet years was performed in institutions whose charges recognised no family "on principle".

I remember a curious incident, which took place under interesting circumstances.

Some film studio sent a cameraman down to take pictures of the Dzerzhinsky Commune near Kharkov. He was a spry old fellow, one of those smart, efficient chaps who have an eye for everything.

He was delighted with the Commune. He liked everything there. Well, we were sitting in my office, talking, when all of a sudden a man burst into the room, a fairly cultured looking man, who must have come straight off a train. He was covered with dust and breathing hard.

"I've come from Melitopol. I heard that my son Vasya Stolyarov is living here."

"So he is."

"Well, I'm his father. He ran away from home. I've been looking for him these last six months, and now I got word he is here, and I've come for him."

The man was excited and his voice shook.

"Very well. Call Vasya, will you."

In comes Vasya. A boy of fourteen. He'd been in the Commune six months. A trim figure in uniform, he knew

how to stand, and looked fine, everything as it should be. He comes in, stands there and says:

"You sent for me?"

"Yes, your father has come."

"My father?"

Here all form is thrown to the winds. They fall on each other's necks, hug and kiss each other. The real thing—Father loves son, son loves Father.

The kissing and hugging over, the boy becomes his trim old self. Says the Father:

"Will you let him go with me?"

"I don't mind, it's for him to say. If he wants to go he can go."

And that same boy, who had just been weeping for joy, reddens, becomes grave, looks at me, and shakes his head, saying:

"I don't want to go."

"Why not? Isn't he your father?"

"Just the same I won't go."

His father turns pale.

"What do you mean you won't go?"

"I won't."

"But why?"

"I won't go, and that's all."

"Why don't you want to go? Isn't he your father?"

The Father begins to lose his temper.

"You're going with me whether you want to or not."

Here my commanders butt in.

"You can't make anybody go with you here. He's a communard and he's free to do as he wants."

The Father sinks into an armchair. Hysterics. General commotion. Gradually we bring him round, give him some water to drink. After a while he calms down and says, "Call Vasya."

"No, not this time."

"But I only want to say good-bye to him."



I send my messenger.

"Ask Vasya whether he wants to say good-bye to his father?"

In comes Vasya. More tears, hugging, kissing. When it's all over, Vasya asks, "May I go?"

"You may."

He goes, and I sit with his father another couple of hours, looking at him. He sits in the armchair, sighing, weeping, calming down, and then weeping again. Finally he goes away without his Vasya.

The most "dramatic" part of this incident was my cameraman's reaction. The scene had sent him into raptures. Himself singularly unemotional, he had contrived during this love passage between Father and son to shoot the whole scene, and he was very pleased with himself.

"We cameramen get such a stroke of luck once in a blue moon."

There are good families and bad families. You can never be sure that a family will provide a proper upbringing. Nor can we say that a family can provide any kind of upbringing it wishes. We should organise family upbringing, and the basis of this organisation should be the school, which stands for state education. The school should guide the family.

The question is, how? To send for parents and tell them: "Do something about it!"—is no guidance.

To send for parents, throw up your hands, and say: "Ah, what a bad job you are making of this!" is no good either.

How can you help, what can you do? An unsatisfactory parent, that is to say, a parent who is unable to bring up his child properly, can always be taught, just as you can train a teacher.

Incidentally, comrades, many parents as well as teachers do not know how to speak to a child. You must train your voice. Unfortunately, this voice discipline is not taught at our teachers' colleges and higher schools. I would make it

incumbent on every higher school and college to have a good specialist who knows how to train voices. This is very important.

I wasn't very good at it myself at the beginning. What's the matter, I thought. I sought the advice of an experienced actor.

"Your voice needs training."

"What do you mean? Have I got to sing?"

"Not to sing, but to speak."

I took some lessons from him and after a while it dawned on me what a big thing this voice training was. It is very important what kind of tone you use. "You may go" is a simple phrase, but this simple phrase, these three words, can be spoken in fifty different ways. And each time you can introduce a note that will have a stinging effect, if you intend it to act that way.

This is a very difficult thing. If your voice hasn't been trained, you will find it hard. Teachers and parents would be all the better for having their voices trained. Some of them permit themselves the luxury of letting their voices reflect their mood. This is impermissible. No matter what your mood may be, your voice should always be real, genuine, firm.

Your mood has nothing whatever to do with your voice. How do you know what state of mind I am in now? Maybe I am miserable. Or maybe I am experiencing some great joy. But I have to speak to you in a way that will command attention. Every parent, every teacher, before speaking to a child, should tune himself up a bit and get rid of his mood. And that is not so difficult.

After having lived for three years in a forest with bandits prowling around us, what moods could there be? How could I give rein to my moods under these conditions? I was accustomed to control my moods and found this very easy. You must, in certain cases, make your face, your eyes, your voice, act independently, as it were. An educator must have



a "parade look" on his face. It is desirable that parents should have it too.

Let us assume that you have received an unpleasant letter, perhaps even one from a beloved person. Does that mean that a month of pedagogical effort is to be ruined on account of that unpleasant letter? On account of a beloved person, who, maybe, is not worth it, and probably it is a good thing on the whole that that letter was written?

The training of the voice, facial expression, the ability to stand up and sit down—all this is very important indeed for the educator. Every trifle matters, and they are trifles that can be taught to parents.

The other day a parent came to me and said, "I am a Communist, a worker. I have a son. He's disobedient. I tell him to do something—he doesn't obey. I tell him a second time—he doesn't obey. I tell him a third time, and still he doesn't obey. What am I to do with him?"

I offered my visitor a seat and started talking with him.

"Come on, now, show me how you speak to your son."

"Like this."

"Now try this way."

"Doesn't work."

"Try again."

I kept him at it for half an hour until he learned how to give orders. It was merely a question of using the right tone of voice.

Assistance to parents on the part of the school is possible only when the school is a single, united collective, which knows what it wants of its pupils and is firm in its demands.

This is one form of assistance to parents. There are other forms as well. You should study family life, you should study the causes of bad traits of character. I shall not enumerate here all the methods of helping the family.

The next question. I put forward the thesis that a real family should be a good economic unit. The child should be a member of this economic unit from the earliest age. He

should know where the family's money comes from, what it buys, and why you can buy this but not that, and so on.

The child should become a participant in the life of this economic unit as early as possible, at the age of five. He should be responsible for the household. Responsible not in a formal way, of course, but with the conveniences of his own life and the life of the family. If things are bad in the household, they will be bad in his life, too. This problem needs dealing with.

And finally, comrades, the last question, perhaps the most difficult of all—that of happiness.

People usually say: We, the Mother and Father, devote our lives to our child, give him everything, and sacrifice even our own happiness for his sake.

This is the most terrible present that parents can give to a child. It is such a terrible present that we can only recommend parents—if you wish to poison your child, give him a large dose of your own happiness, and he will be poisoned.

The question should be put this way: no sacrifices, never, on no account. On the contrary, the child should give precedence to his parents.

You know the habit some girls have of saying to their mothers, "You have had your life, but I haven't had anything yet."

And this, mind you, to a Mother who may be only thirty years old.

"You have had your life and I haven't lived yet, therefore for me everything, for you nothing."

A girl should say to herself, "I have all my life before me, but Mamma has less to live."

Therefore, in the fourth volume of *A Book for Parents* I am going to write in black and white: new dresses should first go to mothers.

Children will no longer feel resentful if you bring them up in a desire to make their parents happy. Let the children think of their parents' happiness first of all; what the parents



think is not the children's business. We are grownup people, we know what we think.

If you have money to spare and are thinking whom to buy a dress—Mother or daughter, I say, only the Mother.

The Father and Mother should have the first right to happiness as far as their children are concerned. There is no sense, either for mothers or daughters, still less for the state, to rear consumers of maternal happiness. The most terrible thing is to bring up children at the expense of their mother's or father's happiness.

In our Commune we spent 200,000 rubles a year on outings and holidays and 40,000 on tickets to the theatre. We didn't stint ourselves, as you see. But when we had new clothes made there was a rule that the little ones got their clothes from the older ones. And they knew, did these little ones, that the new clothes were not for them. They could only count on getting altered clothes. True, we could have let the older children wear their clothes out and then throw them away, but we did not do this. The older children wore their clothes for a short time, and then these were altered to fit the younger ones.

What are you going to give a girl at seventeen or eighteen, if at fourteen you dressed her in silks?

What is the sense in giving a young girl such a head start? The result of this is she begins to reason like this: "I have only one dress, while you (that is, her mother) have three dresses."

Children should be brought up to care for their parents; a simple natural desire should be bred in them to deny themselves their own pleasures until those of their father or mother have been gratified.

Well, comrades, that is about all I wanted to say. Will there be any questions?

A voice from the audience: "Does the Dzerzhinsky Commune still exist, and if it does, who is in charge of it, and what connections do you now have with it?"

The Dzerzhinsky Commune existed another two years after I left it, and then it was liquidated. Why? Because the older pupils had gone out to study in the higher schools, and the factory that had been set up there was taken over by the appropriate government department. All the communards were discharged with honour. I am in touch with my communards.

I must say, though, that this contact is becoming a source of worry to me. There are so many of them, and though I remember them all, I don't remember who married whom and how many children they have. And this is a thing you can't avoid when writing letters.

Do you know, comrades, I spend one whole day a week answering my mail. It's very difficult for me. Still, I always bear in mind that these people have no relatives in the world besides me. It's only natural that they turn to me, though such a heavy mail as I get can be very embarrassing at times.

When one of my former pupils comes to Moscow, say, he comes to me straight from the railway station. Sometimes for as long as a month. He comes and announces open-heartedly, "I've come to stay with you a month, Anton Semyonovich!" I'm horrified. After all, there's my wife to think of. She can't be expected to run a regular hotel. I don't grudge my guests the food they will eat, that's not the point. It's the extra work and trouble.

"All right, since you've come you can stay. Galya, here's a new arrival."

"Who's that?"

"Victor Bogdanovich."

"How do you do, Victor."

Three days later the guest starts:

"I think I'd better go to a hotel."

"What for? Can't you stay here?"

Three days later he starts again:

"I think I'd better take a trip to Leningrad."

"Why should you? Live here."



And when he leaves we are sorry to part with him.

"Couldn't you get a transfer to Moscow? You could work here and live with us."

The thing is that most of them have turned out good people. For all its discomforts, this contact is nevertheless a source of genuine joy to me. True, I have lost touch with some of these people.

On the occasion of my being awarded a medal I received a radiogram from Wrangel Island, signed by Mitya Zheveli. You know him from my book *The Road to Life*.

Today I received a letter—one of congratulations too—signed: "Engineer Order-Bearer Orisenko (Gud)".

Voice from the audience: "What is your opinion about corporal punishment?"

I am against the use of physical methods, and always have been. I strongly object to corporal punishment as a method of education. I have yet to see the family where corporal punishment has done any good.

I do not have in mind those cases when a mother slaps a two- or three-year-old. The child will not even understand what it is all about. And the Mother will simply be making a display of her own temper rather than punishing the child. But to hit a boy of twelve or thirteen is to acknowledge one's utter impotence to deal with him. It means, perhaps, breaking off good relations with him once for all.

At the Dzerzhinsky Commune there was never any fighting among the children. I remember one incident. We were returning to the Crimea from Batumi by boat. We occupied the whole upper deck. We were great favourites. All were prettily dressed, we had a fine band, and we gave concerts on board. The passengers and the crew took a great liking to us. One morning, at breakfast, just before we reached Yalta, one of the older boys hit a younger comrade over the head with a tin can. This was unheard of. I was dumbfounded. What was to be done? Suddenly I heard the bugle sounding the signal for general assembly.

"What's this?"
"The duty commander's orders."
"What for?"
"You'd order it just the same."
"All right." We all assembled. What's to be done? It was moved that the culprit should be set ashore at Yalta and dismissed for good.
I saw there were no objections. So I said, "What's this, are you joking or are you serious? How can you do such a thing? He's to blame, of course, he hit a comrade, but you can't just kick a person out of the Commune for it."
"What's there to talk about, put it to the vote."
"Wait a minute," I said.
Then the chairman gets up and says:
"There's a proposal to ask Anton Semyonovich to sit down."
And would you believe it, they voted me out of order. I said to them:
"We're in the field, and I'm your commander. I can put you all under arrest for five hours if I want. This is not the Commune for you, where I discuss things with you. How can you tell me to sit down?"
"All right, have your say then."
But there was nothing to say. The motion was put to the vote. Everyone voted unanimously for it. Another motion was carried that anyone who went to see the boy off need not come back.
A delegation came hurrying up from the passengers and the crew. They asked that the boy should be forgiven.
"No, we know what we are doing."
At Yalta no one went ashore. They had all been looking forward eagerly to do some sightseeing there, but not a single person left the ship. Our duty-man said to the boy curtly, "Go on."
And the boy went.
On our arrival in Kharkov we found him waiting for us on the square outside the station. Our communards were



busy loading their luggage on to the lorries. The duty-man told him to get out of the way.
He went away. Three days later he turned up at the Commune and wanted to see me. The doorkeeper, one of the boys, refused to let him pass.
"You're letting others pass."
"I'll let everybody pass except you."
"Then call Anton Semyonovich out."
"I'll do nothing of the kind."
Nevertheless they called me out.
"What do you want?"
"Call the general meeting."
"All right."
He sat in my room until the evening. In the evening the general meeting was called. Everybody sat looking, saying nothing. I asked, who wants to speak? Nobody. Well, isn't anybody going to say anything? They smiled. Well, I thought, it looks like they'll let him stay. I asked them to vote the question. The chairman put my proposal to the vote. "Who is for Anton Semyonovich's proposal raise your hand." Not a single hand was raised. "Who is against?" All hands.
The next day he came again.
"I can't believe they've punished me so cruelly. Call the general meeting, I want them to explain the thing to me."
That evening a general meeting was called.
"There he is, he demands an explanation."
"Very well. Alexeyev, you have the floor."
Alexeyev started to speak.
"Aboard that ship, in the presence of the whole Soviet Union—since there were representatives of all towns aboard the ship—in front of the ship's crew you hit a comrade on the head over some trifle or other. This is a thing we can't forgive and we shall never forgive you. There will be boys here after us, and they, too, will never forgive such a thing."

He went away. Many of the old boys had left the Commune, and there were a lot of new ones. And these new boys always used to say, "We must do what they did with Zvyagints." They had never set eyes on Zvyagints, but they knew all about him.

There you have an instance of the communards' attitude towards fighting. One half of me, the pedagogical half, condemns this cruelty, but the other, human, half does not.

This is cruelty, of course, but cruelty provoked. Naturally, you can't allow beatings in a community. Personally I am strongly opposed to physical methods of punishment.

A voice from the audience: "You had boys and girls of seventeen and eighteen in the Commune. What were the relations between them?"

That is a very difficult question. I would have to speak about it a long time. I deal with it in my book. Briefly, I would say this. You cannot ban love, but neither can you permit people falling in love and marrying at eighteen. Such a marriage is bound to be unhappy. An important role in our Commune was played by the unity of the collective and trust in me. I would get the girls together and read them a lecture on how girls should behave. And then I'd get the boys together. These I did not so much teach as I simply demanded of them responsibility for their actions and behaviour.

I had the support of the Komsomol organisation, the Party organisation, and, of course, the Pioneer organisation. I also had the support of the general meeting.

This was the reason why things were satisfactory as far as this problem was concerned. We had no tragedies, no painful situations. We knew, for instance, that Kravchenko loves Donya, and Donya loves Kravchenko. They always went out together, but there was nothing wrong in that. On leaving the Commune they both entered higher school, and only after this, after a lapse of three years, did they marry. They arrived at the Commune and announced before the



Council, "We are getting married." The commanders applauded. "You are marrying in good time, your love has stood the test of five years."

Voice from the audience: "How is it you are so familiar with the psychology of children under school age?"

I have no children of my own, but I have adopted children. At the Commune we had a kindergarten for children of the employees. I organised it, and I ran it. I know many of these children very well and love them very much. My experience is not very great, but, still, I have some experience.

## MY EXPERIENCE*

I doubt whether in what I have to tell you you will find anything of value to yourselves. I think that you, too, have something to teach me, just as I and all the other comrades have something to teach you. You yourselves have splendid experience, working as you do in such splendid institutions.

I think that what I am going to tell you may be useful to you merely as a spur, an impetus, if only an impetus of resistance, since my experience is rather peculiar and probably has little in common with yours. I may have been more fortunate than you, perhaps.

Therefore, I would ask you not to take my words as a prescription, a law, or as deductions. Although, for sixteen years running I have worked only in a children's home, I cannot say that I have arrived at any definite conclusions. I am still in the formative process, as no doubt you are too.

In seeking answers to many questions I shall probably have to fall back on your assistance or the assistance of other people.

* This lecture was read by A. S. Makarenko at the Scientific and Practical Institute of Special Schools and Children's Homes on October 20, 1938.—*Ed.*



Therefore, what I am going to tell you will not be conclusions. Conclusions may be drawn in a work of research, in a monograph, in a work based on a Marxist analysis. I have no conclusions in regard to education, therefore allow me to speak to you as friend to friend about the hypotheses and surmises which I have, for what I am going to speak to you about is surmise rather than conclusions.

I am perfectly well aware that my thoughts are conditioned by my pedagogical experience. I understand that a different kind of experience is possible, and if I had had it I might think differently.

My experience is very limited. For 8 years I managed a Colony for delinquents named after Gorky, and for 8 years a Labour Commune named after Dzerzhinsky. The Dzerzhinsky Commune was not an institution for juvenile offenders. At the beginning I received waifs and strays, and during the last four years I received exclusively children from families where the trouble was due not to material conditions but to purely pedagogical and domestic conditions.

It is hard to say which of these three categories are the more difficult—the delinquents, the street waifs, or the children from families. Personally, I think the children from families are the more difficult. At least, in my own experience, they seem so to me in point of complexity of character, individuality, and intensity of resistance.

By that time, however, I was better equipped with the technique of my job, and most important of all, I had a community of children with sixteen-year-old traditions and a sixteen-year history behind it.

For that reason alone I found it easier to work with children from families than I had with my first delinquent charges, because at that time I had practically no experience of such work.

On the basis of my work with all three categories I have come, during the last few years, to the following conclusion —a conclusion that is important to me. This conclusion even today sounds somewhat paradoxical to me. It is this: there

is no such thing as difficult children. This statement, by the way, is not just a simple denial.

Generally speaking, the distance between moral social standards and moral social distortions is very slight, almost negligible.

This brings me to another conclusion in which I am not so sure that so-called regeneration and readjustment are not an evolutionary process, which takes a long time.

I come to the conclusion that since this distance between anti-social habits, between a kind of experience which is unacceptable to our society, and normal experience is very insignificant, this distance should be spanned as quickly as possible.

I am not quite sure that this conclusion should be formulated in these exact terms. I am not quite sure that such a theory is possible, but what I am quite sure of is my own experience.

During the last five years of my work in the Dzerzhinsky Commune, where there were a good many vivid and difficult characters, I no longer observed any processes of character evolution. I observed evolution in the ordinary sense in which we understand growth, development: a boy studies in the 3rd, the 4th form, then passes up into the 5th. His horizon broadens, he acquires more knowledge and skills. He works at a factory, becomes more proficient, and acquires skills and habits of a social nature. But this is ordinary growth and not readjustment, not some kind of evolution from a spoilt warped character to a normal one.

This does not mean that there is no distinction between a warped character and a normal one, but it does mean that character improvement is much better achieved by the method of what I call explosion.

By explosion I do not mean a situation in which you put a charge of dynamite under a person, fire it off, and run for safety before that person blows up. What I have in mind is the instantaneous effect of an action which revolutionises all of a person's desires, all his strivings.



I was so astounded by the outward spectacle of these changes that I eventually took up the question of the methodology of these explosions and evolution in the sphere of warped character, and gradually became convinced that the method of explosion—I can think of no better term for it—merited the attention of educators. Perhaps a happier pedagogical term will be found for this method than the one I have chosen.

I will tell you about some of the impressions which not only made me think the way I do, but induced me to continue my work on the basis of this method.

As far back as 1931 I had to take in 150 new children into the Commune, which had a population of 150. Many of this contingent had to be taken in in the course of a fortnight.

I already had a very good organisation of communards. Ninety out of the 150 were Komsomol members between the ages of 14 and 18. The rest were Pioneer youngsters. All of them made a well-knit friendly community, with a fine, cheerful, clearly-defined discipline. They were splendid workers, proud of their Commune and their discipline. They could be given tasks of responsibility, sometimes physically difficult and even psychologically difficult.

This was the method I used to make the most powerful impression on my new "draft". Of course, the method had a variety of aspects, and one of them consisted in preparing the premises itself—the dormitories, the work places, the classrooms, and such things as flowers, mirrors, etc.

The Commune was very well off, as we were self-supporting.

This is how we received the newcomers. We always collected them off the express trains, which made a stop at Kharkov. Our contingent was the waifs who travelled in express trains—this contingent belonged to us. The Moscow-Mineralniye Vodi, Moscow-Sochi, and Moscow-Kislovodsk spa expresses carried candidates to our Commune. All these express trains passed through Kharkov at night, and we collected these children at night too.

Seven or eight communards, one of whom was appointed temporary commander for the night, went out to collect these children. This temporary commander was responsible for the work of his squad and always reported on the fulfilment of its assignment.

The temporary squad, in the course of two or three hours, collected the street arabs off the roofs of the railway coaches, pulled them out of lavatories and from under the coaches. They were master-hands at rounding up these "passengers". I would never have been able to find their hiding places.

The N.K.V.D. guards placed a special room at the railway station at my disposal. It was in this room that our first meeting took place.

This meeting was held not to coax the children into going to the Commune, but to put to them the following proposition. Our communards addressed the round-up with the following words: "Dear comrades, our Commune is badly in need of work hands. We are building a new factory, and we have come to ask you to help us out." And the waifs were convinced that such was the case.

They were told, "Those who don't want to can continue their journey by train."

And then there started that method of surprise, which I choose to call the method of explosion.

Usually the children always agreed to help us with our building job. They stayed overnight in that room. And the next day, at 12 o'clock, the whole Commune turned out in a body complete with band–we had a very good, large band –sixty trumpets–with unfurled banner, in parade uniforms, all smart and chic with white collars, monograms, etc. This brilliant company stood lined up on the square outside the station, and when the ragged band of newcomers trooped out barefoot on to the square the music struck up and they found themselves confronting the assembled ranks. We greeted them with music, with a salute, like we would our best friends.



Then our Komsomol boys and girls lined up in front, behind them came these street arabs, and the rear was brought up by another platoon of communards. And the whole group marched off, eight men in a row. Some of the public were moved to tears, but we saw only the technique of it, and there was nothing sentimental in that.

Arriving at the Commune, they were sent to the bathhouse, whence they emerged clean-washed, with their hair cut, and wearing the same smart white-collared uniforms the others wore. After that their old clothes were trundled out in a wheelbarrow, dumped in a heap, drenched with petrol and set ablaze with ceremonial solemnity. Two monitors who were on yard duty came out with brooms and swept all the ashes up into a pail.

Many members of my staff thought the whole thing a joke, but actually the effect was staggering materially, if not symbolically.

Of all these street arabs whom I had picked up off trains I could name perhaps only two or three who did not make good.

But these children will never forget the reception given to them at the railway station. They will never forget that bonfire of rags, the new dormitories, the new treatment, the new discipline, and these will remain indelible impressions as long as they live.

I have given here only one instance of the method which I call the method of explosion.*

This method is continuing and developing in the whole of my system.

This system consists, above all, in the collective body. Unfortunately, we have no books describing what the

* This pedagogical method gave rise to considerable dispute among educators. In passing judgement on this method of explosion it should be borne in mind that Makarenko speaks of it as applied to re-education. Under conditions of properly organised upbringing the need for reformation and readjustment does not arise. The field of application for this method of explosion is correspondingly narrowed.–*Ed.*

collective is, especially what the children's educative collective is.

More should be written about this and more research should be made into the collective.

The first characteristic of a collective is that it is not a crowd, but a rationally organised and effective body.

The organisation of the collective was such that the collective became a social organism; it always remained a collective, and never became a crowd.

This is perhaps the most difficult thing in our pedagogical work, and I have never seen such collectives as the one that we had.

I am not saying this in self-praise, but am simply stating a fact.

Nor was I the only one who built up that collective. It's a very long story, and I doubt whether I can do full justice to it here.

The first step in the organisation of the collective itself should be made by tackling the problem of the primary collective. I have given a great deal of thought to this problem, and various methods of organising the collective have suggested themselves to me. As a result I have arrived at the following conclusions.

The primary collective, that is, a collective that will not be further divided up into smaller collectives or units, cannot be less than seven or more than fifteen people. I don't know why this is so, I have never analysed it. All I know is that if the primary collective is less than seven people it undergoes conversion into a friendly collective, a self-contained group of friends and cronies.

A primary collective of more than fifteen people always has a tendency to split up into two collectives. There is always a line of cleavage.

The ideal primary collective, in my opinion, is one that feels itself to be united, closely-knit, and strong, while at the same time realising that this is not a group of friends who have come to some arrangement, but a phenomenon of



a social type, a community, a body having certain obligations, a certain duty, a certain responsibility. All this can be committed to paper. It is rather difficult to describe it briefly in words.

I was especially interested in the figure of the person who was to direct this primary collective and answer for it.

I spent all the sixteen years of my work trying to solve this problem and have come to the conclusion that such a collective should have a one-man management, should be headed by a single person, who, by the type of power he is invested with, will not be a dictator, but who at the same time will be authorised to act on behalf of the collective.

Another factor I eventually found important was the duration of such a primary collective body.

I succeeded in preserving such a primary collective unchanged in the course of 7-8 years. Ten to fifteen boys and girls preserved the quality of a primary collective in the course of 7-8 years with changes that did not amount to more than 25 per cent: there were only three changes among the twelve people during eight years, three of the members going and three others coming.

I foresaw and actually saw in practice that a very interesting collective was coming out of it, interesting in the sense that it could be regarded as a miracle in the nature of its movement, in the nature of its development, in the character of its tone, a tone of cheerful assurance, in its tendency towards preserving the primary collective. This collective had a one-man management in the shape of a commander and eventually a team-leader.

At first there was a tendency to put this primary collective in charge of an "old hand", one of the most capable, the most strong-willed boy or girl, a "boss" capable of keeping a strong hold on people, giving orders and having his own way.

In the course of sixteen years I observed how this tendency towards choosing the strongest personality as leader, a person who was able to command, gradually changed until, towards the end, this primary collective, or detachment as

it was called with us, was headed by the next in seniority, who was no different from any of the others in character or abilities.

In the course of those sixteen years this change took place almost unnoticed by me and almost irrespective of my educational objectives—I mean this change in the form of leadership.

In recent years I achieved a stage of pedagogical happiness when I could appoint any communard in any collective as leader and be perfectly sure that he would cope with his duties brilliantly.

I cannot go into all the details of this interesting example of children's magistracy, this type of children's public officer, capable not only of playing at leader but actually leading the collective without being the strongest, the most talented or the most strong-willed member, and differing from all the others only in one respect—in that he was vested with authority and responsibility—a distinction of a purely formal nature.

In 1933 I had occasion to detail about 100 communards for very heavy, difficult and nerve-racking work, a special job commissioned by the Ukrainian Government, when my communards worked for several months outside the Commune in the most difficult conditions.

I couldn't give my best communards for the job, as they were usually boys and girls in the 9th and 10th forms, and besides, they were our most skilled workmen. Since we were paying our own way I couldn't very well dispense with this staff, most of whom were foremen and shop superintendents at our factory.

I picked out a middle-rank group, chose commanders from among it, and broke the party up into detachments. I took a risk—I didn't go with them myself and, except for a supply manager who was to see to their meals, there was no one in charge.

And let me tell you they acquitted themselves admirably, especially the newly appointed commanders whom I had



chosen simply in alphabetical order. They realised perfectly well to what limits their authority and their responsibility extended.

It takes a long time, of course, to cultivate this sense of limit to which authority and serious responsibility extend. I do not think this can be done in any collective in the course of a year or two years. It takes four to five years to cultivate this interesting, normal magistracy in a children's collective.

The same logical connection as in the organisation of primary collectives exists in the organisation of social dependencies within a large collective.

With me the primary collective was the Detachment.

At first I organised the detachments according to the principle of work and study. Those who studied or worked together were united in a single detachment.

Then I decided that the younger ones should be separated from the older ones. Then I came to the conclusion that this was harmful, and subsequently every detachment included both little ones and teen-agers.

I decided that the educatively most useful collective would be one that was most reminiscent of a family. There you have care for the younger ones, respect for the older ones, and the most tender nuances of comradeship.

There the little ones would not be segregated in a separate group which stewed in its own juice, and the older ones would not talk bawdy, as they had the little ones to think about and take care of.

A very important question was that of the temporary officers. It would seem a trivial question, but I trained many interesting cadres of my communards on this theme, on the constant, steady, daily selection of errands and tasks, on their distribution among separate persons, on strict adherence to the rule of reporting fulfilment of brief assignments.

Finally, according to the same collective logic, I was particularly interested in the general self-government of the large collective body.

Throughout my sixteen years I always had specially appointed commanders who were responsible for the detachments. We had a Commanders' Council.

This organ of self-government always met with objections not only on the part of educators and professors, but on the part of journalists and writers as well. Everyone considered this a sort of regimentation, drill methods.

Unfortunately, few people went into the heart of the matter.

The Commanders' Council as an organ of administration was extremely useful in the following respect.

I had 28 detachments in the Colony, and needed 28 commanders for them.

I was against drafting work plans for the Commanders' Council. And despite the pressure that was brought to bear on me from above, I never submitted a single work plan for the Commanders' Council. The latter was an organ of administration which had to handle questions and subjects that cropped up every day and which could not be described in any plan. During the last 8-10 years it was a very mobile institution. I could call the Commanders' Council together in two minutes on any question that cropped up before me.

The Commanders' Council assembled at a bugle signal—three short notes. The signal was never repeated so as not to give the commanders an excuse for dawdling. They answered the call promptly.

No matter where he was—in the classroom, at work or in the bath-house—the commander, upon hearing the signal, had to hurry to the Council without delay. This was difficult at first, but eventually it became a habit, a genuine collective reflex.

And if an assistant of mine summoned the Council I would answer the signal on the double quick like a war horse.

It was a conditioned reflex calling me to my duties.

We had an interesting rule on the Council. You could speak for no more than a minute. Anyone who spoke more than a minute was considered a "windbag" and no one wanted to listen to him.



Sometimes we had to assemble during the school interval—for about 5 or 10 minutes.

One witty chairman of the Commanders' Council made use of a sand-glass, and assured us that in the time it took for one grain of sand to drop you could utter one word, and as there were 2,000 grains of sand in the glass, you could utter 2,000 words a minute. Wasn't 2,000 words a minute enough for you? These standing orders were necessary.

Ours was a complete ten-year school with all the qualities of a full secondary school.

In addition we had a factory in which everyone worked 4 hours a day. Four hours in the factory with five hours at school made a total of nine hours.

We employed no cleaners, and every morning the floors were polished. There was not a speck of dust about. On some days we had as many as three or four delegations visiting us. Everything had to be spick and span.

Furthermore, we had work conferences, Komsomol meetings, Pioneer and sports rallies, etc. We couldn't afford to waste a minute. Others perhaps may have better conditions and can dispense with such strict time rules.

When we called the Commanders' Council some of the commanders would perhaps be absent or not be able to drop their work at some important machine. And so it became a custom, or rather a law, that in the absence of the commander his assistant went instead, and in the absence of the assistant, any member of the detachment.

Every detachment usually knew beforehand who was to go to the Council if the signal was given that day. Gradually things so arranged themselves that when the Commanders' Council assembled we never asked whether Ivanov or Petrov was present, but whether this or that detachment was represented. What really mattered was that the detachments should all be represented.

Gradually the Commanders' Council became the Detachments' Council. It didn't matter who came from the detach-

ment. What mattered was that there should be a person who called himself a communard.

If an important question was being dealt with at the Council we demanded the attendance of the commander, since the latter was elected not by the detachment but by the general meeting of the Commune.

We arrived at this formula in order that the Commanders' Council, both in the Commune at large and in every separate detachment, should act as a Council of Representatives, authorised not only by the given detachment, but by the whole Commune. This Council stood above the detachment.

The Commanders' Council assisted me in my work in the course of 16 years, and I now feel grateful and entertain a great respect for this body, which, though gradually changing, always kept the same tone, the same face, the same tendency.

I wish to draw your attention to the following.

We grownups always think we are terribly clever, that we know our onions, and when we come to a new institution, when we are given a new job to do, the first thing we do is try to break things up and start from scratch.

As a result our young pedagogical business, which is not even twenty years old yet, suffers from a fluidity of form, from instability, from an absence of traditions.

It wasn't until the end of my sixteenth year that I realised what the trouble was. Traditions, that is, the experience of adult generations who have been gone 4-5-6 years, who have accomplished something and solved something, should be sufficiently respected to avoid the experience of preceding generations from being changed with too light a heart.

When all is said and done, there were so many interesting, original and precise rules at the Commune, that any duty officer there could take charge of the establishment quite easily.

Now the question of discipline.

If you have read my book *The Road to Life*, you will re-



collect that I began with the question of discipline. I started by hitting one of my charges.

This is described at more or less greater length in my book, and I was very much surprised to find myself being accused of favouring beatings.

That is just what the book *The Road to Life* does not show. On the contrary, this was a deplorable incident as far as I am concerned, deplorable not in the sense of my having been driven to such despair, but in the sense that it was not I but the boy I had struck—Zadorov—who had found a way out.

He had in him the amazing strength and courage to realise to what desperate straits I had been reduced, and he stretched out to me a helping hand.

The successful outcome of this incident was due not to my method, but to the casual human object of punishment. It is not every day that you run into a person, who, on being struck by you, gives you his hand and says, "I'll help you", and he really did. I was fortunate, and I realised it at the time.

In my practice I could not base myself on such methods of discipline, on violence. I eventually arrived at a form of discipline which I tried to describe in my last novel *Learning to Live*.

This novel deals with a strict, strong, iron discipline, capable of becoming an idyll. Such a thing is possible only in the Soviet Union. Such a discipline is very difficult to create. It calls for a strong creative faculty, for a soul, a personality. It is a job into which you have to put your own personality.

Another reason why it is difficult is that success in this field is achieved very slowly, gradually, and progress is almost imperceptible. You have to be able to look ahead, and see more than the present has to show you.

The object of such discipline is perfectly clear to us. It is a combination of profound consciousness with very strict and seemingly mechanical standards.

I cannot visualise good discipline based on consciousness alone. There can be no such discipline, it will always have a tendency towards rigorism. It will be rationalistic, it will always question one or another form of behaviour, it will lead to a permanent state of indecision.

Discipline based only on consciousness will always tend to become rationalistic. It will change the standards in any collective and will always ultimately present a chain of disputes, problems, and pressures.

On the other hand, discipline based on a technical standard, on dogma, or command, will always tend to become mere blind obedience, mechanical submission to a single directing will.

This is not our kind of discipline. Our discipline is a combination of full consciousness, clarity, complete understanding—an understanding, common to all, how to act—with a clear, perfectly distinct outward form which tolerates no arguments, differences of opinion, objections, delays or chatter. This harmony of two ideas in discipline is the most difficult thing.

My collective succeeded in achieving this harmony not only thanks to me, but thanks to many happy circumstances and many other people.

How then was this combination of consciousness with precise disciplinary form achieved?

This was done in many ways. Ultimately, all ways and all methods led up to this. Discipline in this case was not a condition of successful work. It is customary with us to think that such discipline is a necessary condition for good work, but not so long ago I realised that real discipline cannot be a condition, it can only be the result of all work and all methods. Discipline is not a method and cannot be a method. The moment you start regarding discipline as a method it is bound to become a curse. It can only be the ultimate result of all your work.

Discipline is the face of your collective, its voice, its



beauty, its mobility, its conviction. Everything in the collective body ultimately assumes the form of discipline.

Discipline is a profoundly political phenomenon, it is what you might call the feeling of being a citizen of the Soviet Union. I understand that very well now.

I assure you that throughout those sixteen years I was unable to grasp this, unable to discover this formula, and get all this straight in my own mind.

Therefore, you cannot speak of discipline as a method of education. I can speak of discipline as the result of education.* This result of education is manifest not only in the fact that somebody gives an order and somebody obeys. This result is manifest even when the person, left to himself, knows what he has to do.

My communards used to say, "We shall judge your discipline not by the way you have acted in front of others, and not by the way you have carried out an order or performed a task, but by the way you acted without knowing that others knew how you had acted."

For instance, you are crossing a parquet floor and see a dirty piece of paper lying on it. Nobody sees you and you see nobody. The thing now is: will you pick up that bit of paper or not. If you do and throw it away without anyone seeing you do it, then you have discipline.

The latter form of discipline was exemplified in the figure of the duty-man. This was one of the team-leaders, a boy or girl, usually not even from among the older children, since the senior Komsomol members had greater responsibilities to bear in the capacity of newspaper editor, factory shop superintendent, design office manager, Komsomol organiser, or Secretary of the Komsomol collective. It was usually a team or detachment commander, a boy or girl of 15, 16 or 17.

As a rule they had no power to impose penalties, they had

* Makarenko eventually modified this formula by withdrawing the too sharp line between discipline as a result and discipline as a means. He said, "Discipline is first of all not a means of education but its result, and only afterwards does it become a means." (Cf. *My Pedagogical Views.*)—*Ed.*

no other special privileges in the Commune, but they ran the Commune during the day they were on duty.

We had no tutors in the Commune. I did away with that institution in 1930. The tutors simply became schoolteachers. The Commune lived without a single tutor for eight years.

The duty officer, from six o'clock in the morning till twelve midnight, or from midnight till morning, was responsible for everything that went on in the Commune. This included strict observance of schedules, proper tidying up, reception of visitors, seeing that meals were up to standard. He was responsible for outings, if there were any, and for any extra jobs that required attending to. At night he had the right to sleep.

He was the only person authorised by the general meeting to issue orders. Gradually, this authority developed into a very complex tradition of which everybody was very proud and strictly adhered to.

A fifteen-year-old like this could, without hesitation, tell a senior Komsomol boy or girl, however high his or her position in the Commune, "Take a rag and wipe up that puddle on the floor."

He had no right, usually, to repeat an order, but the person to whom the order was given had to say, "Aye, aye, comrade officer."

Even if he did wipe the floor but did not say, "Aye, aye", it was considered that he had not carried out the order.

You could not speak to the duty officer sitting down, and had to stand up to attention.

You could not argue with him. You could argue with me, with any of the commanders, but you could not argue with the duty officer. He was a busy man, they said, and if everyone was going to argue with him the poor beggar wouldn't last long.

Even if the duty officer made a wrong decision your business was to obey and forget that it was wrong.

I had no right to verify the report of the duty officer. He reports that in such and such a detachment this or that hap-



pened. He makes his report in front of everybody and salutes. Everybody has to stand while he is reporting.

If I had any doubts about anything, I could not say, "Go and call that communard, I'll ask him about it." This would be the grossest insult.

It became a tradition that afterwards, the next day, the person the duty officer had been reporting about, could say that the latter had "fibbed", but without me hearing it, because I could put him under arrest for such talk. If he had "fibbed", you were not supposed to talk about it. He was our authorised officer and we had to obey him and do as he said.

The next day you could say that he was no good as duty officer and we would relieve him of these duties, but when he was reporting you dare not say anything. In this way we avoided endless squabbles.

Most important of all was the fact that the duty officer's report was not subject to verification. The duty officer reported to me in the evening about everybody, and I never remember him telling me a lie. He couldn't tell a lie.

If the duty officer met me when I was out for a walk and told me something about a certain person, I could check this at assembly time, but if he told this to me in front of everybody, it was not to be checked. The communards declared, "He didn't whisper this into Anton Semyonovich's ear, they weren't sitting in the garden—he told him in front of everybody while making his report and saluting. How could he tell a lie. A man can't tell a lie in such a situation."

The communards were convinced that the whole situation, the very position of a duty officer, made it impossible for him to lie.

This was a moral law, and no checking was needed. That was the general resultant picture, which could be called discipline.

What should be the methods leading to such a resultant picture? They are the arrangement of the collective body as a definite organisation and pedagogical skill.

17—2407

Pedagogical skill means a lot. There isn't a trace of this pedagogical skill in our teachers' training institutes. They have no idea of it there. The situation today is such that we have every right to say that instead of pedagogical technique we have crude rule-of-thumb methods.

This question, too, worried me a great deal, all the more that I have never considered myself a talented educator, and frankly, I don't consider myself one today, otherwise I would not have had to work so hard, to err so much and to suffer.

Even now I am deeply convinced that I am just an ordinary, average educator. But I developed pedagogical skill, and that is an important thing.

The skill of a teacher is not an art that requires special talent. It is the result of a specialised training, like that of a doctor or a musician. Any person who is not an idiot can become a doctor and treat people, and any person who is not an idiot can become a musician. One may be better, another worse, depending on the quality of the instrument, the training, etc. The trouble is that a teacher does not get this kind of training.

What is skill, technique? I am inclined to treat the process of upbringing apart from that of education. I know that every educational specialist will protest against this. But I consider that the process of upbringing can logically be treated apart and so can the technique of upbringing.

It is important to develop sight, just ordinary physical sight. This is essential in an educator. You must be able to read the human face, the face of a child, and this reading can even be described in a special course of training. There is nothing intricate, no mystique about the fact that you can read the workings of a person's mind in his face.

Pedagogical skill consists in the educator being able to train his voice and control his features.

Today your Director spoke to a boy in my presence. Few people can speak that way. I will not use flattery and say that this requires great talent, but we have here an example



of technique. He spoke to the boy angrily, and the boy saw that anger and indignation, he saw what he was meant to see. For me this was skill. I could see that the Director was acting a role, and doing it magnificently.

A teacher cannot help play acting. There isn't a teacher who cannot act. We can't allow our nerves to become a pedagogical instrument, we cannot accept the idea that children can be educated at the expense of our heartaches, our mental pains. We are human beings after all. If we can do without mental suffering in every other calling, surely we can do without it here as well.

But sometimes you have to demonstrate mental anguish, and to do that you must be able to act. You must not act theatrically, however, just for outward show. There is a driving belt which should connect your own splendid personality with this acting. This is not lifeless acting, bare technique, but a real reflection of the workings of your mind. As far as the pupil is concerned these workings are conveyed in the form of anger, indignation, etc.

I acquired real skill only after I had learnt to say "come here" in fifteen or twenty different keys, after I had learnt to give my face, my figure, my voice twenty nuances of expression. I was not afraid then that somebody might not come up to me or might not feel what I wanted him to feel.

This skill of the educator makes itself felt at every turn. It does not necessarily need a situation of two to manifest itself, with me the teacher, and you the pupil. The situation of two is not half so important as what surrounds you.

Your attitude as an educator is of importance even when no one is looking at you. And this is not mystique.

I am sitting in my office all alone. The communards are all at work or in school. I am angry with someone and must do something about it. I put a definite expression into my face, and this affects everybody. One comes running in, looks at me, then whispers to another, and so, at odd moments, you find that something has clicked into place.

This does not mean that the mood of all the children should depend upon the mood of a single person. You must be able to govern your moods.

If you were to weep and sob in that office, that, too, would become known to everybody and produce a definite impression.

This holds good in all trivial matters, such as whether you shave every day or not, whether you polish your boots every day or not.

The educator who pulls a black rumpled handkerchief out of his pocket is no educator. He would do better to go into a corner and blow his nose there without anybody seeing it.

This skill is of importance in organising certain special methodological movements.

For instance, I often practised things like this. I could send for a person who was guilty of some offence and tell him off. But I never did so.

I would send him a note asking him to come and see me in the evening at 11 o'clock sharp. I had no intention of telling him off, but up to eleven o'clock in the evening he would be on edge, waiting for this talk. In the meantime he would have a lot to say to himself, and would hear a lot from his comrades, and he would come to me fully conditioned. I'd have nothing to do. All I'd tell him would be: "All right, go along." That boy or girl was bound to undergo some inner process.

I can imagine that in a teacher's college certain exercises have to be carried out. We are all students--you, you, and you.

You tell me, "Please, Comrade Makarenko, give us some practical lessons. A boy, say, has stolen three rubles. You are to speak to him. We shall listen to your talk and then discuss whether it was good or bad."

Such exercises are not practised with us, yet it is a very difficult thing to talk to a boy who is suspected of having stolen something, and nobody knows whether he stole it or not. This is where you need skill not only in training eye and voice, but in logic as well.



My colleagues and I always tried to develop this skill. We used to get together and discuss the question, but never wrote anything down.

Another important method is play. I don't think it is quite correct to regard play as part of a child's occupations. The play impulse in childhood is a normal thing, and a child should always play even when he is doing a serious job. We adults have this play instinct too. Why does one girl like a lace collar and another girl does not? Why the sudden urge to put on a crêpe de Chine dress instead of a cotton one? Why do people like to wear uniforms? Why does a uniform attract us? Because there is an element of play in this.

Why do we set books out on our shelves in such a way that the handsome ones with gold-lettered backs come at the top, while the poorer looking ones are stuck away at the bottom? Because we are playing at intellectual, cultured people who have a library of their own.

The child has a passion for play, and this passion should be gratified.

He should not only be given time for games, but this play impulse should tincture his whole life. His whole life is a game.

We had a factory with first-class equipment. We manufactured Leica-type cameras of high precision to within one micron, and this, too, was a game.

Many people thought me a crank for playing at military reporting. You have to be able to play with children, to stand at attention, before making demands on them. The commander who came to me punctually to the minute to report was an excellent player, and I played with him. I was responsible for all of them, but they believed they were responsible.

In some cases this play should be encouraged.

We were planning an excursion and had to decide whether it was to be Leningrad or the Crimea. Most of the communards were for the Crimea, and so was I. But I started arguing with them heatedly. I said, "What will you see in the Crimea? Only the sun, and you'll lie about in the sand, but

in Leningrad you have the Putilov Works, the Winter Palace." They argued with me just as fiercely. Then they all voted for the Crimea, hands raised, looking at me. I had played a good game with them. They had played as winners, I as loser.

Three days later they were telling one another, "Anton Semyonovich was fibbing, he's for the Crimea too." They had been playing and they understood it perfectly well.

Next comes the question of pedagogical risk. This problem, too, is unsolved. May we run risks or not?

Two years ago, in an advice column in one of the educational journals, a teacher raised this question: "What are you to do with a child who behaves like a hooligan in school?"

Answer: "You must speak to the child. The teacher should speak in a level voice, without raising his tone, so as to make the pupil understand that the teacher was speaking to him not because he was irritated, but because it was his duty."

The ideal teacher must speak in a level voice—and then nothing will come of it. The boy will go away the same hooligan as he came.

I took risks, and the moment I did so all Macbeth's witches flocked round me: "Well, let's see you risking, come on, let's see you do it."

I would say in a heightened voice, "What is this!"

And it worked.

In Leningrad, when I spoke about taking risks, I received a note, saying: "You talk about risk. In our school this is what happened. A boy was given bad marks and he went and hanged himself. In your opinion, then, 'casualties' like this are permissible?"

I was greatly surprised. This was not against me, it was against you. The boy hanged himself not because of any risky act on the part of the teacher. If you consider it a risk, don't give bad marks, or you'll have the whole class hanging itself. You may be afraid of giving bad marks, since there is a certain risk entailed, but that is a trifle.



Bad marks are not a risky act. There is no risk in stroking a child's head.

Speaking in a level voice is no risk either.

Perhaps the boy developed suicidal tendencies precisely because he was spoilt by these constant acts of non-risk? Any person, if spoken to in a level voice for several years running, would want to hang himself. If all teachers spoke to a child in a level voice, I dread to think what extremes that child could be driven to.

Luckily, however, not everyone speaks in a level voice. Some take risks, make demands, give bad marks, but most important of all, make demands. And that is the only thing that gives life its glow and zest.

This subject of risk should be examined in pedagogical practice.

As a teacher, I frankly laugh, rejoice, joke, and express anger.

If I feel like joking, I joke. If I want to take a sly dig at somebody, I take it.

This kind of risk is harmless. I have to take more risks than other teachers.

For instance, sometimes the general meeting ruled that such-and-such a person was to be expelled from the Commune. No matter how much I protested and threatened, they just looked at me and voted again in favour of expelling the culprit. And I expelled him. In eight years I expelled ten pupils. Opened the door to the wide world and told them to go wherever they chose.

It was a terrible risk, but thanks to that risk I achieved a permanently sincere, demanding tone, and everyone knew that this was the tone he would meet on his very first day and it did not come as a surprise to anybody.

The most remarkable thing was that all those who had been expelled wrote letters to me. Recently I received a letter from a person who had been expelled six years ago and from whom I had not heard all this time.

He writes: "I am Senior Lieutenant so-and-so. I distinguished myself at Lake Khasan, and decided to take this opportunity to write to you. If you knew how grateful I am to you for having expelled me! How I threw my weight about at the Commune. When they expelled me, it set me thinking: 'Am I so bad that five hundred people refuse to live with me?' I wanted to go to you and ask to be taken back, but then I decided to make my own way in the world. And now I am a lieutenant, I have distinguished myself in action, and consider it my duty to tell you this, so that you should not worry about having expelled me that time."

Here's a man telling me after six years not to worry. I had lost touch with him, and now he has written to me, written after he has become victor at Lake Khasan, and at that very moment of all moments he remembers me as being one of the causes of his present lustre.

Now try and predict, if you can, what every act of yours leads to.

It is high time the question of risk was tackled, because teachers as well as pupils are beginning to get fed up with the so-called tact system.

At the time of my disputes with the Ukrainian educational authorities, I was asked at a teachers' conference, "Do you know what tact is?"

"I do."

"What is it?"

"Supposing you are dining with a person and that person spits in your plate, you can say to him, 'What are you doing, it's not tactful.'

"Or you can do this: you can pick up the plate and smash it over his head. And you won't be taking any risks."

Sometimes you have to break the plate over a person's head, carry his act to its logical limit, and not try to dodge the issue.

Isn't tact very often an evasion of responsibility?

Before me is a boy or girl. I have to do something about them, but I don't want to do anything because I'm afraid



to take the risk, and so I start acting tactfully. I tactfully retreat from the concrete case into a quiet corner.

Maybe I am mistaken, but I achieved good results.

With the exception of one case, when a girl I married off became a prostitute again, there were never any relapses in my practice.

I am sure that in my own practice I have approached a certain truth, just as you have too.

I assert that the principle of the greatest possible respect for the human being is the basic principle of all our pedagogical work in school, extra-school, and pre-school practice.

I even called an eight-year-old person Comrade Komarov. Ordinarily he is Pete, Johnnie, etc., but when I come among the collective I call him Comrade Komarov.

The greatest possible respect and the persistent, clear, frank demand: behave in such and such a way.

These miracles are within the reach of everybody.

Parents keep coming to me, saying that I perform miracles. A Father and Mother come motoring down, saying, "We just can't live with him any more. He's rude, he demands money, demands tickets to the theatre or cinema, he refuses to help himself at home, and so on. For God's sake, take him!" To look at the boy was quite normal, no sign of mental backwardness in his face. A healthy boy in the 8th form at school. What was there to work on?

"All right, leave him, but keep away from here for two years, and don't let us have the smell of your petrol around here."

Their chief complaints were that he didn't want to brush his own suit, didn't want to make his bed, didn't want to go to the shop to get anything. Out here the commanders would go over him with sandpaper, and so he starts mending his ways. In six months you let him go home on leave for the first time. The parents think you have worked wonders. There are no miracles and no wonder-workers. You have to make your demands in such a way that the boy will have no doubts that you mean business. He will even find a pleasure in it.

He will be pleased that he can show his parents that he, too, is capable of working. What is required of a teacher is the conviction that he is right. If you are sure of this, you can go on demanding all the way through, and the child will always do what is required of him.

I beg your pardon once more if there was anything in my talk that you found didactic. I least of all wish to be didactic or edifying, and have merely told you things I have been a witness to in life.

## FROM MY OWN PRACTICE*

Comrades, in giving this talk I think perhaps you will say something too, since my experience—and I speak only from experience—will be different to yours. But I am also a teacher, a railwaymen's teacher and the son of a railwayman, so I should be pedagogically minded, just as you are, although I daresay I have been more fortunate than you have.

In 1920 the Soviet authorities put me in charge of a Colony of delinquents. I took the job not because I considered myself proficient as an educator. After the Revolution I worked in a school in Poltava, and had to use the premises of the Gubernia Economic Council for the purpose after office hours. Whenever I came there I found dirty office desks and cigarette-ends lying about on the floor, and the air, as a rule, was compounded of nicotine and smoke. It was very difficult to conduct a school there under such conditions, and naturally I was prepared to run anywhere to escape it. And that is how I came to take this Colony job. I worked at it for sixteen years, and in that respect I have been lucky. Few

* This is a paper which A. S. Makarenko read in Moscow at a conference of schoolteachers of the Yaroslavl Railway on March 29, 1931.—*Ed.*

people have had the good fortune to manage one and the same collective in the course of sixteen years.

In 1935, however, this work came to an end, through no fault of mine.*

During all those years I worked with a single collective. True, people came and went, but these changes were gradual, and traditions, continuity between the generations, were preserved. As a result of my work in this collective I have been led to certain conclusions, which I am inclined to apply to the ordinary school as well. I say this because during the last eight years of its existence the Dzerzhinsky Commune in the Ukraine differed very little from the ordinary school as far as the nature of the children's society was concerned.

The Commune had a complete secondary school, and the children very quickly–approximately in 3 or 4 months–became normal children, super-normal, if you like, compared with the average schoolboy. I have no grounds, therefore, for presuming that the population at my school was more of a problem than anywhere else. If anything, it was easier than in some schools. I could allow myself such freedom of action, for instance, as to do away with my tutor staff at the Commune after two years' work. My charges no longer needed special supervisory aid in their domestic life.

My school was a more difficult problem than yours because the children I got were more or less backward. Ten- and twelve-year-olds could barely read or write, and some of them could not write at all. It was therefore more difficult for them to complete the ten-year course at the age of 18.

There was an old intellectualist illusion that a street arab was more precocious and smarter. As a matter of fact he was in some respects inferior to the normal child. He was not trained to do systematic school work. This made it more difficult for him to master the course of secondary education. But these waifs had something that enabled them and me to overcome these great odds. They could not count on the help of parents, and could rely only on themselves. They realised this. Another thing they soon realised was that the school was a road leading to the university and higher schools. This became clear to them when the first communard undergraduates made their appearance, and these undergraduates visited the Commune.

The communards saw that the road to higher education was the finest road, the most interesting. Another of its attractions was the hostel and the stipend that went with it.

The urge towards knowledge among my communards was stronger than it is with the average schoolboy. It was this urge that helped them to conquer laziness and all difficulties.

We had better facilities for educative work in the Commune than you have, because the communards were in my hands twenty-four hours a day for five, six, and seven years. You use a terminology like "this method is educative, that method is non-educative". Your educative method, by the way, is not one that pursues an object, but one that involves less rows, less noise. (*Laughter.*) It is a method of playing safe. As to what such a method leads to, no one really seems to care, for no one checks results.

An educative method to me was something that pursued a definite object, even if this meant rows. In this respect I was in a better position and quicker on the move. Another thing that made for easier work was the fact that the Commune ran a factory.

I was once an adherent of the "labour-processes" idea. We all believed that a child's work instincts found an outlet in labour processes. I even believed that the labour process was essential in order to give a child the labour touch. Eventually I realised that a child should be taught some productive work, should acquire a work skill.

* In July 1935 Makarenko was appointed Assistant Manager of the Labour Colonies Department of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs in Kiev.–*Ed.*

We educators soared very high theoretically, but were very low practically. We thought we could give our child a good skill, but actually we gave him one that did not enable him to make anything better than a poor stool. We trained a dressmaker who could sew only shorts. I even experienced a glow of feeling myself when my boots were well mended, when a pair of shorts were sewn for me, or when a poor stool was made. Later I shed this pedagogical illusion. You probably remember that illusion about the labour process having to be "tied up" with the school syllabus. How hard we racked our brains over that accursed question. The children were making a stool, say, and this had to be linked up somehow with geography or mathematics. (*Laughter.*) I felt pretty bad when an inspection committee came down and failed to discover any co-ordination between a stool and the Russian language. (*Laughter.*) In the end I just gave it up, and flatly denied that there was any connection here at all.

I know my arguments now, after the Commune had organised a splendid factory, organised it with our own hands. A factory that made Leica-type cameras. This camera has three hundred parts machined to within 0.001 mm, high precision lenses, and its manufacture is a most intricate process such as Russia had never known in the old days.

When I watched that factory at work—and that work meant an exact, detailed plan, standards of tolerance, standards of quality, servicing by dozens of engineers, a design office, etc., etc.—only then did I realise what such production meant. And how pitiful all that prattle was about tying up the school syllabus with labour processes. I discovered that the teaching process at school and the production process were strong personality builders, because they tended to eliminate the distinction between manual and mental labour and turned out highly skilled people.

One of our girls I recently met in Kharkov is shortly graduating from the institute. She is a high-grade lense polisher, and although she is now studying at an institution of higher



education, she still retains her skill, has not forgotten it. When boys and girls with a secondary education and high work qualifications left the Commune I saw that their school studies had done them good. The factory, real production, provided the very conditions which facilitated pedagogical work. I shall now endeavour to have these facilities introduced in our Soviet school. I shall work for this all the harder that children's productive work opens up many educational vistas.

Finally, another aspect of the case—and by no means one to be despised—is the profitableness of such a business. The Dzerzhinsky Commune turned down the government subsidy it had been receiving and began to pay its own way. Lately, it not only covered the cost of maintaining the factory, the hostel, all living requirements such as meals, clothes, including the school, but gave the state an annual net profit of five million rubles. And that was only because we ran things on a self-supporting basis.

You can imagine what a power of instrumentation was wielded by the teachers. We decide that five hundred of us are to take a trip down the Volga, to the Caucasus. For that we need two hundred thousand rubles. And so a resolution is passed to work half an hour extra every day in the course of a month, and this gives us the two hundred thousand we need.

We were able to clothe the boys in cloth suits and the girls in silk and woollen dresses. We were able to spend forty thousand rubles on the theatre. And when this is done by way of work discipline, by way of wealth-earning effort, when the whole collective is out to achieve this aim, then we have a pedagogical agency of incomparable force.

I say nothing of the other minor merits of such a system. Wages, for instance. Wages are an excellent thing not because they give the pupil money, but because they put him on his own budget and are a means of cultivating thrift and industry. Every graduating member of the Commune had two thousand rubles to his account in the savings bank.

I am convinced that the object we pursue in education is not only to bring up a creator and a citizen capable of effectual participation in the development of the state. We should rear a person who is obliged to be a happy man. Money in the Soviet Union can serve as an excellent educator, an excellent teacher. I can speak on pedagogical questions from my own experience, and I was more fortunate in the conditions of that experience than you are.

I will urge that similar conditions be created in our schools. It may seem a bit terrifying at first, but it isn't in reality. If I were given a school today I would speak at the pedagogical meeting about what ideas I intended to put into effect, and at the same time I would be thinking where I could get the necessary money from. At the Dzerzhinsky Commune I looked for a man who could buy and sell things, and make himself generally useful. And I found such a person. He said, "Fancy complaining, when you have two hundred work hands." "What can we do with them?" I asked. "I tell you what," he says, "we'll make cotton thread." "Where will we get the money?" "We don't need money. We'll sign a contract and buy cheap home-made machines." And so we did. We started making thread. Six years later we had the best lense factory in the U.S.S.R. worth several million rubles.

And so we started with cotton thread and stools. How do you make a stool? Some said that to make a stool the pupil had to make all the parts himself, then he would become a good craftsman. Others said, on the contrary, one pupil makes this part, another that part, a third does the polishing, and so on. And that is correct. But when the "pious teacher" saw this work, he paled and swooned. Whoever heard of such maltreatment of a poor boy. All he does is to saw off that thing. Yes, the boy only had that thing to handle, but he sawed off two hundred pieces in several minutes, he was working as part of a collective.

Division of labour is necessary. Today we do not so much need a craftsman who can make a stool all by himself as we



do a joiner who is able to operate a machine. This is the kind of collective, this is the kind of production we had in my practice.

You shouldn't think from what I have told you that I am only an economy worker. I have always remained an educator, I have always been interested in questions of upbringing, and I have arrived at certain conclusions which may possibly run counter to current theoretical opinion. I have always been opposed to the view that pedagogy is based on a study of the child and a study of isolated, abstract educative methods. I consider education to be the expression of a teacher's political credo, his knowledge being a contributing factor. You can pump me as full as you like with methodology, but I shall never be able to rear a whiteguard. Nor will you. Only a person who is himself a whiteguard at heart can do that.

Pedagogical skill can be developed to a high degree of perfection, almost to that of technique. That is my belief, and all my life I have sought evidence in support of this belief. I contend that questions of education, methods of education, cannot be restricted to questions of teaching, all the more as the educative process takes place not only in the classroom, but literally on every square yard of our land. Pedagogy should master the resources of influence potent and universal enough to nullify any harmful influences that your pupil is likely to meet. Hence, under no circumstances can we imagine this educative work as something confined to the classroom. Educative work governs the whole life of the pupil.

My second emphatic point is that I stand for active education, that is to say, I am for educating a person with definite qualities, and I do everything I can, I exert all the powers of my mind and body towards achieving that end. I must find the means towards that end, and must always see the goal before me, see the model, the ideal, towards which I am striving. The fact that the "personality will start squeaking" does not worry me. Let it squeak—I shall go on trying

to achieve my aim. This does not mean that I stand for suffering. On the contrary, I am convinced that many shortcomings, especially in discipline, tone, and style, are due to the fact that we do not attach sufficient importance to a very important circumstance. This circumstance—I saw it better when dealing with my waifs and strays—is bad children's nerves. I used to think, this one is a disorganiser, that one is a thief or a lazybones, but in most cases they were simply children with ragged nerves. Every word of yours, every impulse, met with resistance. Their nerves cried out when you approached them. And sometimes our most cunning pedagogical devices are simply a strain on their nerves.

People say a child should shout after lessons (this is not done in your school); sometimes he feels like breaking windows. They say it's in the child's nature. They believe he should be diverted from the window-breaking urge to something else, that his nerves should be irritated in some other direction. He should be made to sing, or dance, or have the radio switched on for him.

I visit many schools, and my nerves are as hard as steel ropes, but when I come into a noisy school like that I get a nervous tic. And mind you, children go to school for ten years.

We are asked to be "pedagogic" and not show our feelings. Only our lips quiver sometimes and we don't sleep at nights, or else we take it out on our near ones. At one time there was even a profound conviction that a teacher's work was nervous work, and that a teacher was bound to be a neurasthenic.

I gave my thoughts to this a long time ago. And then I saw what a blessing it was to have a well-ordered school, with no screaming, no running about. If you wanted to run about, there was the playground for you outside. If you wanted to scream, then you were not to. You have to think of us too. We teachers are useful servants of the state and you children must spare our nerves.



As for windows, there can be only one solution—you dare not break any windows, I shall put no radio or music on for you, and I shall not allow you to destroy public property. I'm not going to divert you in any way.

And when a school community takes a conscientious attitude towards such an arrangement, you will get peace and orderliness in that community, you will get that degree of strict and well-defined bounds which are essential to calm nerves. It took me some time to reach this conclusion. But you could visit the Commune at any time and never see the children engaged in rough horseplay, or breaking windows, etc. It was a cheerful, happy community, and nobody hit anyone. I am absolutely convinced that the child's urge to run about in a disorderly fashion and shout can easily be channelled into calmer waters. Very often we are asked to believe in the pedagogical wisdom of things that really should be questioned, because it is highly doubtful whether this is pedagogical wisdom or wisdom at all.

Another important question: the school should be much more demanding than it is. I am grateful to the communards—they appreciated the importance of demandingness and taught me a great deal in this respect.

Take emulation, for instance. I demanded a lot, and so did the whole community. This emulation was organised without contracting parties. There was a general ruling for all classes and detachments on all occasions, and that was to be polite, to behave well, and so on. I had a card index and kept a record. The best detachment, winner of the monthly competition, received a bonus in the shape of six tickets to the theatre every day until all thirty members of the detachment had received theirs, and was granted the right of cleaning the non-living quarters.

The logic of demand developed into very curious forms. Thus, the most unpleasant work was assigned by merit and preference. Our 4th Detachment was a fine detachment. It fell to its lot to clean the lavatory in the course of a month.

Its members cleaned the lavatory with alkali and acid and then sprinkled eau-de-Cologne around. Everyone knew that they made a thorough job of it. The detachment won preferential right. After the month's work, the detachment declared, "We reserve the right of cleaning the lavatory." Two months later they did the same. On the third month preference was won by the 3rd Detachment, who declared, "No, we've won preference this time and the lavatory cleaning job is ours now."

It is amusing today to think of this. At first lavatory cleaning, like all other cleaning jobs, was assigned by drawing lots, and afterwards it was assigned by merit.

This logic, comrades, was not my invention, it was a natural logic arising from demands.

You cannot be demanding if you have no single well-knit collective. If I were put in charge of a school the first thing I would do would be to get the teachers together and tell them, "My dear friends, I want you to do things this way." If any teacher did not agree, I would tell him, however high his qualifications, "Go to another school." To a girl of eighteen, if I saw that she agreed with me, I would say, "You are inexperienced, but I can tell from the sparkle in your eyes that you are keen to work. So please remain and work, and we shall show you how."

A real collective is a very difficult thing to achieve. Whether a man is right or wrong, these questions should be decided not as a matter of personal prestige or personal interests, but in the interests of the collective. To always maintain discipline, to do what has to be done however unpleasant it may be–is the highest degree of discipline.

I believe that the teachers of a single school should be on good terms with one another, should be friends in and out of school.

The last subject is the handling of parents. Here my previous experience in the railwaymen's school is supplemented by my work in the Commune. During the last five years pupils were sent to me whom their teachers had given up as a bad job, as a disruptive influence.



These children, of course, were more difficult than the waifs. With a waif all roads led to the Commune, to me and to my teaching staff. But this one has a Father and a Mother. Papa sometimes has a car, a stripe, a gramophone, and money. Try and tackle a fellow like that. He's more difficult. And so I decided that close contact with the parents was necessary.

You know the old, stereotyped pattern, when you send for the parents and tell them, "Your boy has done this and that." You look them in the face and think: "Now what are the parents going to do with him." Your own face wears a virtuous expression, and you say, "There's no need to beat him, of course." The Father goes away, you don't say a word to anybody, but deep down in your heart, hidden even from your wife, you think: "It wouldn't be a bad thing after all if he gave the rascal a good hiding." With us, this kind of hypocrisy is intolerable.

Another form of handling parents is this. It is clear to the class-teacher and the headmaster that this particular family is unable to bring up the child. And what do they do? Convinced though they are that the family is incapable of bringing up the child, they usually go to that family and begin to teach the parents how to bring up the child. The family that has spoilt the child will not be able, as a rule, to grasp your instructions. Re-education is a very difficult job, and if you start teaching the rudiments of pedagogics to such a family you are likely to make things worse.

This does not mean, however, that there is no way of influencing the family. It is your duty to help it. And the best way of doing this is through the child.

This influence on the family through the pupil can be increased. I worked in the Kryukov Railway School. The pupils lived in families. I organised teams of pupils on a territorial basis. Every morning all the team-leaders reported what was going on in the house yards, and how the pupils, the

members of the teams, behaved. Periodically I gave the order for a review to be held. This was attended by the class monitors besides myself. I came to the yard where the team was drawn up, and I and other members of the team made a round of the homes where the pupils of my school lived.

Such teams, answerable through their team-leaders to the headmaster, and obliged to report back to the general meeting, are an excellent method of influencing the family. I believe the question of what forms this influence should take, should be decided according to the following logic: the school is a state organisation, the family a domestic organisation, and the best way of influencing the family is through the pupil.

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